

## **Fair-play life: A community policing project carried out to prevent participation of Kurdish youth in a terrorist organization in Turkiye**

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### **Abstract**

Counter-terrorism is a common problem of many states in the world and Turkiye is one of them. The Republic of Turkiye has been fighting with the PKK, which is a separatist terrorist organization, since 1978 and lost tens of thousands of its citizens and billions of dollars in order to protect the integrity of the country. In this process, many methods were tried including from measures aimed at protecting citizens in rural areas such as temporary village guard system to development moves like GAP project in cities where Kurds live intensively. However, none of these strategies gave the desired results. Upon this, the Republic of Turkiye, which gave weight to community policing projects in order to prevent (or at least reduce) the participation of youth in terrorism, supported such projects especially in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia regions. One of those projects, "Fair-Play Life Project," started to be implemented in Diyarbakir city since 2010. For the project, an annual grant of approximately \$37,000 was received and 160 students were given a 3-month football training. At the end of the training, a football tournament was held and after the project ended, communication with these students was continued. As a result, the targeted success was achieved, and it was seen that the students who participated in the project preferred to stay away from the PKK terrorist organization.

**Key words:** terror, fair-play, community policing, PKK, counter-terrorism.

### **Introduction**

Terrorism is an act of violence carried out against a person or a community individually, as a group, and sometimes even by state institutions for political reasons. The difference of this act of violence from others is that its target is not directly those who are harmed but the community to which they belong, and through this act of violence that community is actually threatened (Schmid, 2011).

Although its effect has decreased in recent years, Turkiye is one of the countries that feels the terrorism problem the most. According to Global Terrorism Index data (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2025), Turkiye is the 32nd country most affected by terrorism.

**Table 1.** Global Terrorism Index

RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE	RANK CHANGE	RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE	RANK CHANGE	RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE	RANK CHANGE
1	Burkina Faso	8.581	↔	28	Thailand	4.63	↑ 1	55	Tanzania	1.573	↓ 11
2	Pakistan	8.374	↑ 2	29	Egypt	4.416	↓ 9	56	Ecuador	1.55	↑ 33
3	Syria	8.006	↑ 2	30	Indonesia	4.17	↓ 2	57	Djibouti	1.461	↓ 7
4	Mali	7.907	↓ 1	31	Burundi	4.043	↑ 1	58	Côte d'Ivoire	1.454	↓ 9
5	Niger	7.776	↑ 5	32	Turkiye	3.968	↓ 2	59	Brazil	1.43	↓ 8
6	Nigeria	7.658	↑ 2	33	Uganda	3.702	↓ 6	60	Netherlands	1.402	↑ 17
7	Somalia	7.614	↔	34	United States of America	3.517	↓ 3	61	Belgium	1.347	↓ 7
8	Israel	7.463	↓ 6	35	Bangladesh	3.03	↓ 1	62	Switzerland	1.265	↑ 12
9	Afghanistan	7.262	↓ 3	36	Greece	2.928	↓ 1	63	Spain	1.256	↓ 8
10	Cameroon	6.944	↑ 2	37	Oman	2.927	↑ 57	64	Lebanon	1.237	↓ 6
11	Myanmar	6.929	↓ 2	38	Jordan	2.913	↑ 40	65	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1.218	↑ 29
12	Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.768	↑ 1	39	Czechia	2.906	↓ 6	66	Norway	1.198	↓ 10
13	Iraq	6.582	↓ 2	40	France	2.712	↓ 2	67	United Arab Emirates	1.178	↑ 18
14	India	6.411	↔	41	United Kingdom	2.639	↑ 2	68	Nepal	1.113	↓ 20
15	Colombia	6.381	↑ 1	42	Algeria	2.415	↑ 4	69	Slovakia	1.023	↓ 1
16	Russia	6.267	↑ 21	43	Tunisia	2.184	↓ 4	70	Tajikistan	0.999	↑ 1
17	Mozambique	6.251	↓ 2	44	Peru	2.062	↓ 3	71	Central African Republic	0.957	↓ 10
18	Iran	6.056	↑ 7	45	Ukraine	2.003	↑ 12	72	Finland	0.949	↑ 22
19	Kenya	5.366	↓ 1	46	Australia	1.973	↑ 13	72	Japan	0.949	↓ 6
20	Philippines	5.166	↓ 1	47	Poland	1.962	↑ 33	74	Italy	0.929	↓ 14
21	Chile	5.162	↓ 4	48	Canada	1.87	↑ 5	75	Saudi Arabia	0.845	↓ 13
22	Yemen	5.08	↑ 1	49	China	1.863	↑ 27	76	Argentina	0.801	↓ 13
23	Chad	5.032	↓ 2	50	Sweden	1.842	↑ 22	77	Ethiopia	0.787	↓ 13
24	Togo	5.004	↑ 2	51	Angola	1.657	↓ 6	78	Kosovo	0.782	↓ 13
25	Palestine	4.93	↓ 4	52	Malaysia	1.626	↑ 35	79	Armenia	0.72	↓ 6
26	Benin	4.802	↓ 2	53	Libya	1.612	↓ 11	79	Denmark	0.72	↑ 15
27	Germany	4.748	↑ 13	54	Senegal	1.578	↓ 7				

Source: Institute for Economics & Peace, 2025

Although it is expressed with a single concept by looking at its results, terror is actually not a single-type act and is labeled with different names according to its aims and way of execution. Lone actor terrorism is a type of act carried out by individuals who are not members of any terrorist organization and act only with personal motivations. Vigilante terrorism is the name of actions carried out by a group existing in society in order to establish a new and, according to themselves, more just order in the society they belong to. Separatist (ethno-national) terrorism consists of actions carried out by an ethnic group that demands independence or at least autonomy by separating from the society it lives with.

Left-wing terrorism is carried out by those who want some concepts (such as equality, social revolution and class struggle) to be adopted by society, while right-wing terrorism is carried out by those who try to impose the superiority of some groups in society over others. Religious-based terrorism is carried out in order to spread a religion or a religious sect to wider masses. Cyber terrorism consists of attacks against digital systems of states and basically has political aims. Chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear terrorism is the name of actions carried out by political groups using weapons of mass destruction to reach their aims. And finally, state terrorism is the name given to acts of violence and oppression (and maybe executions) that governments apply to their opponents (Schmid, 2021).

Turkiye, in the last fifty years, has been exposed especially to separatist (ethno-national) terrorism among these types of terror. In this period, it is estimated that approximately 40,000 people died as a result of conflicts between law enforcement forces and the PKK (Mandiraci, 2016).

### 1. Turkiye's combat with the PKK

The PKK (Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan - Kurdistan Workers' Party), which was founded in 1978 under the leadership of Abdullah Ocalan in the Lice district of Diyarbakir, is a Marxist-Leninist oriented and armed terrorist organization. This organization is active in the southeast and east of Turkiye and also in Europe. A geography including certain parts of Iraq, Turkiye, Iran and Syria is called Kurdistan by this

organization, and the ultimate aim of the PKK is to establish an independent Kurdistan by separating these regions from the states they belong to (Çelik, 2019).

While fighting the PKK, Türkiye initially only applied military measures. Accordingly, while on one hand the people living especially in rural areas were tried to be protected, on the other hand military operations were organized against the terrorist organization. However, the scattered settlement structure of the country and especially the eastern and southeastern regions prevented the Turkish army from intervening in terrorist attacks on time. So, a new strategy was adopted in the mid-80s and “temporary village guard system” was established in those regions (Bural, 2020).

At this point, it is necessary to explain this system a little bit. Normally, a state has two basic law enforcement forces that ensure its security: army and police. The first protects the borders of the country against enemy attacks and the second ensures public order inside the country (even though the existence of other law enforcement forces such as gendarmerie and coast guard can also be mentioned, they are generally considered within military structuring). However, a state can organize different communities as armed in the face of extraordinary problems. As a matter of fact, the Republic of Türkiye armed some citizens living in those regions against the PKK terrorist organization, which threatened the security of citizens living in rural areas, and assigned them as security personnel.

The temporary village guard system established in 1985 takes its legal basis from the Village Law dated 1924 and numbered 442. This system was first established in 1924 because the state’s security forces (army and police) had difficulties in organizing all over the country and in order to protect villagers in time against possible dangers. However, since it was not much needed after its establishment, this system remained idle and was put into practice again from the 80s onwards (Arap & Erat, 2015).

The second strategy applied by the Republic of Türkiye within the scope of fight with the PKK is the struggle against unemployment problem. Politicians who thought that Kurds living in Eastern and Southeastern regions joined the PKK due to unemployment put into force a 32-billion-dollar project called Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) in 1989 in order to solve (or at least reduce) the unemployment problem. With this project, it was aimed to develop the region or at least to equalize the income level of the people of the region with those living in other regions of the country. Within the scope of the project, improving transportation, health, education and infrastructure activities in the region were also among the main targets (Bural, 2020).

From the beginning of the 90s, the PKK started to get stronger and accordingly, the number of terrorist acts in Türkiye increased. Terrorists who fought with the army in the mountains were forcing shops to close when they came down to the city and making demonstrations in the streets. The situation reached such a point that in some settlements in Eastern and Southeastern regions, soldiers were the dominant force during the day and terrorists at night (Cemal, 2003).

Thus situated, the leader of the terror organization, Ocalan, called Kurds to uprising on March 21, 1992 and this call found response among Kurds. The response of the Republic of Türkiye to this uprising was harsh and as a result of intense counter-terrorism activities in the country, a large part of the militants fled to Northern Iraq. After military operations carried out in northern Iraq on October 5, 1992, around 3000 militants were killed.

Immediately after this operation, the President of Türkiye, Turgut Ozal, warned the government to act more softly towards Kurds. Radical proposals such as allowing Kurdish language to be spoken freely, broadcasting in Kurdish language on state television and providing education of Kurds in their mother tongue were presented to the government in the form of a report. After these developments, the PKK declared a ceasefire on March 17, 1993 (Kazan, 2015).

However, this ceasefire ended when the PKK militants stopped a bus on Elazig-Bingol highway on May 24, 1993 and took down 33 unarmed soldiers who were discharged soon and killed them one by one. After that event, Tansu Ciller, who was the Prime Minister of Türkiye, aimed to completely eliminate

the PKK and adopted a new strategy called “Low Intensity Conflict”. In this period, more than 2,500 villages and hamlets where Kurds lived were evacuated, more than 6000 torture cases were reported, and countless unsolved murders were committed (Kamer, 2025).

From 1994 onwards, Turkish armed forces frequently conducted security controls in regions where Kurds lived intensively, organized winter operations against terrorists, carried out night operations and captured terrorists involved in crimes and put them in prison. So much so that at the end of 1994, the number of terrorists captured dead was 3559 and terrorists killed in cross-border operations were not included in this number. In this process, 308 terrorists surrendered voluntarily and the number of terrorists in prisons reached 8000. As a result of these and similar practices, Turkish army started to take control in the region again (Cemal, 2003).

On February 15, 1999, the leader of the organization, Ocalan, was captured in an operation in Nairobi and brought to Turkiye. The leader of the PKK was tried in Turkish courts, and he was first sentenced to death but this decision was later converted to life imprisonment. The PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire after the arrest of its leader and in 2002 the name of the organization was changed to KADEK and in 2004 to KONGRA-GEL. In the same year, the PKK announced that it ended the ceasefire and clashes in the mountains started to spread to cities. In 2005, the organization announced that its name was changed back to PKK (Kamer, 2025).

“The solution process” that started with Prime Minister Erdogan’s Diyarbakir rally in 2005 caused a different page to be opened in the struggle with the PKK. What was intended with this process was to solve the Kurdish issue in the country through political and democratic ways. In his speech at the rally, Prime Minister Erdogan admitted some mistakes that the state had made against Kurdish citizens until that day and claimed that this problem could be solved with more democracy, more citizenship rights and more welfare in the country.

This process was further expanded with “the National Unity and Brotherhood Project” initiated in 2009 and was reinforced with the meetings held by the state’s intelligence organization MIT with the PKK representatives in Oslo. It was also put on a legal basis with the “Law on the Termination of Terror and Strengthening Social Integration” enacted on July 16, 2014. However, after the Ceylanpinar terrorist attack in 2015, which resulted in the killing of two police officers, this process ended and clashes between the PKK and the state’s armed forces started again (Haberler, 2024).

On July 24, 2015, Turkish Armed Forces carried out an air operation against the PKK targets in northern Iraq. Afterwards, PKK leaders declared autonomy in some cities and districts where Kurds live intensively (Silopi, Nusaybin, Cizre districts of Sirnak; Batman, Bitlis and Yuksekova of Hakkari; Varto, Bulanik of Mus; Edremit of Van; Dogubayazit of Agri; Sur, Silvan, Lice of Diyarbakir). The government reacted harshly to that decision and first curfews were declared in the mentioned districts and then security operations were started. In those operations, 4571 terrorists were killed and the PKK carried out suicide attacks on some military outposts in retaliation (Kamer, 2025).

In October 2024, with the call of Nationalist Movement Party leader Devlet Bahçeli to Abdullah Ocalan to dissolve the PKK, “the second solution process” started. The demands of the government were conveyed to Ocalan and the demands of Ocalan to the government through MPs who are members of DEM party (a Kurdish party supporting the PKK).

From the beginning of 2025, regular but indirect meetings were held between the two sides. On February 27, 2025, Ocalan called the PKK to lay down arms and dissolve itself. The PKK, which does not go against its leader’s word, declared a unilateral ceasefire shortly after and dissolved itself on May 12, 2025. Finally, “National Solidarity, Brotherhood and Democracy Commission” was established in the Turkish Grand National Assembly and in the autumn period the PKK announced that it withdrew its militants within Turkiye’s borders (BBC News Türkçe, 2025).

Although the PKK has dissolved itself, it is known that the terror threat still continues in the country.

## 2. Methods of Counter-Terrorism

Terrorism is not fought only with military methods and states that struggle with terrorism problem have different styles of struggle. In the literature, four main methods come to the fore in counter-terrorism (Boz, 2025):

**Figure 1.** Counter-terrorism methods



*-Military and security-based method:* This is the most common method used in counter-terrorism; this method includes military operations, intelligence (or counter-intelligence) activities, increasing border security, protection of critical infrastructure facilities, ensuring city security and taking potential terrorists under close surveillance (Özdağ, 2008). The handicap of this method is that it does not address the structural problems that cause the emergence of terrorist organizations and therefore it is evaluated that it cannot be a long-term solution (Boz, 2025).

*-Preventive and socio-political strategies:* Fighting terrorism by finding solutions (such as creating job opportunities, increasing education level, ensuring the integration of all groups that make up the society, increasing participation in politics, etc.) to the problems that cause the emergence of terrorist organizations (unemployment, being socio-economically disadvantaged, lack of education, exclusion from society, injustice and others) is one of the most commonly used methods in democratic countries (Polis Akademisi Başkanlığı, 2019).

*-Legal and Legislative Based Approaches:* According to this approach, in order for a state to fight terrorism effectively, its legal system must be strong and up to date. The definition of terrorism and related terms (terrorist, terrorist organization, terrorist act and others) should be made fully and correctly and all related areas including the financing of terrorism should be handled within the framework of law. On the one hand, those who commit terrorist acts and even those who support them should be punished, but on the other hand, the rights of innocent citizens should be protected (Baki, 2009).

*-International Cooperation and Diplomatic Mechanisms:* According to this view, terrorist organizations tend to cooperate with other similar organizations abroad. In this case, states should also cooperate with other states or international organizations and solve the terrorism problem together. They should share intelligence, when necessary, determine common strategies and even carry out joint military operations. From time to time, they should strengthen their stance against terrorism with joint declarations they will publish (Demir, 2022).

### **3. Community Policing in Counter-Terrorism in Turkiye**

According to Cinoğlu and Sever (2011), a policing style such as community policing in counter-terrorism shows itself in three different areas: creating a common platform, developing a problem-oriented understanding and structural transformations.

Regarding the first, the following can be said: community policing aims to create a voluntary-based cooperation between security forces and the institutions they work with. This new platform that emerges as a result of cooperation determines the correct intervention methods by receiving feedback from citizens from time to time about counter-terrorism methods and at the same time proposes new solutions suitable for local dynamics. The sense of participation in individuals makes it easier for them to provide moral support to the police and this enables a platform to be formed spontaneously in effective counter-terrorism (Eck & Rosenbaum, 1994).

On the other hand, the main purpose of terrorism is to create an environment of fear and uncertainty in a society and from this point of view, community policing practices reveal strong strategies against this threat. This approach basically foresees calming people's feelings of revenge by reducing the fear of crime and terrorism in society. In addition, one of the biggest advantages of community policing in counter-terrorism is that it strengthens the exchange of information and cooperation between law enforcement forces and society (Scheider & Chapman, 2003). That is, the feeling of fear and uncertainty in society pushes them to seek solutions on a platform that also includes the police.

Secondly, addressing terrorism as a multidimensional problem in a society (that is, developing a problem-oriented understanding) paves the way for producing more permanent solutions. Defining a problem with all its aspects and the solution proposals that emerge afterwards enable soft power to replace hard power in society and the police's use of force strategy is replaced by dialogue-oriented strategies (Eck & Rosenbaum, 1994).

Finally, the implementation of community policing strategies in counter-terrorism requires some structural and legislative changes. Although the participation of some other actors in the decision-making processes of the police in Turkiye is possible with a small legislative reform, the existing status quo structure in the organization will resist such a transformation. Despite all kinds of resistance, some police officers in this country meet with the families of terrorists and show constructive approaches towards their children (Cinoğlu ve Özeren, 2009).

Apart from the fact that a policing style such as community policing shows itself in different areas in counter-terrorism, it is very important to understand its basic philosophy. In the philosophy of community policing, there is strengthening police-public relations with methods suitable for the cultural structure of society, increasing the awareness of the individual about crime and providing support to the police in crime prevention. When "terror" is defined as a "crime", it is expected to ensure and expand police-public cooperation in the implementation of police strategies applied against terror, to raise awareness of young people about terror and for them to support especially community policing projects. As a matter of fact, the social projects carried out by community policing branches in Turkiye (especially those carried out in schools and culturally weighted projects) are quite effective in keeping young people who are at risk of participation in terror away from the influence of terrorist organizations (Cinoğlu & Sever, 2011).

Alkan (2007), while mentioning socio-cultural factors that are effective in recruiting new members by terrorist organizations in Türkiye (such as friend and relative relations, fellow-townsmen relations, social and cultural activities, exploitation of religious values and ethnic origin), draws attention to the importance of community policing in preventing their activities. According to him, CP activities prevent the participation of young people in organizations by increasing their awareness about crime and terror. CP activities carried out in schools have been quite effective, especially in preventing participation in organizations with peer effect. In order to prevent participation in organizations with relative effect, CP branches have made individuals at risk more resilient by ensuring early detection of them. Against the strategy of recruiting new members to the organization through fellow-townsmen ties formed after migration to cities, the social and cultural projects carried out by CP branches have been quite successful. The strategy of gaining sympathy for the organization through religious exploitation has also been thwarted thanks to CP projects.

An example of the successful CP projects mentioned by Alkan was carried out in Mardin. Community policing activities implemented in this city in order to prevent the participation of young people in the PKK were met with great appreciation both by the city residents and the state authorities. In these projects, it was aimed to further increase security measures by cooperating with the local people. In this context, various seminars and information meetings were organized to build trust between the police, and the society and young people were also encouraged to participate in social activities. As a result of these activities, the perception of security in the region improved and participation in the PKK decreased significantly (Yıldız & Şahin, 2010).

As a matter of fact, some studies show that Turkish people are satisfied with these projects. For example, in 2011, a scientific study was conducted to measure the level of public satisfaction with CP projects. In this context, first a survey was conducted with the participation of 1067 people in the city center and districts of Çanakkale and data was collected in this way. As a result of the analysis of the data, it was understood that the public were satisfied with CP. On the other hand, it was determined that the expectations of the people of Çanakkale from CP police and their projects were quite high and they were ready to support them in the projects they would carry out (Marangoz, Çelikkan, & Yavuz, 2011).

#### **4. Fair-play life: A community policing project carried out to prevent participation in a terrorist organization in Türkiye**

This project was first implemented in 2010 by Diyarbakir community policing branch manager Halim İltas. Later, the project was continued by his successors Hakan Hekim and Mustafa Donmez and gained the appreciation of the people of Diyarbakir. The aim of the project was to keep some of the young Kurdish people whose families moved to Diyarbakir through migration away from terrorism through sports (Diyarbakir Police Department, 2012).

As it is known, people sometimes leave the places where they were born and raised and where they grew up with their traditions willingly (career, education etc.) and sometimes forcibly (displacement, exile or forced migration) and they migrate to other places (Keser, 2011). Due to the oppressive policies applied by the government to some of the Kurds in Türkiye in the 90s, many Kurds were forced to migrate from villages to city centers or to other cities (Hünee, 2006).

Sociological studies conducted on those migrations stated that those immigrants faced some problems (such as housing shortage, unemployment and economic problems) in their new settlements. It has also paved the way for the formation of new group identities instead of family, village and tribe ties for those people. In addition, the inability of those people and their children who try to hold on in new settlements to receive adequate education has constituted another problem and made their adaptation with their surroundings difficult. As a natural result of that, they were excluded by their new environment and started to feel as if they were strangers. This difference made some of them

more prone to crime and even terrorism. With the effect of the weakening of traditional control mechanisms (family, school and environment), they easily fell into the network of terrorist organizations (TESEV, 2006).

Diyarbakir was one of the most preferred destinations of Kurds after the forced migration experienced in Turkiye in the 90s. In order to prevent the participation of young people living in this city in terrorist organizations, it was necessary to include those who came to the city through migration in the project and it was done so.

The aim of the project was to prevent at least 160 young people every year from being involved in terror crimes (and therefore from participating in terrorist organizations and especially the PKK) through a 3-month football training. In addition, it was to have the opportunity to meet 1000 young people by participating in this football tournament. These young people met would be included in other projects to be carried out in the future and it was to establish a bond with them early thanks to this project.

The biggest expected result from the project was to prevent young people from being involved in crime and worse, terrorism both during the project process and afterwards. The second expected result was to break the prejudices of young people from Diyarbakir against the police and to establish a warm communication with them. Thirdly, it was to instill the spirit of sportsmanship in football to these young people and to ensure that they reflect this character to social life as well.

The first part of the project budget (33,000 TL – \$18,333) was received as a grant from SODES (Social Support Program) and the second part (33,000 TL – \$18,333) from COGEP (children and youth social protection and support program). In total, a budget of 66,000 TL (\$36,666) was spent for this project. In the project, 4 CP officers, 2 referees and 26 physical education teachers took part.

First, school selection was made and while doing this, care was taken that the target school was from socio-economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. After one-on-one interviews with physical education teachers working in the selected schools, the students who would participate in the project were selected one by one. Then, the sports materials needed by the young people were distributed and they started training in a short time on the astroturf field in the police house. During the training period, picnics and out-of-city trips (Urfa trip) were organized many times.

A Fairplay football tournament was organized in two periods in which 26 schools participated in each. The difference of this football tournament from others was its rules. The tournament rules directed young people not to win but to show respect to their opponent. These rules were as follows:

#### *Fair-play scoring system*

##### *Behaviors appropriate to fair play: (+) actions that will receive points*

- 1- Goal: (+) 6 points
- 2- Organization, nice dribbling and passing: (+) 1 point
- 3- Apologizing after fouling the opponent: (+) 1 point
- 4- Positive behavior of the coach: (+) 1 point
- 5- Positive support of the fans to the team: (+) 1 point
- 6- All movements that will beautify football: (+) 1 point

##### *Behaviors not appropriate to fair play: (-) actions that will receive points*

- 1- Red card: (-) 6 points
- 2- Yellow card: (-) 3 points
- 3- Foul: (-) 1 point
- 4- Objection of players and coach to the referee: (-) 1 point
- 5- Wrong behaviors towards own teammates or opponent team players: (-) 1 point

6- All negative behaviors that will create tension in the environment: (-) 1 point

7- Negative behaviors of the fans: (-) 1 point

At the end of the tournament, various awards (computer to the school attended by the young people, tracksuit, jersey, shorts and astroturf shoes to the young people themselves) were distributed to the schools and students who ranked. In order to maintain contact with the young people included in the project, a web page named <http://facebook.com/fairplay.doluhayat> was established. Other young people who could not access the site were also contacted by phone. In addition, young people who were included in this project 2 years ago were also reached. They played matches among themselves in the police house and experienced the happiness of coming together with the police again (Diyarbakir Police Department, 2012).

## 5. Results obtained from the project

At the interviews with teachers after the project, they stated that the students who participated in the project continued sportsmanship even in the matches they played within the school. In fact, in a football tournament organized by the Ministry of National Education recently, there were those who exhibited sportsmanship behaviors such as helping the opposing team players who fell to the ground to get up.

It was observed that none of the students who participated in the project (at least for a few years) joined the terrorist organization. Of course, the community policing officers who continued contact with the students have a big share in this success (Diyarbakir Police Department, 2012).

In January 2012, the Turkish National Olympic Committee gave the "Sportive Promotion Branch Fair Play Grand Award" to this project (National Olympic Committee of Türkiye, 2012). Some web sites introduced this project of Diyarbakir community policing branch as follows:

"The Turkish National Olympic Committee deemed the Diyarbakir Police Department Community Policing Branch Directorate worthy of the Grand Award due to the 'Fair-Play Life Project' it has been carrying out for children for 3 years. The Fair-Play Life project, which is financed within the scope of the 'Safe Life and Safe Future for Children' and 'Youth Social Protection and Support Program' in Diyarbakir and carried out by the Diyarbakir police department community policing branch directorate was deemed worthy of the Grand Award by the Turkish National Olympic Committee. In the statement made by the Diyarbakir police department community policing branch directorate, it was stated that within the scope of the project, 160 students from 4 primary schools identified from disadvantaged regions were given technical and theoretical training for 4 months as part of the works continuing this year as well. In the statement, it was emphasized that while the rules of football were shown one-to-one with technical training, in theoretical trainings, besides the fair-play philosophy 'I should be deemed worthy of the award with my behavior by rejecting victory and reward throughout my life', it was aimed to keep students away from bad habits.

In the statement, it was said: 'By instilling the fair-play spirit in students, both in the family and school environment; it is aimed to be an exemplary child, an exemplary student, an exemplary friend and to be together with students in order to break the prejudice against the police. 26 primary schools participated in the fair-play football tournament organized for the 3rd time in our province, and Şehit Jandarma Üsteğmen Tefvik Pehlivan Primary School and Mehmet Akif Ersoy Primary School remained in the final. Şehit Jandarma Üsteğmen Tefvik Pehlivan Primary School won the tournament. The school that showed the most fair-play behavior during the tournament was Alatosun Primary School.' In the statement emphasizing that the aim of the football tournament in the project is football based on fair-play behaviors, sportsmanship and friendship, it was stated as follows: 'The winner of the match was not determined only by the score superiority, but also by the fair-play points it received throughout

the match. Teams ranking in the tournament will be given computers, jerseys, tracksuits, sports shoes and various gifts as awards' ...” (Etki haber, 2012).

The project became the subject of many newspapers and news websites. For example, in Öz Diyarbakir Newspaper, which is a local press organ, the following was written about the project:

“Organized by the Diyarbakir provincial police department community policing branch directorate, the football tournament held within the framework of the ‘Fair-Play Life Project’ ended with the final match. In the tournament financed within the scope of COGEP, Şehit Jandarma Üsteğmen Tefrik Pehlivan Primary School became the champion. Within the scope of the project, in 2012, 160 students from 4 primary schools identified from disadvantaged regions were given the necessary technical and theoretical training for 4 months. While the rules of football were shown one-to-one by police officers working in the community policing branch directorate with technical training, in theoretical trainings, besides the fair-play philosophy ‘I should be deemed worthy of the award with my behavior by rejecting victory and reward throughout my life’, it was aimed to keep students away from bad habits.

By instilling the fair-play spirit in students, both in the family and school environment; the project, which aims to be an exemplary child, an exemplary student, an exemplary friend and to be together with students in order to break the prejudice against the police, was organized for the 3rd time by the Diyarbakir police department community policing branch directorate. In the Fair-Play Astro turf Football Tournament, where the winner of the match was not determined only by score superiority but also by the Fair-Play points they received from positive behaviors throughout the match, Şehit Jandarma Üsteğmen Tefrik Pehlivan Primary School and Mehmet Akif Ersoy Primary School remained in the final as a result of the matches played. In the final of the match, which was quite lively and exciting, Şehit Jandarma Üsteğmen Tefrik Pehlivan Primary School defeated its opponent and achieved the championship. While the school that showed the most Fair-Play behavior throughout the tournament was Atatürk Primary School, one computer was given to their schools as a reward to the three teams that ranked in the tournament, and jerseys, tracksuits, sports shoes and various gifts were given to the students. The tournament ended with the police officers working in the community policing branch directorate and the students participating in the tournament taking a souvenir photo. Within the scope of the ‘Fair-Play Life Project’ organized by the Community Policing Branch Directorate, an astro turf tournament was organized for the third time and a total of 26 teams have participated so far. The project had previously been deemed worthy of the grand award by the Turkish National Olympic Committee” (Öztürk, 2012).

## **Conclusion**

Terrorism is a problem that many states in the world face and Türkiye is one of the states that feels this problem most deeply. In this country, especially the PKK, which is a separatist/divisive terrorist organization, has killed innocent citizens for years and caused serious damage to the country's economy. The Republic of Türkiye has tried options such as temporary village guard system, GAP project and military operations in order to struggle with this problem until today. However, none of them could be a permanent and rooted solution and this pushed state officials to different searches.

In fact, there are 4 main strategies that states have been applying in counter-terrorism: military and security-based method, preventive and socio-political strategies, legal and legislative based approaches and international cooperation and diplomatic mechanisms. Especially the second of them (preventive and socio-political strategies) is the strategy preferred by democratic countries and Türkiye has been acting in line with this strategy especially in recent years.

Community policing practices in preventing participation in terrorist organizations are a type of preventive and socio-political strategy and its importance has been understood more in Türkiye especially in recent years. “Fair-Play Life Project,” which is a community policing project, was started

in Diyarbakir in 2010 and has been continued until today. Especially with the award received in 2012, the value of the project has been understood one more time and with the participation of more young people every passing year, the project has spread to a wider area.

As a result, it can be said that this project met the expected targets and kept some of the young people away from the terrorist organization. By raising their awareness, it enabled them to turn to different areas of life. Therefore, it would be beneficial to implement such projects in other cities and even in other countries.

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