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THE PKK'S DECISION
TO DISSOLVE ITSELF

Kemal Okuyan
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TURKEY: A NEW CYCLE OF UNCERTAINTY BEGINS



Initial Notes on the PKK's Decision to Dissolve Itself

Kemal Okuyan – TKP General Secretary



The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), active since 1978 and possessing significant influence not only in Turkey but also in Iraq, Syria, and Iran (albeit under the names of different structures), and with widespread organization among Kurds worldwide, especially in Europe, decided to dissolve itself and end its armed struggle during its congress held in early May. This decision came following calls in this direction from Devlet Bahçeli, the leader of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) and a key supporter of the government, as well as from Abdullah Öcalan, the PKK leader imprisoned since 1999.

The recent process, which has developed on a very different ground compared to previous overt or covert "solution" initiatives between the state and the PKK, may have caused internationally deep disappointment among those who approach the issue with a certain emotionality and understandable sympathy towards oppressed nations. The current situation is not a surprise, but contrary to some claims, there is no "defeat" or "betrayal" involved.

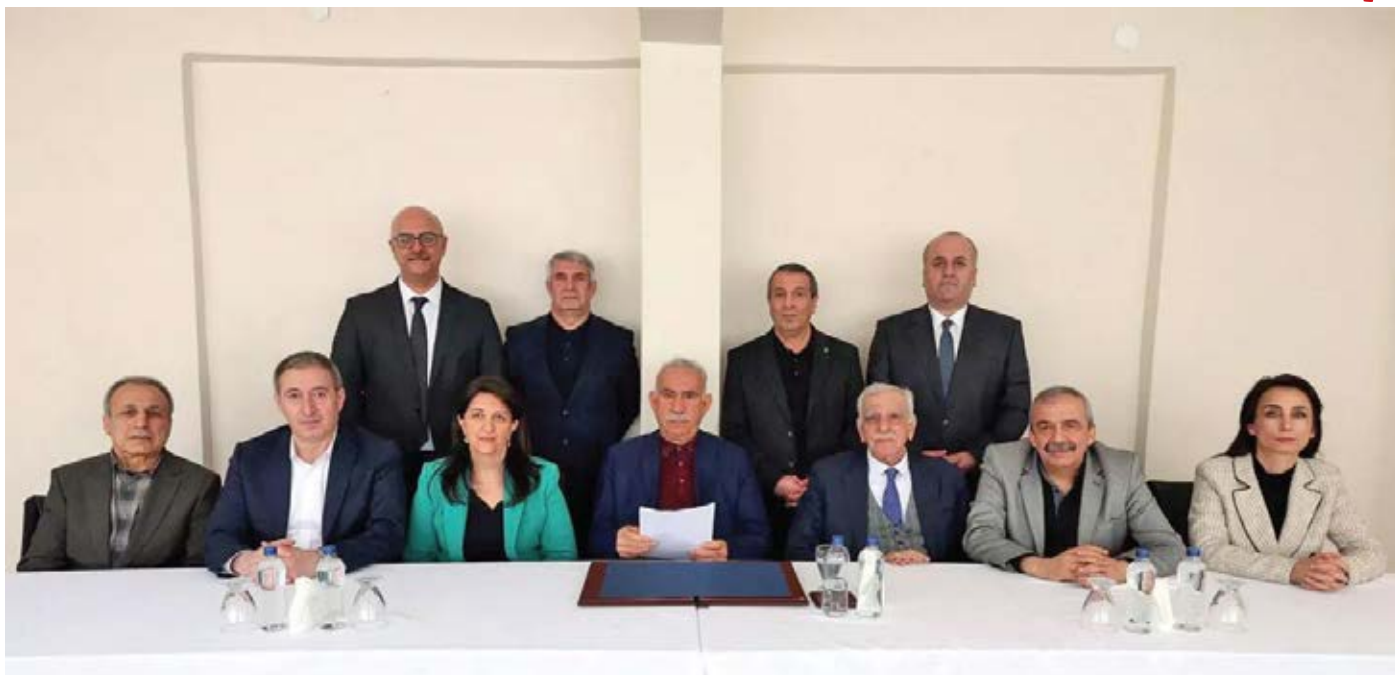
We are discussing a movement that has supported the AKP government multiple times, interacted with various imperialist projects across a broad region, and most recently engaged in open and comprehensive cooperation with the United States in Syria. Although this movement cannot be reduced solely to these aspects, the current situation cannot be seen as a sharp turn.

The cessation of armed conflicts, which have divided impoverished segments of the population in Turkey, led to ethnic hostilities, and provided the capitalist government with opportunities to obscure various issues, is a positive development for every revolutionist in Turkey. From the beginning, Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) has emphasized this point and has taken a clear stance. However, the matter does not end here; the content of the process, its class and ideological character, and its international dimensions will be decisive.

We are not facing a completed process yet. The "determined" stance of both sides does not conceal the presence of different tendencies within each. Today, within the AKP government and the state, there is no unity regarding the content and objectives of the process. A similar situation should be noted for the PKK, which encompasses various ideological tendencies within itself and its affiliated structures. Therefore, a struggle will continue, and the actors in this struggle will not be limited to those at the negotiating table. Communists, whose organizational development and influence on the country's political and ideological dynamics have been more noticeable recently, as well as other political entities, will also strive to determine the direction of developments.

However, certain points can already be stated:





1- Öcalan is now the undisputed sole leader of the movement, including the Kurdish-nationalist DEM Party in the Parliament, which is undergoing a restructuring process accepted (and desired) by the state.

2- Erdoğan has surpassed a significant threshold in dispersing the opposition bloc that has been cooperating against him for some time. Regardless of the problems and tensions that may arise, as long as the process continues, the DEM Party will distance itself from the opposition led by the Republican People's Party (CHP).

3- However, since this process is developing in line with the needs of the capitalist class, the CHP will, in some form, be part of this "compromise of historic significance". The upcoming New Constitution should be seen as a critical juncture in this regard.

4- Erdoğan has come closer to creating a political environment in which he can win the upcoming elections. In this process, the release of certain individuals and thousands of DEM Party representatives, who are prisoned unlawfully, can be expected, thereby creating an atmosphere of "democratization." However, it is evident that the economic and political pressures on the working people in Turkey will not ease in the slightest.

5- Both sides' constant emphasis on the process developing independently of "foreign powers" aims to alleviate the widespread concern in society about a "new game by imperialist powers". However, the reality is that the process unfolding in Turkey is closely linked to regional developments—particularly in Syria. Despite recently strengthening its ties with the US and the UK, and experiencing a thaw in relations with Israel, Turkey is not in a position to independently take political initiative in this context. We are witnessing a sharp struggle in the region, ongoing with negotiations, threats, blackmail, and counter-moves, which can at any moment evolve into a new

hot conflict.

6- The government claims that Turkish-Kurdish peace will strengthen Turkey's internal front. However, that front is under the control of international monopolies; Turkey is seeking additional roles in NATO and Europe's "new security" system. Moreover, both sides of the process state that religion will be the glue of brotherhood. Turkish or Kurdish workers are never placed on the negotiating table. What is being discussed is a peace of the capitalists, and the driving force of this process is the transition to a new phase in the years-long integration of Turkish capital with Kurdish capital, the creation of new profit areas in Kurdish regions of Iraq and Syria, and the strong possibility of playing a role in a move against Iran.

7- The fact that both sides ideologically hold actually existing socialism and the founding of the Republic of Turkey responsible for the Kurdish issue is another case that should be taken seriously. The questioning of the Treaty of Lausanne, signed after the struggle in Anatolia in 1923, against the forces led by British imperialism and the Ottoman Palace, marks a new phase in the debate over the legitimacy of the Republic of Turkey—established through a temporary and problematic but historical alliance with Soviet Russia during the great revolutionary wave between 1917 and 1924— from an Islamist, Ottomanist, and imperialist perspective.

TKP will, in this process, advocate for the unity of all workers living in Turkey under the socialist alternative against Turkish and Kurdish nationalism and the liberal capitalist compromise. It will oppose all imperialist powers, the venturesome and expansionist ambitions of the Turkish bourgeoisie, and Islamist-Ottomanist reactionary policies, and will carry its recently created political influence to further points in the revolutionary struggle.

The Meaning of Solidarity with Cuba

Cansu Oba,

Member of TKP Central Committee

If we are to avoid reducing solidarity with Cuba to an abstract notion or a narrow principled stance, it is essential to reconsider its meaning in light of the current dynamics.

The struggle for the survival of socialism in Cuba follows a dynamic trajectory. A key driver of this dynamism is the speed and complexity of developments in the international system, as well as the growing contradictions within it. Another vital factor is the efforts of Cuban leadership and the Cuban people to confront threats to socialism with determination. It is an ongoing struggle.

It is well known that Cuba has, for some time, been compelled to take steps backward in the construction of socialism. These regressions are primarily economic—allowing private ownership of the means of production and undermining socialism’s material base. The influence of foreign investors and the private sector in the national economy is steadily increasing.

Yet, evaluating socialism in Cuba with a linear framework fails to capture its full reality. In an international context where the balance of class power does not favour the working class, temporary retreats to enable future advances in socialist construction are not unusual in our struggle. Even in the Soviet Union—with resources far surpassing Cuba’s—such reversals occurred. What matters is whether a leadership with revolutionary will exists, one capable of managing and ultimately reversing the negative consequences of these concessions. In Cuba’s case, we believe that this will is clearly present.

That said, we also recognize how fragile this process is—and that revolutionary will, while essential, is not always sufficient on its own.

In Cuba, economic practices increasingly deviate from the logic of socialist construction. The principal cause of this is the economic, commercial, financial blockade by the US, of which inhumane and even genocidal character is now widely acknowledged. Those who point to Cuba’s hardships as proof of socialism’s failure must first answer a simple challenge: lift the blockade, then let’s see. Socialism in Cuba is not “competing” on equal footing with capitalism. The blockade is not the only pressure point; the Cuban economy has also suffered from the severe

consequences of Covid-19 pandemic, the international economic crisis, and repeated natural disasters—conditions that have been made more devastating by the longstanding blockade.

Still, a mere understanding of these material hardships is not enough to ease the concerns of Cuba’s genuine friends. As Marxists, we know that growing inequality within a socialist system can open the door to social regression and decay. One of Cuba’s greatest strengths is the spirit of resistance and struggle that runs deep in its society. However, assuming that this spirit will remain untouched by underlying economic shifts—despite the vaccine influence of the well-organized Communist Party—leans more toward idealism than optimism.

The inequalities arising from concessions made under socialism will inevitably create social unrest. Such unrest is to be expected in a society shaped by the ideals of equality. But in a context of worsening living conditions and an international environment hostile to ideological clarity and political solutions, it

may not always be easy to channel popular frustration in a revolutionary direction.

Given these troubling conditions, the response should not be to distance ourselves from Cuba—but to strengthen solidarity with it. If the Communist Party of Cuba does not remain sufficiently vigilant, there is indeed a risk of capitalist restoration. In the presence of such a potential, Cuba needs not only to hear the concerns of its true friends but also to feel their solidarity—without being subjected to ideological grading or conditional support.

Cuba’s strategic choices for survival within the current international balance come with consequences. It may not always be possible to align with Cuba on every political front. However, it’s important to remember that Cuba’s challenges in adopting a class-based international stance are also tied to the weaknesses of the world communist movement itself. The absence of a strong international revolutionary wave makes it harder for Cuba to chart a clearly socialist course in foreign policy affairs.

In this context, solidarity with Cuba must be stronger than ever. Even if the implementation of mature, fully developed socialism is not currently feasible in Cuba, we can—and must—support Cuba in holding on to the fundamental values of socialism. We owe this to the Cuban people.





May Day in Turkey and TKP

Berkay Kemal Önoğlu,
Member of TKP Central Committee

May Day has historically been a time in Turkey when the working class and the communist movement most strongly voiced their political demands. Undoubtedly, May Day is a significant day for the working class all over the world. However, given the political significance and large-scale participation in the demonstrations, Turkey stands out as one of the few countries where May Day is observed in a manner that truly reflects its importance.

May Day stands as the most important occasion to demonstrate the power workers can wield when united as a class on the political stage—especially for the working class of Turkey, which is facing unprecedented impoverishment. In a country where pensioners are told to 'fend for themselves,' students are pushed into a precarious labor market even before graduation, child labor is legalized under various disguises, the minimum wage has effectively become the average wage, and citizens are left alone to confront the brutality of

capitalism, May Day gains even greater urgency and significance. Without the means to survive, democracy is impossible; without equality, freedom is unattainable. The necessity for the working class to unite and fight against these stark realities constitutes the primary message that May Day must convey.

Nevertheless, May Day demonstrations in Turkey often reflect both a defiant, revolutionary stance against the system and, at the same time, a diluted, aimless form of protest. Given the historical broad social resonance of May Day demonstrations in Turkey, bourgeois politicians are turning their attention to them, viewing the events as a potential source of political legitimacy. As a result, they see leaving the stage entirely to working-class politics as a risky move.

It is common on May Day podiums—not independent from the influence of bourgeois politics—to see the attempts to align the power of the working class with one tendency or another within that same system. Today, the balances of the class struggle is not yet able to push the perpetrators of this betrayal

out of May Day. Fortunately, however, communists who refuse to allow this day to be used as fodder for political maneuvering of bourgeois politics continue to give May Day its real revolutionary character.

For the Communist Party of Turkey, May Day is a day when one of the most massive and significant responses is given to the attacks on the working class at that moment. May Day activities are carried out to create renewed revolutionary enthusiasm that will be conveyed on May 2nd: To raise the historical claim of the working class, which stands as a real alternative to the rule of the capitalists. The full militant force of the TKP is evident in the May Day squares, not only through the powerful image of a mass bloc but also in the disciplined and self-assured presence of workers' organizations.

This year, following the mass protests on March 19, sparked by the arrest of the Mayor of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, the TKP chose to prioritize the spirit of unity and collective action that had gained strong public support. As a result, the party decided to withdraw from its previously

planned independent May Day rally and instead participated in the rally organized by major trade union confederations and democratic mass organizations. TKP mobilized a large, disciplined, enthusiastic, and determined presence at May Day events across various regions of Turkey.

However, we experienced once again that many of the problems that had concerned us in previous years in the framework mentioned above persisted once again. In response, TKP announced that it would no longer mobilize its members and supporters for rallies that have increasingly become stages for bourgeois parties to promote themselves. The party will also refrain from calling on workers to participate in events that do not genuinely reflect their interests. Instead, TKP affirmed its commitment to commemorating May Day in a way that honors its true meaning and revolutionary spirit.

The ineffectiveness and limitations of approaches that attempt to confine working-class politics solely to the trade union sphere were once again made



abundantly clear. The working class is not just a trade union movement. It asserts itself not only through immediate demands and interests but also through its historical mission and struggle for political power. Ultimately, it is this political struggle that charts the path toward true emancipation. Yes, workers have trade unions—but

despite persistent efforts to obscure or dismiss it, the working class also has its own political party.

What makes May Day in Turkey so significant and defining are the historic turning points when workers asserted their political will. The most impactful May Day celebrations in Turkey took place during periods when the trade union movement aligned itself with revolutionary politics.

May 1st, 2025, marked the strongest response by the Communist Party of Turkey, relying on the working class, against privatizations, the darkness of religious sects, the country being dragged in line with the interests of the imperialist powers, the plundering of

public resources, and the attempted elimination of constitutional achievements that strengthen the will of society to live together.

As every year, on May 2nd, we are more courageous, determined, and more decisive. We trust ourselves, our class, and our country's resources. Long live May Day!

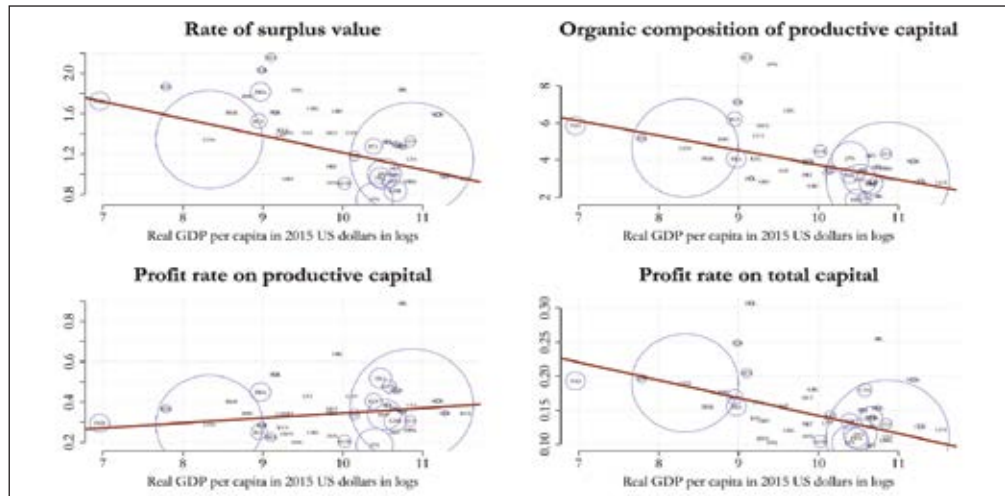


A Record in Exploitation in Turkey

Gülay Dinçel,

Member of TKP Party Council

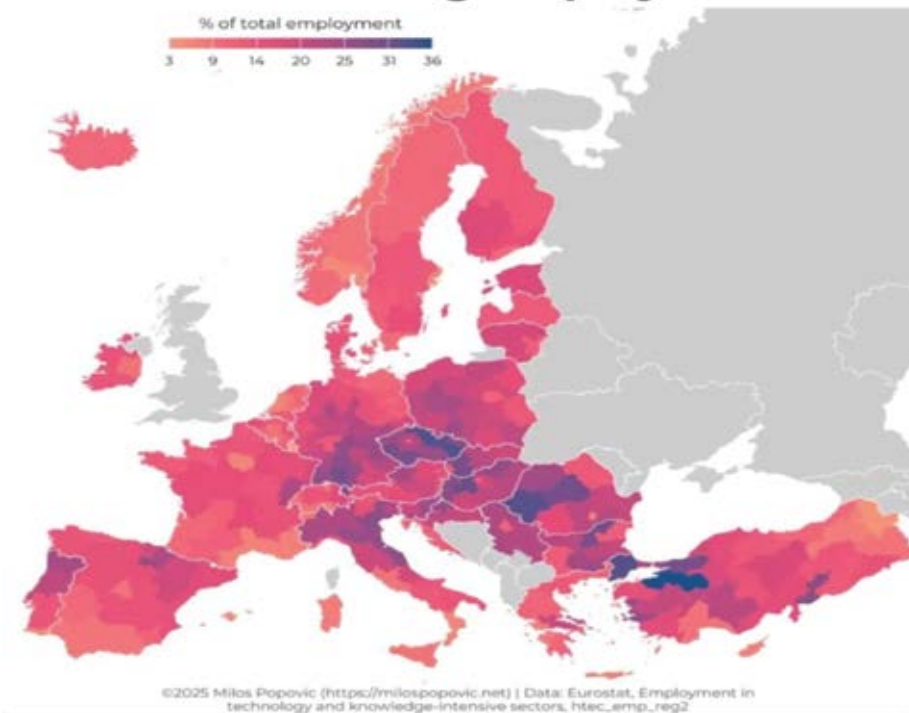
Turkish capitalism ranks among the highest in the world in terms of exploitation rates. A study covering 43 countries over the period from 2000 to 2014 found that Turkey had the second-highest exploitation rate, following Mexico. This study calculated profit rates (both for productive and total capital), surplus value rates, and the organic composition of capital using each country's national accounts and the input-output tables prepared by the Groningen Growth and Development Centre at the University of Groningen.¹ Turkey's second-place ranking in surplus value production is a striking outcome. Moreover, additional data and observations suggest that Turkey may have surpassed Mexico after 2014. It appears that the surplus value rate may have experienced a significant leap, particularly after 2018.



Shortly before this study, economist E. Ahmet Tonak noted² that Turkey has one of the highest manufacturing employment rates in Europe. Tonak emphasized that a large and expanding manufacturing sector implies both high and increasing surplus value production over time. He stressed that manufacturing is a productive sector and a key driver of surplus value, while also warning that an increase in surplus value production does not

necessarily mean a proportional rise in the number of productive workers—nor that the surplus value remains within the country. In fact, although manufacturing employment grew after 2018, the increase in productive labor appears limited. Instead, it can be assumed that the outflow of surplus value, as Tonak highlighted, has intensified— and we should underline that this is a topic that deserves dedicated research.

Manufacturing Employment



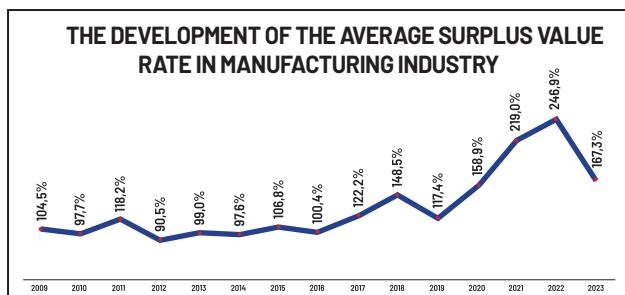
To track the trajectory of exploitation after 2014, one can perform an indicative calculation of the surplus value rate using TURKSTAT's Annual Industry and Service Statistics. Below are the results of such an analysis, based on manufacturing sector added value and personnel cost data from 2009 to 2023.³

The indicative surplus value rate (or exploitation rate) is calculated by subtracting personnel costs from the manufacturing industry's added value to obtain the surplus value mass, then dividing that figure by personnel costs (variable capital). This reveals that while the surplus value rate gradually increased throughout the entire period, it surged dramatically between 2018 and 2023. While the average exploitation rate for 2009–2017 was 104%, it jumped to 176% during 2018–2023.

¹ <https://www.rug.nl/ggdc/valuechain/wiod/>

² <https://www.rug.nl/ggdc/valuechain/wiod/>

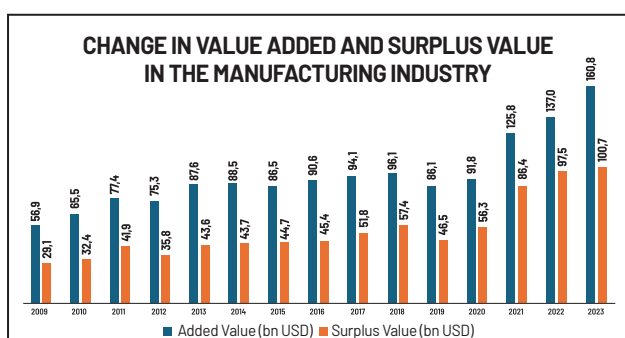
³ For a more accurate—though somewhat outdated—calculation made for the overall economy, see the study by Alper Birdal: <https://gelenek.org/turkiye-ekonomisinde-arti-deger-orani-ve-akpin-sermaye-sinifiyla-imtihani/>



Source: Calculation based on TURKSTAT Annual Industry and Service Statistics (2009-2023).

It is also important to note that as the surplus value rate increased, so did the total value produced—meaning the mass of surplus value also grew. In other words, this is not a case where the surplus value rate increased while the total value remained stagnant or grew only slightly; both metrics grew substantially.

Specifically, between 2018 and 2023, the value added in the manufacturing sector increased by 67% (in USD), while the mass of surplus value grew by 75%. Over the broader period of 2009-2023, these figures rose by 182% and 246%, respectively.



Source: Calculation based on TURKSTAT Annual Industry and Service Statistics (2009-2023)

However, several limitations should be considered when interpreting surplus value rate calculations:

- The study's reliance on input-output tables may misrepresent current realities in the manufacturing industry due to shortcomings in capital stock accounting.
- Since 2000, value measurement has become more problematic due to privatization, liberalization, the shift of surplus value realization to non-manufacturing sectors due to increasingly fragmented production. (It is also important to consider the resurgence of informal employment over the past decade in this context.)
- Evidence suggests that part of the value added is transferred abroad without being captured in official accounts. For example, despite significant changes in production capacity, domestic input contribution ratios, and product composition, the value-added ratios in high-export sectors like automotive and white goods have remained nearly constant.

Turkey's position as one of the countries with the highest exploitation rates globally is underpinned by a deep and multifaceted systemic deterioration. An examination of manufacturing sub-sectors supports this "multidimensionality," revealing both high exploitation rates and rapid increases across almost all sectors.

Surplus Value Rates in Selected Manufacturing Sub-sectors			
Sector	Average Surplus Value Rate (2009-2017)	Average Surplus Value Rate (2018-2023)	Difference Between Periods
Food	92.5%	155.2%	62.7
Textile	106.6%	168.4%	61.8
Apparel	43.0%	56.1%	13.2
Chemicals	202.6%	398.1%	195.4
Glass-Ceramics-Cement	128.0%	168.7%	40.7
Iron-Steel and Other Metals	168.6%	377.2%	208.6
Electrical Equipment (e.g. Appliances)	107.3%	161.0%	53.7
Automotive	119.4%	198.6%	79.2
Manufacturing Average	104.1%	176.3%	72.2

Source: Calculation based on TURKSTAT Annual Industry and Service Statistics (2009-2023).

One noteworthy phenomenon is the convergence of surplus value rates across sectors that vary significantly in capital and technology intensity, and that face different domestic and international market dynamics. This suggests the presence of overarching factors such as monopolization in various forms, and state-supported protectionist mechanisms benefiting capital. Since 2018, these include rapid depreciation of the Turkish lira, export incentives, the ability to pass rising costs onto prices, investment-driven production capacity increases financed at low or even zero interest rates, and of course, wage suppression.

Yet, developments based on the unique dynamics of each sector are also notable:

In labor-intensive sectors, migrant, child, and female workers are employed at extremely low wages for long hours.

In capital-intensive sectors that rely heavily on the overexploitation of natural resources, growth is driven by aggressive export strategies.

In technologically advanced sectors, there is intensive exploitation of skilled and technical labor.

This grim picture—rooted in the devastation of national resources and the severe exploitation of millions of workers—is the product of the dictatorship of capital. The mainstream economic claim that low productivity is Turkey's core problem is clearly a fallacy. On the contrary, the working class in Turkey is achieving the impossible relative to the country's infrastructure, expanding surplus value production within an exploitation cycle that arguably surpasses the limits of the existing means of production. In "growing Turkey", it is the working class that is endlessly losing.

The powerful message of this exploitation picture to those who create all wealth is clear: "Rise up".

Manufacturing Industry in Turkey with Figures



2X

INCREASE ON THE RATE OF EXPLOITATION IN THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

In the last seven years covering the period between 2017 and 2024 the rate of surplus value in the manufacturing industry has more than doubled. During the period mentioned employment growth was limited to 16% whilst GDP grew by 35% and manufacturing production by 30%. The real unit wage index for Turkey fell by more than 30%.



1 million

EXPANDING IN MANUFACTURING WORKERS POPULATION

In the last seven years the number of manufacturing workers reached 5 million with 1 million additional employment that the majority is based on the young and female workers. This transformation expresses there is a dynamic proletariat providing significant opportunities for class struggle in Turkey.



31%

THE MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT OVER TOTAL

The employment of manufacturing industry is 31% of total employment except for agriculture implying Turkey has one of the highest rates among OECD countries. That high manufacturing employment rate is also one of the indicators of the existence of a developed and sophisticated mechanism of exploitation. As of April 2025, the number of workers in the manufacturing industry exceeded 5 million people.



500

NUMBER OF LEADING EXPLOITERS

The leading manufacturing corporations also known as the leading exploiters, listed in the first 500 manufacturing companies by İstanbul Chamber of Industry, have 41.1% of all manufacturing revenue. Evaluating as companies within the same capital group are considered together, it reveals that only a couple of hundred capitalists extorted the enormous surplus value created by the working class.



38%

THE RATE OF EXPLOITATION

In the period between 2017 and 2023 the average rate of surplus value or the exploitation rate in the manufacturing industry was nearly 170%. That rate means a worker gains only 38% of the total value they created which was much lower for some industries.



USD 246 bn

MANUFACTURED EXPORTS: THE STRONG VALUE CHAIN OR EXCESSIVE DEPENDENCY

The exports' share in manufacturing production is over 40% due to Turkey being one of the significant elements of the Global Value Chains, especially in the EU-centered GVC's. The amount of manufactured exports approaching USD 250 billion in 2024 also stimulates a huge amount of raw material and intermediate goods import and external debt. Through those two channels, trade and finance mechanisms, it is observed that Turkey's dependence on this chain within the imperialist system is deepening.

Highlights from Turkish Foreign Policy

Antalya Diplomacy Forum: Turkey's Expanding Regional Ambitions

The fourth Antalya Diplomacy Forum took place between April 11–13 under the theme “Reclaiming Diplomacy in a Fragmented World.” Despite minimal Western interest, the event saw significant participation from African delegations. The forum largely centered on the rhetoric of a multipolar world, with its main session titled “Search for Partnerships in the Era of Multipolarization.” Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan underscored Ankara’s goal: “Turkey pledges to manage multipolarity not through competition, but with wisdom.”

Promoted heavily under the

banner of “more dialogue, more diplomacy,” the forum painted Turkey as a torchbearer for global cooperation. Fidan described this posture as a “non-Western vision for global governance,” though critics argue it masks the AKP government’s neo-Ottomanist and imperialist ambitions – portraying Turkey as a benevolent regional power while actively pursuing influence in war-torn, impoverished areas, especially nearby.

President Erdoğan reinforces this image with populist slogans like “a fairer world is possible” and “the world is bigger than five,” referencing the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. However, such rhetoric also exposes the hypocrisy of the

AKP government. While praising HTS’s takeover of Syrian territory as the “December 8 Revolution” and branding Israel a terrorist state, Ankara’s actions in Syria remain visibly aligned with the regime-change and fragmentation agenda long pursued by the UK, the US, and Israel.

Three Fronts in Turkey-Europe Relations

Turkey’s relations with Europe recently evolved on three significant fronts:

1. Russia-Ukraine Mediation

Istanbul has once again emerged as a potential venue for peace talks. Although both Putin and Zelensky, as well as Trump, pointed to Turkey as a host for the negotiations, an “imbalance” between the delegations prevented the meeting from taking place as planned on May 15. As of the morning of May 16—when this publication went to press—uncertainty remained, though the talks were still expected to begin later that day. The flurry of diplomacy, coinciding with the NATO Foreign Ministers’ meeting hosted by Turkey in Antalya, appears to have broadened Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan’s engagement not only with NATO but also on issues concerning European security.

2. Cyprus Tensions and Central Asia

Recent developments shook both Turkish politics and foreign policy. Three Turkic state’s appointment of ambassadors to Republic of Cyprus and Kazakhstan’s, as one of those three states, remarks supporting Cypriot territorial integrity suggest European efforts to draw Central Asia into its geopolitical orbit. Although Ankara avoided strong statements, it met with Northern Cyprus officials – officially for economic talks. However, the timing coincided with renewed scrutiny of corruption scandals involving





Northern Cypriot businessman Halil Falyalı – a very dark figure and it is said that he possesses information that could put the Turkish government in a difficult position – and associate Cemil Önal, who were murdered, prompting speculation.

Simultaneously, growing ties between Damascus and Nicosia could be seen as a challenge to Turkey's influence in Syria, particularly from the Eastern Mediterranean axis.

3. Effect of March 19

Following the arrest of İstanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu – Erdoğan's key rival – EU-Turkey tensions escalated. Germany vetoed a Eurofighter jet sale to Turkey, and the European Parliament released a report Ankara labeled "distorted and prejudiced." In response, Fidan quipped that far-right movements wouldn't be rising in Europe "if Turkey were a member". On the other hand, Europe's focus on democracy in Turkey is hardly convincing. Europe, a region where fascist movements have risen, is itself controversial on this matter. Ultimately, it is well known that economic relations and interests are what truly shape the course of relations between Turkey and Europe.

Active Diplomacy on the Syria Front

The Turkey-Syria equation, amid ongoing negotiations, is entering a phase marked by new uncertainties and turbulence.

Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan consistently signals that Turkey is ready to take on a greater role in Syria. However, as is well known, Turkey is just one of many actors in Syria. The multi-actor structure, along with the conflicting and overlapping interests of imperial powers and the emergence of new dynamics during the solution process in the Kurdish issue, make the situation increasingly delicate.

The existence of a Kurdish autonomous region in Syria has always been one of Turkey's red lines. In addition, Israel's advances and its relationship with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have put the AKP government in a difficult position both in foreign and domestic politics since HTS (Hayat Tahrir al-Sham) came to power. Although the solution process has made significant progress, the status of the Kurdish region in Syria remains unresolved, especially in the context of discussions around a possible expansion of Turkey's borders.

The US's relationship with Syria is also directly linked to how much room Turkey will have to operate in the region. During a meeting between Trump and Ahmed al-Sharaa in Riyadh, it was reported that Trump requested the Syrian government take responsibility for prisons currently under SDF control, which hold ISIS detainees. While this move appears to align with Turkey's demands, it raises the question of what Turkey may have offered the US in return.

Israel-Palestine and Turkey's Quiet Mediation

While tensions between Turkey and Israel persist, Fidan has subtly taken on a mediator role in the Palestine issue. During a visit to Doha, he pressured Hamas to make concessions in ceasefire negotiations, which is argued to be at Trump's request. Meanwhile, Trump's inflammatory remarks about Gaza being "prime real estate" went mostly ignored in Turkish media until a pro-government newspaper published a piece exploring the "logic" of Palestinian relocation by "playing devil's advocate". This sudden public interest raises concerns about where the AKP might stand on such proposals – likely depending on how events unfold in Syria.

The Story of Özgür Özel: Climbing the Ladder of Leadership After March 19

Özgür Özel, the Chairman of the Republican People's Party (CHP), has recently been one of the leading figures in bourgeois politics in Turkey. As he heads the long-standing main opposition party, which emerged as the top party in the recent elections, this may seem like a natural observation. However, in the context of Turkey's past 20 years of very-recent history, it is quite extraordinary for the opposition not only to set the agenda in bourgeois politics but also to lead it.

The context of this situation is actually related to what has happened to another political figure: Ekrem İmamoğlu, the CHP Mayor of Istanbul.

The process the opposition has dubbed the March 19 "coup" centers on the arrest of Istanbul's Metropolitan Mayor, district mayors, and other officials on various charges. It started with the annulment of İmamoğlu's university diploma – a requirement for presidential candidacy – effectively sidelining Erdoğan's strongest potential rival. The judiciary's swift action, seemingly aligned with political directives, suggests serious legal and political implications. Yet the accusations against İmamoğlu might make a large section of people say "no way, such a candidate" and may trivialise the illegality in the annulment of the diploma. However, thus far, the process seems to have strengthened support for İmamoğlu, with signs of skepticism emerging—even within the AKP base—regarding the accusations against him.

At the same time, public distrust in the judiciary and the weak evidence revealed so far don't strengthen the government's hand. Much of the corruption in the country ultimately circles back to those in power.

A further notable point is that this operation has coincided with



the "solution process," surprisingly led by the fascist party MHP. This coincidence has even led some AKP circles to speculate that İmamoğlu operation was launched to sabotage the "process" and disrupt the conciliatory atmosphere it required.

What may surprise some readers is the unexpected strength of the political operation: within the CHP and the broader opposition, there are people who – for various reasons – are actually comfortable with İmamoğlu being disqualified, and some even openly support his removal from the scene. Certain nationalist-leaning opposition figures have added fuel to this sentiment with direct attacks.

Despite this, the CHP as a whole – both officially and in practice – has rallied behind İmamoğlu. Since March 19, the party has shown an intensity and sharpness not seen in recent years. While all this activity appears to focus on defending their "strong candidate," the one who has truly benefited politically is CHP Chairman Özgür Özel.

Özel is now stepping into a more assertive role, making the kind of bold moves that both mainstream opposition voters and the broader public – who are frustrated with

the ruling bloc – have long hoped for. In doing so, he is taking the initiative. In contrast to the earlier "normalization" approach – which involved the opposition acting as if everything was fine, in line with the expectations of the bourgeoisie—Özel's assertive stance has begun to position him as a kind of heroic figure in the eyes of many.

Since these are part of a broader context relevant to our topic, let's now turn to CHP Chairman Özgür Özel without getting too caught up in the details.

But first, a few words about the CHP.

The CHP, founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, began as the central force of the 1923 Republic but gradually lost its dominance with the shift to a multi-party system and the rise of competing political forces. Over time, it adapted to changing class dynamics by aligning with popular movements and embracing a more reformist image, marked by the "left of center" turn initiated by İsmet İnönü. Though still a bourgeois party with strong ties to the state, the CHP adopted the label of social democracy, despite not fully aligning with Western models of reformist class parties.

In summary, the CHP should also be viewed as a “state party.”

Sometimes, details can be eye-opening.

The CHP owns 28% of İş Bank (established as an instrument of the Republic’s state-led and state-supported industrialization/capitalist development policies), a legacy from Atatürk that gives the party chairman the authority to appoint four of eleven board members, granting influence over both the bank and its subsidiary, Şişecam. While the focus isn’t on the party’s financial resources, this arrangement highlights how the party leadership — especially the chairman — can be shaped by decisions within the state-capital nexus rather than internal party dynamics. Leadership changes within the CHP and its predecessor SHP have often reflected external power structures more than grassroots party processes.

Of course, we cannot say that the CHP leader is simply appointed as a state bureaucrat. That would also be problematic in terms of the roles assigned to the CHP. However, when we look at the individuals who have served as CHP chairman and examine how they fell or rose, we can sense that there is a state/capitalist logic at the helm.

Let’s turn back to Özgür Özel.

He has risen as a polemical, articulate, and somewhat educated

political figure—one of many examples within the CHP. Erdoğan, referencing his profession and somewhat “artisan background,” calls him “the pharmacist.” In replacing former president Kılıçdaroğlu, Özel was selected as a figure who could serve a broad coalition and, most importantly, one who would not overshadow İmamoğlu’s candidacy, which has been carefully waiting to gain strength while avoiding early depletion. An extension of this is that Özel was perceived as a figure who did not seem particularly strong against Erdoğan and was unable to perform the typical “neighborhood bully” role that is often seen in Turkish bourgeois politics.

As mentioned, while İmamoğlu was preparing for “the final battle”, it was a favorable scenario that the CHP leader did not overshadow him. For this reason, no one focused on Özel being a “weak leader”.

After March 19, Özel emerged, swiftly leading rallies, marches, and press conferences, showing a “longed-for toughness.” In just a few weeks, he seemed to gain a “leadership” quality that appeared almost engineered. His rise, which seems to be shaped largely by the needs of capital and the state, made him the fiery leader needed in response to the government’s operation against İmamoğlu.

Interestingly, while Özel’s resistance elevates him, it distances

İmamoğlu from the candidacy. The public supports İmamoğlu, but Özel seems prepared for an honorable defeat and a potential shift in leadership. The idea circulating in AKP circles that “Özel is preparing his own candidacy” hints at the ongoing power struggle, with İmamoğlu likely taking steps to protect his position.

Let’s add another twist to the action movie atmosphere we’ve been witnessing: we had already hinted that the sabotage targeting İmamoğlu’s candidacy was not carried out solely by actors within the AKP circles. It’s no secret that certain factions within the CHP, which maintain specific ties within the state, consider İmamoğlu a threat. These factions also share the intention of “get rid of him” in the recent phase. Moreover, Erdoğan’s repeated claims that “the tip-offs come directly from CHP members” are not merely examples of his usual crude jabs — they likely reflect a deeper truth.

While Özel rose and increased his popularity on the resistance platforms, standing “shoulder to shoulder with his comrade Ekrem İmamoğlu” against the government’s attacks, the actual result of these assaults was the loss of ground for İmamoğlu and the liberal coalition within the CHP.

So, can Özel’s leadership pave the way for a CHP (or CHP-centered) government that will bring an end to the AKP era?

Turkish politics is crowded with self-proclaimed analysts and forecasters — more reminiscent of stock market or horse racing commentators than political thinkers. Let’s not join their ranks. Still, from a theoretical standpoint, one thing can be said: The needs of capital may require the CHP to stay in opposition, primarily to absorb and diffuse pressure from the working class. After all, while carrying out this consistent role, it would be both difficult and risky for the CHP to govern the country as a party representing capitalist interests.



On PKK's Dissolution Decision

With the PKK's announcement of its dissolution on May 12, a new chapter has opened in Turkey's political and social landscape.

In a related statement, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkey emphasized its opposition to the essence of the PKK's declaration, noting that it aligns with the framework previously outlined by Bahçeli (leader of the fascist MHP), Öcalan (PKK leader), and officials from the ruling AKP. TKP underlined that the historical trajectory of these developments indicates the AKP's

intent to carry forward its 23-year-old policies into a new stage.

TKP identified this new phase of the solution process as the collapse of the narrative that the "Kurdish question" is a separate or more fundamental issue than the broader problems facing Turkey. Once again, it has become evident that no major social or national issue can be resolved without a commitment to socialism and a determined struggle to dismantle capitalism.



TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan discussed the dissolution decision in all its dimensions from a class-based perspective on the program Communist Perspective, broadcast on Sol TV. You can watch the full recording of the program, aired on May 12, with English subtitles by clicking the [link](#).



TKP on May Day: Mass Rallies All Over Turkey

TKP took the streets across the country for May Day with massive blocs. In 30 cities, thousands of workers marched under TKP banner with the slogan of "We do not kneel before the capitalists or tyrants".

TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan gave a speech in the demonstrations in İstanbul. He invoked the slogan, "Factories, fields, political power—everything

shall belong to workers!", and continued: "That last part—political power—is the first thing we must claim. For our emancipation, we, raising our flags here higher and shouting 'Long live May Day!', must seize political power."

You may visit TKP website for more details from TKP's May Day demonstrations [in Turkey](#) and [in Europe](#).

NATO, Get Out of Our Country!

NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs met in Antalya on May 14-15.

In the statement by TKP with the title "[You are not welcome here!](#)", it is declared that "the day we rid ourselves of all of you — your bombs, your bases, your spies, and your collaborators — is not far away."



Interviews with Okuyan in Netherlands and Spain

An interview with TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan was featured in the May issue of Manifest, the newspaper of the New Communist Party of the Netherlands. The discussion covers a range of topics, including the AKP's governance crisis, the protests in

Turkey, and TKP's position on the republic. The interview is also available on the Manifest podcast.

In the May edition of Nuevo



Rumbo, the monthly publication of the Communist Party of the Workers of Spain, Okuyan addresses the protests in

Turkey following the events of March 19th and outlines TKP's stance on the issue.

Great Interest in The Republic and the Communists

TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan's interview book *The Republic and the Communists*, published by Kırmızı Kedi Publishing House, met readers in April and quickly reached its third edition.

In this interview, which followed TKP's 14th Congress decision to "break away from the 'left' influenced by the CHP and the Kurdish nationalist movement," Okuyan presents TKP's

class-based assessments on the republic, the Kurdish question, anti-capitalism, and the bourgeois revolution in Turkey. The book will soon be translated into English and made accessible to readers worldwide.

For more on the background of TKP's decision to "break away from the left," you can visit the first issue of [Voice of TKP](#).



TKP On the 80th Anniversary of the Great Victory

TKP Central Committee issued a statement on the 80th anniversary of the Great Victory against fascism, titled as **"We must achieve victory once again!"**

The statement emphasized that, 80 years later, fascist movements has once again been brought to the forefront in line with the interests of the capitalist class. And it salutes the communist militants, the Red Army, Soviet citizens, and Stalin, who led the struggle against fascism to victory.

TKP Organization in Germany took part in the commemoration at the Soviet War Memorial in Berlin, marking the anniversary of the Red Army's victory over Nazi Germany



and the liberation of Europe from fascism.

In addition, TKP Organization in Germany co-hosted European Communist Action Conference in Berlin on the same theme, in collaboration with the KKE Organization in Germany.

Visit to Europe by TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan



Okuyan met with Dimitris Koutsoumbas, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Greece, in Athens, and with Astor Garcia, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Workers of Spain, in Madrid. During these bilateral meetings, Okuyan emphasized the urgency for communists to respond swiftly and decisively to the regional and international developments. The parties also shared insights into the ongoing struggles and political dynamics within their respective countries. Okuyan also attended the mass rally organised by the KKE on the 80th anniversary of the Great Victory against fascism, and together with KKE General Secretary Dimitris Koutsoumbas, laid a wreath at the Kaisariani Shooting Range where 200 communists who fought against fascism were shot on May 1, 1944. Okuyan's visit concluded with a meeting held with the TKP Organization in Berlin.



The Fight Against the Monopolies

Turkey's largest industrial company, TÜPRAŞ (Turkish Petroleum Refineries), which was privatized and sold to Koç Holding at the cost of few years' worth of profits, is now facing a workers' struggle against exploitative conditions. In solidarity with the workers, TKP organizations continue to provide support to ensure



the success of their fight. Through the TÜPRAŞ case, TKP is actively raising awareness about the detrimental effects of privatization on society and continues to claim that "TÜPRAŞ must be immediately socialized."

Another target for TKP was Çalık Holding. After an employee, who had been denied compensation for 10 years following his dismissal, was beaten to death by the company, TKP organized protests in front of the holding's offices in two major cities, İstanbul and Ankara. The protests called for holding the capitalists that murder workers to account.