

# Annual Report



# 2018



# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

© Freedom Research Association, 2019

in collaboration with Friedrich Naumann Stiftung

## Freedom Research Association

📍 Turgut Reis Cad. No: 15/4, Mebusevleri, Çankaya, Ankara

☎ +903122132400 ✉ info@ozgurlukarastirmalari.com

📘 ozgurlukarastirmalari 🐦 ozgurlukar

Design:  
**Eksi Kitaplar**  
eksikitaplar.com

## CONTENTS

FOREWORD .....	5
2018 IN A NUTSHELL .....	8
VISION AND MISSION .....	11
CORPORATE STRATEGY .....	12
GENERAL PROCESS IN THE FRA RESEARCH .....	14
EXECUTIVE BOARD .....	16
ADVISORY BOARDS .....	17
EVENTS .....	22
Colloquia .....	23
Conferences .....	26
Roundtable Meetings .....	27
FreedomTalks@FRA .....	28
PUBLICATIONS .....	30
Liberal Perspective: Commentary .....	31
Liberal Perspective: Analysis .....	32
Liberal Perspective: Report .....	33
IN THE NEWS .....	36
FRIENDS OF FRA .....	40
FRA TEAM ABROAD .....	46
PARTNERS .....	54

## **FOREWORD**

Dear Friend of Liberty,

We left a busy year behind as Freedom Research Association and we've seen many tense events in 2018.

In the beginning of the 2018, the operation "Zeytin Dalı" was launched against the armed Kurdish groups in the Northern Syria. This operation showed us that a really tough year is ahead of us. The General Election of Turkey 2018, the Pastor Andrew Brunson crisis and the historical fall of the Turkish lira against the American Dollar /Euro were the most important issues in the domestic policy this year.

After the change of the government system, the first general election of Turkey has been held on 24th of June 2018. To hold an election under the State of Emergency sparked serious controversy about the freedom of speech, fair and competitive elections and the increasing power of the executive branch.

The first President of the new government system has become Recep Tayyip Erdoğan who is also the president of the ruling government party, Justice and Development Party (AKP). The new government system has created a dozen regulations which made the president and the executive branch much stronger than the legislative and the judiciary branches. To



appoint the ministers, the members of the higher courts and an indefinite number of vice presidents are now among the authorities of the president. The annual state budget, previously set by the parliament, is now drafted by the president. However, it must be approved by the parliament. If it is rejected, the previous year's budget will be used with an increase of the revaluation rate.. Therefore, now the government system must be watched carefully to establish a functioning checks and balances mechanism.

The State of Emergency was extended 7 times and is finally abolished on 19th of July 2018. The executive branch had extraordinary powers throughout the State of Emergency. The executive branch used the emergency decrees to disable the legislative and judicial branches. After the state of emergency, the expectation was the political agenda going back to usual business along with the power of the executive branch.. However, due to the law numbered 7145, the most dangerous powers of the government under the State of Emergency has been made ordinary regulations for three years. The most worrying implications of this law have been expanding the custody period and the authority of the governors and the power of the public institutions which allows them to suspend all the public servants without any accusation.

The last year has been really threatening for the civil society organizations. Open Society Foundation was forced to withdraw from Turkey because of excessive and unfounded claims about their work in Turkey which they served for 18 years. The international institutions are established legally and their works and budgets are audited by the public authorities. Even so, pro-government media has made hundreds of manipulative and false accusations about them. These news have increased the pressure on the international institutions and their local partners. Moreover, almost every group in Turkey have an international partner, but the pro-government media has targeted only the opponent groups.

One of the most important events of the last year was the emergence of the current economic crisis. After the crisis of the Pastor Brunson, President Trump started to impose sanctions on Turkey.

In a time that all the economies in the world are fragile, having a crisis with the United States has led to a sudden crisis in the Turkey's economy. As a result, the Turkish lira lost %40 of his value against the US dollar and the

gold. Turkish people have suffered from a huge inflation rate and increasing prices.

2018 has been a very dramatic year for our country as well as for the rest of the world. US President Trump has moved the US Embassy in Israel's capital, Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, withdrawn from the nuclear weapons treaty with Iran, re-imposed sanctions on Iran. All these cases with the decision of withdrawal from Syria have created a new anxious wait in our region.

Despite all these difficulties, 2018 has had a few promising cases. For the first time in the United States, a homosexual candidate has been selected as a state governor also two Muslim candidates have been selected as members to the US Congress. For the first time in the history of Saudi Arabia, women gained the right to drive. The first peace talks between the South and North Korea have started.

We have been creating public policy proposals and educating the future generations with the basis of the liberal values to establish the rule of law, pluralistic democracy and to promote the human rights in Turkey since 2014. For the first time in the history of Turkey, our country has been categorised as a "unfree country" by the Freedom House. This means we have been experiencing a time when we need to promote our freedom more than ever.

Dear friend of liberty, we will continue to defend liberties in a principle manner in 2019 as FRA. Your support is crucial for us in this struggle. We hope that your support will continue in 2019. We will work with all our power to be worthy of your support.

Your Sincerely,


Prof. Bican Şahin

Chairman of the Executive Board




# 2018 IN A NUTSHELL


## EVENTS

**3** Colloquiums 

**2** Roundtable Meetings 

**1** Conference 

**2** FreedomTalks @FRA 

**11** Meetings/ Trainings Abroad 


## PUBLICATIONS, MEDIA

**2** Reports 

**1** Analyses 

**1** Commentaries 

**10** Blog Posts 

**3** Media Coverage 





## VISION AND MISSION

Freedom Research Association (FRA) was founded in August 2014 by a group of academics, business people, journalists and legal experts to conduct public policy research with a liberal and scientific approach. FRA envisions a free and prosperous Turkey. The mission of FRA is to promote evidence-based policy making among decision-makers and an informed public debate in Turkey. Freedom Research Association is strongly dedicated to individual liberties, rule of law, peace, fair and competitive markets. We believe that a free and prosperous Turkey can only be founded upon universal human rights, rule of law and a competitive free market economy which deters cronyism. "Institutional Reform" is a key focus area of FRA's research. Main aims of FRA's projects on this area are as follows: To explore the suitable ground on which Turkey's institutions can operate with reference to universal standards To propose necessary reforms which need to be done in processes and structures, based on international best case examples.

for a  
**free**  
society...

for a  
**free**  
society...

## CORPORATE STRATEGY

FRA focuses on universal and scientific ethical standards in its work. They formulate their work as inclusive as possible and in accordance with scientific ethical standards. FRA is strictly independent and non-partisan. In order to protect its independence, FRA doesn't accept public funds from state institutions in accordance with its by-law. Transparency and honesty are taken as the basis both for the internal affairs and public relations.

**The rules that FRA has determined to ensure the quality of its research are as follows:**

- The main aim and the purpose of the research should be clearly explained.
- The method of the study should be well formulated and applied throughout the research.
- The research should provide information/references about the other field works.
- The research should be based on the most current and valid data available.

- The theses suggested in the research should be clear and justified.
- The research should improve the knowledge that exists in the field.
- All researches should bring inclusive policy recommendations.
- The theses proposed in the research and the proposed policy recommendation should be consistent with the method and findings of the research.
- All theses and suggestions should be well explained and the weaknesses /deficiencies of the research (if any) should be indicated.
- The resulting reports should be well structured, clear and understandable.
- The language used in the research reports should be objective, inclusive, constructive and equidistant to different views.
- As long as it does not contradict scientific ethical values and the principles of the FRA, no content of any research is intervened based on freedom of opinion.
- Editorial interventions are the exception to this rule.

for a  
**free**  
society...

# GENERAL PROCESS IN THE FRA RESEARCH



## IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEMS

To bring together the stakeholders who are relevant to the research topic or the researched institution. The content, limitations and method of the research are determined in accordance with the feedback from these discussion(s).

In the research process, the research team guided by a specialist will identify the problems in the field, their causes and their effects and explore international good examples. The results of the research will be presented as a solution to the problem identified at the beginning of the research.

## RESEARCH PROCESS



## ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS TO THE PUBLIC

Organizing a conference, seminar or press conference where the results will be announced to the public. The research team (or its representative) shares the findings and outcomes of the research with the public.

The final report will be shared with the relevant departments of the universities, public institutions and organizations, media companies and relevant non-governmental organizations. Going to the GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF TURKEY to share policy proposals with the MP's

## ADVOCACY





## EXECUTIVE BOARD



**Bican Şahin**  
Prof., Hacettepe University



**Yusuf Ziya Kıvanç**  
Lawyer



**Veli Kondak**  
Publisher



**Seval Yaman**  
Dr., Ankara Social Sciences University

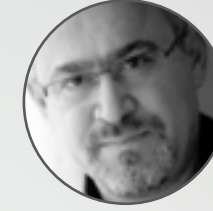


**Erdal Türkkan**  
Prof. Dr.

## NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD



**Mustafa Erdoğan**  
Prof.



**Orhan Kemal Cengiz**  
Lawyer



**Murat Çokgezen**  
Prof., Marmara University



**Erdal Türkkan**  
Prof.



**Mustafa Akyol**  
Journalist-Lawyer



**Nesrin Nas**  
Former MP



**Melih Yürüşen**  
Assist. Prof., Aksaray University

## INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD



**Charles Butterworth**



**Jason Brennan**



**Peter J. Boettke**



**Chandran Kukathas**



**Ali Salman**



**David Schmitz**



**Parth Shah**



**Linda Whetstone**



**Rainer Heufers**



**Timur Kuran**



## RULE OF LAW ACADEMY PROJECT

### **Rule of Law Academy Project**

In the last month of 2017, we launched a new project entitled “Rule of Law Academy.”

The main purpose of this project is to strengthen the foundations of the rule of law in Turkey. The rule of law rises on three pillars: institutions (first level courts, high courts and administrative bodies); rules and regulations; and finally, human capital (judges, prosecutors, lawyers). Turkey’s record of performance is not satisfactory with respect to any of these pillars. In this Project, we will focus on the third pillar, human capital. It is possible to approach to the pillar of human capital from several different angles. One approach may be to train the current judges, prosecutors and lawyers. A second approach may be to train the current students of law who will become judges, prosecutors and lawyers tomorrow. A third approach may be to educate tomorrow’s legal scholars and academics who will educate

for a  
**free**  
society...

for a  
free  
society...

the future generations of judges, prosecutors and lawyers. We will take the third approach which we believe to have the highest added value.

We will bring graduate students of law faculties together with some of the most respected legal scholars of Turkey in a structured colloquium. The participants will be selected on the basis of questionnaires and letters of intent. The selected participants (20 persons) will be sent a reading package prepared by our team of legal scholars. The reading materials will consist of both the classical writings on the matter and writings penned by the team. The colloquiums will last two days. There will be three sessions each day, totalling six sessions. After the completion of the colloquia, the participants will be asked to write a publishable paper on a different aspect of the rule of law. Each participant will be assigned to a scholar. The scholars will give feedback to students. At the end of six months, students will submit their papers. Our team of scholars will encourage and lead students to submit their papers to respected journals for publication. This format will be repeated in four major cities of Turkey.



**Mustafa Erdoğan**  
Prof.



**Ali Rıza Çoban**  
Assoc. Prof.



**Oktay Uygun**  
Prof.



**Günal Kurşun**  
Assist. Prof.



**Kerem Altıparmak**  
Assist. Prof.



**Vahap Coşkun**  
Prof.





## EVENTS



### COLLOQUIA

#### Rule of Law Academy Project - Colloquium in İzmir

The first colloquium of Rule of Law Project was organized in 2017. We visited three different cities this year for other colloquia of the Project.

We were in Izmir on 2-4 March for the second colloquium of Rule of Law Project.

The moderators of the second colloquium were Prof Mustafa Erdoğan and Assist. Prof Günel Kurşun. The participants discussed the principle of the rule of law together with our moderators over the weekend.



for a  
**free**  
society...



### Rule of Law Academy Project - Colloquium in Diyarbakır

We were in Diyarbakır on 6-7 April for the third colloquium of Rule of Law Project.

The moderators of the third colloquium were Prof Mustafa Erdoğan and Prof Vahap Coşkun and Lawyer Veysek Ok. The participants discussed the principle of the rule of law together with our moderators over the weekend.



### Rule of Law Academy Project - Colloquium in Ankara

We were in Ankara on 6-7 May for the fourth colloquium of Rule of Law Project.

The moderators of the fourth colloquium were Prof Mustafa Erdoğan, Asst. Prof Kerem Altıparmak and Assist. Prof Günel Kurşun. The participants discussed the principle of the rule of law together with our moderators over the weekend.

for a  
**free**  
society...

for a  
**free**  
society...

## CONFERENCES



### Mass Surveillance Conference 2018 – #MSConf2018

We organized the conference in Istanbul on 28-29 September with the support of the European Liberal Forum (ELF), Friedrich Naumann Foundation – Turkey (FNF-Turkey), International Democratic Initiative (IDI), International Republican Institute (IRI).

This event provided a forum for the presentation and discussion of potential short-term implications of the use of mass surveillance technologies on the rights and freedoms of individuals, the possible policy infrastructure options that would best respond to privacy vs. security dilemma; acceptability and applicability of surveillance technologies on security issues and how to maintain civil rights, responsibility and individual autonomy in the face of the increased capacity of states to interfere with our lives.

In addition to the above, the conference created an excellent opportunity for networking and established a sustainable network of partner and stakeholder organizations who are already or potentially involved with the conference themes.

## ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS

### Turkey's Economy and the New Economy Program: Opportunities and Impasses

We organized two roundtable meetings in Ankara and İstanbul on 3rd and 24th of November with the support of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation – Turkey (FNF- Turkey) and the International Republican Institute (IRI).

The meetings, which included academics, politicians, journalists and expert economists, were moderated by Dr Nesrin Nas and Prof Murat Çokgezen. At the meeting, the participants discussed the reasons of the current economic crisis, the short and long term solutions and the New Economy Program.

The final report of the meetings will be available on our website and social media accounts in early 2019.



The First Meeting in Ankara



The Second Meeting in İstanbul

tree  
society...

for a  
**free**  
society...

## FreedomTalks@FRA

**Tanju Tosun**  
An Analysis of the Results of  
2018 General Election of Turkey



**Metin Kandemir**  
The Effects of Economic Crisis on  
Public Health and Drug Supply Chain





## PUBLICATIONS

### LIBERAL PERSPECTIVE: COMMENTARY

Commentaries are short articles reflecting a liberal perspective written by our experts, on a public policy related topic, 3-5 pages long.

Last year we published one commentary.

#### 1. *Do We Need Secularism to Experience Freedom of Conscience? Yes, We Do: A Liberal Approach* Prof. Bican Şahin

In this essay Prof. Bican Şahin discusses the need for a secular legal and political realm if individuals experience their freedom of religion and conscience. To this aim, he first discusses the concept of liberty/freedom and provides Isaiah Berlin's distinction between the negative and positive forms of it. Secondly, he presents freedom of conscience and religion as a form of negative liberty. It is argued that this freedom can be enjoyed in the best possible way only in a secular legal/political framework. Thirdly, he discusses whether it is possible to have freedom of conscience in a theocratic system. Finally, he presents a liberal secular utopia where all different conscientious beliefs coexist with one another on the basis of mutual toleration.

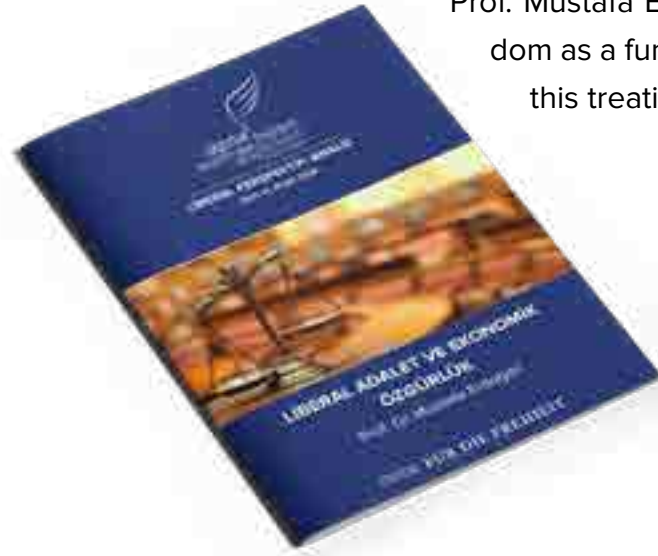




## LIBERAL PERSPECTIVE: ANALYSIS

An analysis is an in-depth investigation of a public-policy issue from a liberal perspective, based on data and research, generally 20-30 pages long. Last year we published two analyses.

### 1. *Liberal Justice and Economic Freedom* Prof. Mustafa Erdoğan



Prof. Mustafa Erdoğan analyzes the economic freedom as a fundamental value of a liberal society in this treatise.

## LIBERAL PERSPECTIVE: REPORT

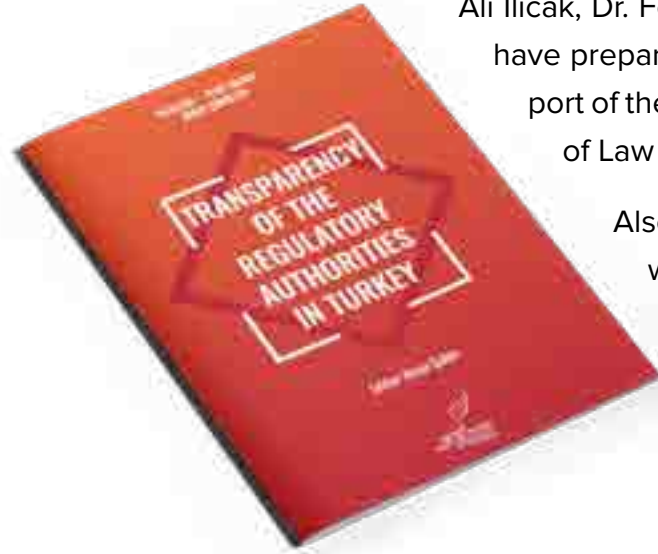
Our reports are generally prepared after a lengthy research process (3-5 months) on a public policy issue and include extensive reform proposals to the government in that particular area. Last year we published two reports.

### 1. *The Economic Freedom in Turkey*

Prof. Murat Çokgezen, Assoc. Prof. Ali Rıza Çoban, Prof. Uğur Emek and Prof. Cengiz Bahçekapılı have prepared the detailed final report of the “Economic Freedom Audit of Turkey”.



## 2. “*Transparency of the Regulatory Authorities: An Analysis of Transparency of Competition Investigations in Turkey*”



Ali İlicak, Dr. Fevzi Toksoy ve Prof. Murat Çokgezen have prepared the English version of the final report of the “Regulatory Authorities and the Rule of Law in Turkey Project” .

Also this report published with a foreword by Prof. Vilenas Vadapalas, the Former Judge of the General Court of the European Union.



## IN THE NEWS

Our work has been covered in the media. A few selected news:

Our Economic Freedom Center prepared a statement about the reasons of the current economic crisis based on the last economic freedom report. The full statement has been on the T24!



The authors of our “Freedom of Press in Turkey” 2015 and 2016 reports have been featured in Financial Times, on the recent sale of Dogan Media Group.

The past “Freedom of Press in Turkey” reports can be accessed from our social media accounts and website.



Prominent economy author Barış Soydan who attended our roundtable discussion titled “Turkey’s Economy and the New Economy Program: Opportunities and Impasses” and has featured the event in his blog on T24!





## Check and Balances Network (CBN)

### “Imagine Turkey”

The Imagine Turkey Project was completed last year. In 2018, the final report of the project has been published by the secretariat of the Checks and Balances Network (CBN). Imagine Turkey project collected the future visions of 500+ citizens from all walks of life around Turkey. We are a member of CBN since 2015 and organized two “Imagine Turkey” workshops in our office to reflect the Turkish liberals’ 2030 vision within the framework of this project.



FRIENDS OF FRA

for a  
freedom

After the final report of the Imagine Turkey Project, our project coordinator İsrafil Özkan, who is also a local coordinator for CBN, carried out various advocacy activities in Ankara.



### Local Coordinatorship of CBN

İsrafil Özkan was at the Holiday INN Hotel – Ankara on 21st-23rd September to participate in the training program organized by the CBN to improve the capacities of its member NGO's and local coordinators.

for a



### **FRA's 4th Anniversary Reception**

Our 4th Anniversary Reception hosted renowned scholars, journalists, business people and friends of FRA. Our keynote speaker was economist and Former member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey Dr. Nesrin Nas. FRA's anniversary receptions are now our flagship event series to celebrate our birthday with the friends of liberty.





## FRA TEAM ABROAD

As part of an international network of more than 480 classical liberal think tanks all around the world, FRA has a global perspective and sense of cooperation with its peer organizations. One of the key targets is to become a competent research institute with considerable human and physical capital. For that reason, FRA team attends numerous events all around the globe, as participants, speakers or contributors, to increase the Association's capacity. Here's a quick snapshot:



### TransatlanticLab – The Policy Network

Our Executive Director Medeni Sungur participated in the “Roundtable Meeting: Transatlantic Lab - The Policy Network” organized by the European Liberal Forum (ELF) in Washington, DC between 15th – 18th July 2018. Within the framework of this program, he moderated a session on the “AI and Competitiveness” with the participation of digital policy experts from DC and European politicians.

for a  
free  
society...



for a  
**free**  
society...



**European Liberal Forum**

Our Executive Director Medeni Sungur was in Denmark to attend the European Liberal Forum organized by the Atlas Network and Center for Political Studies between the 29th – 30th of May 2018.



**Promoting Tolerance 2018**

Promoting Tolerance'18 International Seminar which is one of the annual event of the FNF was held in Sibiu, Romania between the 28th June – 1st July.

for a  
**free**  
society...



### Future Values Training

The European Neighbourhood Council (ENC) in cooperation with the Economic Development Foundation (IKV) and with the support of Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF) Turkey and the Swedish Consulate in Istanbul, organised a one-week training programme entitled “Future values training: European sentiment in Turkey among opinion-shapers and youth leaders”, which took place between the 3rd and the 8th of December 2018 at the premises of IKV in Brussels.



### Summer University

Our President Prof. Bican Şahin was in Tahrán, Iran to attend Summer University, organized by Islam and Liberty Network which took place between the 17th and the 22nd of July 2018.

### The Foundations of Liberalism

Prof. Bican Şahin was in Athens, Greece to attend the one week seminar entitled “The Foundations of Liberalism” organised by the Center for Liberal Studies (KEFİM) which took place between the 17th and the 22nd of October 2018.



### Liberal Forum and Freedom Dinner 2018

Prof. Bican Şahin participated in the “Liberal Forum and Freedom Dinner 2018” organized by the Atlas Network in New York between 7th – 10th November 2018.

Bican Şahin made a presentation entitled “Defending Freedom in an Unfree World” in the Liberal Forum.





### How to Administer a European Liberal Forum (ELF) Project?

ELF organised a training on “How to administer and ELF project”. This training took place between 18th -21st March, in Brussels, Belgium.

Our Project Coordinator İbrahim Özkan participated in the training to prepare the FRA team for the upcoming ELF projects.



### Think Tank Essentials - Europe

25 think tank professionals from 23 different organizations in 19 different countries across Europe gathered together in Brussels/Belgium for a Think Tank Essentials training.

The training was hosted by Atlas Network in partnership with the Brussels-based European Centre for International Political Economy (ECIPE) between 18th – 21st September 2018.



### Moderation: Facilitation and Program Desing

The Moderation and Facilitation seminar is aimed at supporting members of NGO's, Political Parties, Think Tanks and other organisations who are responsible for the planning and implementation of training and development sessions and events to:

Consider refreshed ways to create a liberal environment in training sessions and events, where an audience is able to participate fully and think well for themselves and deepen their knowledge of, and ability to, apply innovative, relevant and fun facilitation methodologies leading to interactive events and learning sessions.

The seminar took place in Gummersbach/Germany between 11th – 24th February 2018 and our Project Coordinator İbrahim Özkan attended to the seminar.



### Summer Seminar

The Institute for Economic Studies Europe (IES – Europe) organized its traditional seminar together with the Institute for Market Economics, the seminar in Bansko/Bulgaria was a great opportunity for students to acquire knowledge on the foundations of liberty.

From FRA team, Project Coordinator İbrahim Özkan participated in the training between 22nd – 28th July.



# PARTNERS





# ANNUAL REPORT 2018



📍 Turgut Reis Cad. No: 15/4, Mebusevleri, Çankaya, Ankara

☎ +90311213 24 00 ✉ info@ozgurlukarastirmalari.com

f ozgurlukarastirmalari 🐦 ozgurlukar