

# We are hopeful for the future



Dilek GAPPI / Pg. 3

■ IZMİR Journalists' Association has been working for 76 years to increase the reputation of the journalism profession, to fight for independence and to enhance the strength of its colleagues. Freedom of the Press means freedom of thought and the dignity of being human for us. Journalists are also witnesses of history. While writing the facts, they also fight for democracy, human rights, and a fair and equitable future. Today, we stand firm against the oppression and domination that we still feel intensely. At the same time, we work for the 'personal and democratic' rights of our colleagues, and we carry out important studies and projects.

# 'Organised Journalists and Strong Solidarity for Press Freedom Project'



■ ORGANISED Journalists and Strong Solidarity for Press Freedom Project' is a support and meeting point of unemployed and freelance journalists. Besides the project aims to contribute to the development of a favourable environment for the right of the freedom of information and press in Turkey. The Project started in January 2019 for the duration of 44 months. The project also aims to improve journalists' access to justice by means of legal aid; monitoring of cases; prison visits; campaigns and monitoring reports. Pg...5

# SOLIDARITY FOR PRESS FREEDOM

JUNE 13, 2022

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# BREATH-TAKING STRUGGLE



The Turkish press continues its respectable struggle despite the problems it is experiencing. Turkish journalists never give up the goal of doing journalism according to universal press criteria

Developing technology and digital opportunities also provide new openings for the Turkish press, while increasingly strengthened press organizations and collaborations enhance solidarity and increase hope

■ TURKEY has been one of the most problematic countries in terms of freedom of press and expression for many years. Due to the pressure exerted by the government on the media and journalists, journalism has become one of the most difficult professions to do. Journalists in prison, journalists who have been tried, and detained, newspapers lacking official advertising income, and television channels that are silenced with high fines. Journalism is trying to exist in this vortex. Pg... 2

## Turkish Press with Figures

According to the official figures, 960 daily publications and 860 magazines are published continuously in Turkey as mainstream and local newspapers.

There are 15,485 press card holder journalists in Turkey. Of this, 5,709 are permanent press card holders.

- 23,907 of the employees registered in the "Press, Publication and Journalism" line of work are engaged in journalistic activities.
- According to TÜİK data, the general unemployment rate is 12% in 2021, while the unemployment rate among journalism graduates is 18.3%.
- The relatively high unemployment rate continues to put pressure on the job and income security of working journalists.
- Although the number of journalists holding an official press card has increased compared to last year, only 68.72 percent of registered journalists have a card. Together with uninsured or self-employed journalists, this rate is falling even more.
- As well as obstacles to editorial independence, the economic and social rights of journalists are also alarming.
- Despite all the obstacles to unionization, TGS has succeeded in securing a majority in seven media organizations over the past year, three of which operate internationally and four at the national level.

## The biggest in Turkey International Press Center

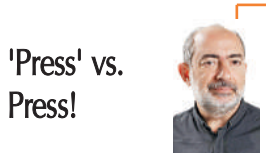
THE largest International Press Center in Turkey has been established with the cooperation of Izmir Journalists Association and Izmir Metropolitan Municipality. There is a conference room, a studio, working areas for freelance journalists, an international media communication office, a laboratory and work offices. In the Press Center, journalists are taught techniques for preparing audiovisual videos with the studio, while trainings and conferences are held for them to capture the technology of the day and to become acquainted with the state of the art equipments. Pg..7

## IZMİR JOURNALISTS' ASSOCIATION HAS BEEN STANDING TALL FOR 76 YEARS

■ THE Izmir Journalists' Association, founded in 1946, has been working for 76 years to increase the reputation of the press profession, to fight for independence, and to increase the power of its colleagues. Pg...3



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'Press' vs. Press! Umur TALU ■ PAGE 3



Never Hopeless or Desperate Pınar TÜRENÇ ■ PAGE 4



Organization And Solidarity L. Doğan TILIÇ ■ PAGE 6



New Social Media Regulation Altuğ AKIN ■ PAGE 6



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"Peace journalism" Sevdâ ALANKUŞ ■ PAGE 7

# FREEDOM OF PRESS IN TÜRKİYE

## THE JOURNALISTS STAND UPON THEIR UPHILL STRUGGLE

**THE** Turkish Journalists' Union (TGS) publishes every year a report on government intervention in the press freedom and its sources. The discussions about the data provided in the latest annual report present the broadest perspective of the press freedom in the country within the period of 2021-2022.

The number of the official press card holders has been increased within the last years; nevertheless it is seen that this figure is still considerably lower than the number of the actual registered journalists in the sector. Moreover, the problem of obtaining the card for the freelance journalists stays unsolved yet. For these reasons, the International Press Card (IPC) comes forward as an alternative option among the journalists. Unemployment and precarious employment among the journalists continue to pose a threat to the economic and social rights. Low salary, overworking, and impediments to unionization are some of the important factors against the struggle for the press freedom.

Against all odds, the persistent editorial independence in the sector and the increase in the amount of the journalists fighting under the umbrella of a Union for their economic and social rights are the main reasons to remain hopeful for the future. The BBC strike, which took place and completed with success as the first strike after 2009 within the sector, and the achievement of signing a collective labor agreement in Cumhuriyet (an important daily newspaper) after 18 years, provide guidance for those journalists that are in search of their rights.

### DESIRE FOR INTERVENTION

For the purpose of prevention of violence and protection of journalists exposed to any kind of violence, the adoption of the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) especially by various organized media workplaces serves as a model for, and contributes substantially to, the efforts of adapting such awareness within the media sector.

The fact that the investigations of the cases of violence against journalists remain long-drawn-out,



The Press Freedom Report published annually by the Journalists' Union of Turkey sheds light on the facts of the Turkish Media

and that the aggressors are released unpunished constitutes the leading motive for the physical violence against local press.

Despite the fact that the rightfulness and lawfulness of journalism are justified by the court decisions as a result of individual applications, the decisions of the Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights are disregarded. Public interest news is blocked under the pretext of attacking personal rights; and during intervention of the law enforcement forces, the right of privacy can be used as a guise for detention of journalists.

Even though the journalists who are not a holder of the press card issued by the Directorate of Communications are tried to be regarded as non-journalists by the courts and law enforcement forces, the Council of State and the Administrative Courts adjudicate that the press card is not indispensable for journalism, yet the authority's abstaining from issuing the card to the journalists constitutes intervention in the press. The International Press Card is regarded as an alternative means to prove identity for the journalists. On the other hand, press professional and labor societies continue to issue their own cards.

## GROWING NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

According to the data obtained, between April 2021-April 2022

- At least 31 journalists were detained.
- At least 60 inquiries were opened.
- Journalists were subjected to at least 27 separate detentions.
- Within the last year journalists stayed in custody for at least 52 days.
- In 116 criminal procedures conducted last year, a total imprisonment of 75 years, 5 months and 26 days was issued as a result of various prison sentences.
- While the trial continued in 68 cases, the verdict was announced in 48 cases.
- 64 journalists were acquitted.
- As a result of various trials, a total punitive fine of 23,680 TL was imposed.
- It was decided to defer the announcement of the verdict about 5 journalists, while the sentence of one journalist was suspended.
- In the last year, there have been 12 trials with compensation claims. The total value of the lawsuits is 2.155.000,03 TL. 11 journalists and 5 newspapers were put on trial in these cases.
- 57 journalists were physically assaulted in the last year.
- While 19 journalists were attacked with fire, chemical or sharp weapons, 36 journalists were battered.
- 92% of the attacks were committed by more than one person. Journalist Güngör Arslan lost his life as a result of the attacks.
- 44 of the journalists who were attacked work in the national and 13 in the local media.
- While 19 of the attacks took place in Istanbul, 38 of them took place in various cities such as Ankara, Diyarbakır, Konya, Kocaeli, Zonguldak, İzmir, Muğla, Malatya, Samsun, Denizli, Urfa, Mersin, and Zonguldak.
- Of the journalists who were attacked, 27 are reporters, 5 are cameramen, 4 are commentators or columnists, 4 are photojournalists, 3 are newspaper publishers, 3 are editor-in-chief.
- 40 of the attacks took place during news tracking, 7 of them in residences or workplaces, and 10 of them in the middle of the street.

### According to the detailed information in the Press Freedom Report of 2021-2022;

**THE** total number of the registered employees in the media sector in Türkiye is 95.484. Although an increase in the number of the employees in the media sector is seen within the last 3 years, considering the long term figures, the number of the total registered employees in the sector shows a falling tendency. There is a reduction of 8,32% in the actual registered employment in the sector between the periods of January 2013 and January 2022.

According to the data in the report, an increase is observed both in the total number of the press card

holders and in the number of the cancelled cards. The rise of the number of the press card holder journalists from 15.104 to 16.429 can be considered as a positive development. However, the fact that this figure is lower than the number of the registered journalists in the press organizations (23.907) keeps on being a problem. Besides, those who are employed uninsured in a media company or who work as freelancer are not included in this calculation. These data indicate that a significant number of journalists do not/cannot obtain press card.

### PRESS CARD ISSUED BY IFJ IS IMPORTANT

**ONE** of the reasons that the number of the card holders is relatively low is that the press card regulation was prepared in an ambiguous way in order to be applied flexibly according to the political needs of the period. Becoming a press card holder continues to be a difficult process for the journalists. The main reason behind this challenge is that the Directorate of Communications is the authority to issue the press card, instead of labor and professional societies as it should be. Many journalists and professional organizations voice criticism that political preferences, instead of objective criteria, are taken into account in the process of obtaining a card.

Facing difficulties in obtaining the official press card, the journalists are canalized to the possible alternatives. One of these alternatives is the International Press Card. In our country there are four labor and professional

organizations including TGS that are authorized to provide IPC that is issued by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). The members who work as a journalist, those who are employed as a staff in a media company, or freelance journalists can obtain IPC via TGS, in case they have the necessary qualifications. While the applicant TGS members are the journalists who are employed in a media company within the scope of the law no. 5953 or no. 4857, and who have the security of a stable job and income, the freelance journalists do not have security of a stable job and income. Those freelance journalists who cannot reach the official press card consider the IPC as an option in order to prove their journalist identity to the news source or in order to protect themselves from the possible impediments by law enforcement forces during news tracking in the field.

### TÜRKİYE SHOULD RATIFY ILO

**ILO** Convention No. 190, which aims to "protect and empower everyone including women who is exposed to violence and harassment in the world of work", has the feature of being "the first international labor standard to address violence and harassment in the working life". ILO conventions are legally binding agreements if ratified by the member state.

When an ILO member country accepts and ratifies a convention, it accepts to adapt the relevant provisions into its national law and to report accordingly. Unfortunately Türkiye is not among the countries that have accepted this convention yet.

However, TGS has been making an effort to raise awareness about the convention with the works it has carried out for the last six months. In this context, TGS organized a workshop in Istanbul in October 2021 with the participation of women journalists from Istanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Eskişehir, Diyarbakır, Mersin and Artvin.

In the workshop, it was decided to start a petition concerning the subject matter on January 10, Working Journalists' Day. The campaign, signed by more than 200 people, moved forward with new

plans for March 8. In the meeting held with the workplace representatives, information was given about the convention.

Video and banner works were put into practice regarding the scope of the convention and why it should be ratified. With the support of the ILO Turkey office, a training activity for journalists was organized within the TGS Academy.

By virtue of all these efforts and the public opinion created among journalists, a provision was added to the CLAs signed with Evrensel newspaper, 9 Eylül newspaper, İz Gazete, Yön Radio and Podfresh, stating that the provisions of the ILO Convention No. 190 and the accompanying Recommendation No. 206 will be complied with in the workplace.

BirGün newspaper, which does not have a collective labor agreement with TGS, took the same step thanks to the sensitivity and insistence of women journalists.

Moreover, a goodwill declaration was received from the employer of Bianet that the issue will be taken into account around the collective bargaining table in the new contract period.

### It is Time For A Change

**TURKEY** has been one of the most problematic countries for freedom of the press and expression for many years. Due to the pressure exerted by the government on the media and journalists, journalism has become one of the most difficult professions to do. Journalists in prison, journalists who have been tried, and detained, newspapers lacking official advertising income, and television channels that are silenced with high



Gökhan DURMUŞ

finances. Journalism is trying to exist in this vortex. This is a snapshot of the journalistic scene in Turkey. On this page, details of various policies that have destroyed press freedom over the past year are given.

Oppression on freedom of speech, journalists in prison, trials, and SPLAPPS have

been our concerns and on our agenda for many years. How are we going to protect journalism as a profession, freedom of the press, and democracy? I believe that these are the main issues to be discussed in Turkey.

In regards to this matter, the responsibility of solving those problems does not only belong to the journalists but also to the public. It is essential that the people have the means to receive the news freely and properly. This cannot be done without journalists doing their jobs and the public protecting the right to access the truth. The climate of fear that the government has been trying to create in journalists for many years has not been successful due to the resistance of journalists and their persistence in journalism.

Now the time to increase this resistance, even more, has come. It is time for our colleagues to be more courageous and insist on journalism, starting with media companies that they think are under government control. It is time to be resistant to all the attacks on journalism. This profession's norms and values are explicit and cannot be changed according to the demands of politicians, government or even the opposition.

After 2013, society started to forget about their right to know, and their right to a free press. It is time to be more vocal about those rights.. It is time to ask questions and question the propaganda. The support of the society is crucial here that their insistence on their right to a free press will encourage the journalists to do even better journalism. The public can strengthen good journalism and punish bad actors, media outlets, and others by not reading them, not watching them, buying not giving a penny to this hazardous machine of propaganda. It will undoubtedly be the organized power of journalists that will disperse this vortex. Precarious work and low wages cause journalists to look at the future insecurely, while also reducing the quality of journalism. This is why unions are essential for a free press to flourish. I believe that journalists have the power to overcome all the challenges they encounter, as long as they are united with society and establish solidarity via their unions.

Solidarity and unity! The time has come.

### UNEMPLOYMENT PRESSURE

Unemployment and precarious employment are among the leading factors that restrain journalists from using their pens freely. The unemployment rate among journalism graduates is quite high compared to the overall unemployment rate. Due to the fact that the unemployment rate is so high, it is very hard to find a job and it also causes a pressure on the security of job and income for the actively employed journalists. However, the rate of freelance journalists is remarkably high.

Without being affiliated with a media institution, with the ease brought on by technological opportunities, free news production tends to grow especially in our country where media independence is controversial. On the other hand, it can be said that this way of working causes serious labor exploitation and insecurity, except for a small minority of journalists in our country.

### WOMEN LEAVE THE PROFESSION

**FREELANCE** journalists dare to take the risk of being deprived of the guarantees provided by insurance, regular income and labor legislation. It is an important problem that women leave the profession over the years. In our country where the care of children and the elderly have not been organized at an institutional level, as a result of the burdens brought by gender roles and the women-oriented organization of domestic labor, we see that female journalists have left their jobs over the years.

Izmir Journalists have a large share in organizing of the press

# A 76-Year-Old Press Sycamore Journalists' Association of Izmir

THE General Directorate of Press and Broadcasting was established in the tenth year of foundation of the Republic of Turkey.

Important journalists of the era from Izmir attended the Press Congress held in Ankara in 1935. At the congress, it was decided to establish the Turkish Press Association.

## IGC RISING

However, as the criticisms against the Turkish Press Association increased over time, the association was closed. Thereupon, the process of organizing journalists under a single roof in every province began. Journalists from Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir rolled up their sleeves and tried to establish their own associations. The Istanbul Journalists' Association achieved the happy result on 13 June 1946. A week later, it was followed by the establishment of the Ankara Journalists' Association.

Journalists of Izmir were also in preparation. There was a broad participation in the establishment of the Journalists' Association in Izmir. With the efforts of journalists such as Asım Kültür, Reşat Sanlı, Süha Sukuşi Tükel, and especially Şevket Bilgin, the owner and editorial writer of Yeni Asır, the charter of the association was prepared and published on July 28, 1946. Thus, Izmir Journalists' Association, which would have an important place in Izmir life in the near

future as one of the most respected democratic mass organizations not only in the Aegean Region but also in Turkey, was established.

Since then, the Izmir Journalists' Association, with all its efforts together with their members and colleagues, has been one of the leading forces of the Turkish press. Izmir, a city where Turks, Levantines, Greeks, Armenians and Jews have lived together for centuries, today with its press, is the Turkey's face opening to the world.

Now IGC has 951 members and is expanding its sphere of influence day by day. IGC, which has been working hard to find solutions to the problems experienced by the Turkish press, providing training for journalists to catch up with the technologies of the day, carrying out studies expressing the importance of the sector, and providing the journalists with the opportunity of utilizing laboratory and studio facilities, also carries on two separate and comprehensive European Union projects.

The world press is a whole. The development of objective and independent journalism is the common goal and effort of all press organizations.

As a member of various national and international press organizations such as the Turkish Press Council, the Turkish Journalists' Federation, and the National Media Platform, IGC will continue to contribute to the strengthening of the press.

Izmir Press, which fought tough battles especially during the years of National Struggle, always takes a courageous stance with the support of the Journalists' Association



## WE HAVE NEVER BOWED DOWN WE WILL NEVER GIVE IN

**IZMIR** Journalists' Association has been working for 76 years to increase the reputation of the journalism profession, to fight for independence and to enhance the strength of its colleagues.

Freedom of Press means freedom of thought and the dignity of being human for us. Journalists are also witnesses of history.

While writing the facts, they also fight for democracy, human rights, and a fair and equitable future.

The history of Izmir press, and Hasan Tahsin, the martyred journalist who made the most important and heroic part of this history, are the main driving forces behind the strength of Izmir media.

### THE LEGACY OF JOURNALIST HASAN TAHSİN

Hasan Tahsin, who lit the first spark in Turkey's struggle for independence on May 15, 1919, is the pride of the Izmir press.

It is this city of Izmir where Hasan Tahsin lit the torch of independent journalism defined by not owing obedience to any power and not compromising on the rightfulness. Our association will never let this torch go out.

Since then, our priority has been "the independence of our country and our profession" Today, we stand firm against the oppression and domination that we still feel intensely. At the same time, we work for the 'personal and democratic' rights of our colleagues, and we develop various projects one after another. We continue our works on both national and international scales. We carry out important studies and projects with the ultimate goals of such as ensuring freedom of media and rights of press employees, adapting new technologies and digital media developments in the sector, empowering the local press, developing the public-private sector cooperation, promoting innovation, good practices and experience sharing, raising environmental awareness, ensuring gender equality and equal opportunity, promotion and protection of human rights and minority rights, etc.

### STRUGGLE FOR RIGHTS AND FREEDOM

Today, we maintain warm communication and dialogs with our young colleagues, freelance

journalists, young communication faculty graduates, and foreign colleagues; and we collaborate with them for the solution of professional problems.

As the Izmir Journalists' Association, we seek to further boost our strength and enhance our solidarity. For this reason, while opening Turkey's largest International Press Academy, we do not compromise on our efforts to improve the rights and freedoms of our colleagues.

### THANK YOU...

We are carrying out two broad European Union projects. Together with the Journalists' Union of Turkey, we started the implementation of "Organized Journalists and Strong Solidarity for Press Freedom Project" under the European Union (EU) Grant Support Program as of January 2019. While our project was supposed to take 44 months in total and to end in September 2022, it was decided to extend the project for another 3 years.

Within the scope of the project, we have enabled tens of thousands of our colleagues to benefit from news support, training and other supports. We have published magazines and organized events. We would like to thank the officials of the European Union Delegation to Turkey and our partner, Turkish Journalists' Union, who created this opportunity. Another project we are carrying out is the IGC-NAR Women and LGBT+ Focused Communication and Awareness Project, supported by the Kingdom of the Netherlands Human Rights Program. Within the scope of this project, on the one hand, we train our colleagues, identify the neighborhoods where violence is most intense on a neighborhood basis, and provide violence awareness trainings directly to the public on the other hand. We would like to thank the Dutch Embassy, who provided essential supports in the realization of our project, and our project partners.

We know that our path is long and arduous. The Turkish media sector has many problems and high expectations, but we find the strength to overcome all these problems in our 'togetherness'.

We strive to overcome the obstacles we encounter in terms of freedom of opinion and freedom of press in Turkey.

We are determined to work with all our strength to give a breath of fresh air to the Turkish press by scaling up our local, national and international studies.

We extend our hand to all our colleagues.



Chairwoman of the Journalists' Association of Izmir

**Dilek  
GAPPI**

## Turkey's one and only unionized association newspaper: Dokuz Eylül

DOKUZ Eylül Newspaper has been published daily for about 10 years within the organization of Izmir Journalists' Association. Today, Dokuz Eylül Newspaper, where 25 colleagues work and dozens of journalists create news by copyright, is one of the symbols of impartial and free journalism.

Besides setting a model with its unionized structure, Dokuz Eylül Newspaper primarily provides

job opportunities to the unemployed and freelance journalists. Dokuz Eylül Newspaper has put its seal on various exclusive publications such as Human Rights, youth and unemployment, pandemic, violence, refugee rights, and May 1, and it is one of the distinctive examples for Turkish and world press with its ownership structure belonging to the Society, that is, the journalists.



## A COLORFUL AND STRONG IZMIR PRESS

AS one of the leading forces of the Turkish media, Izmir Press is getting stronger day by day. In addition to Turkey's oldest newspapers still broadcasting, a strong, free and colorful Izmir Press continues its activities with 8 daily local newspapers, Izmir and Aegean Representations of

mainstream media, numerous websites, and radio and television organizations. In all these organizations, nearly 3,000 press workers from Izmir are employed. Despite the oppressions and difficulties, the city press presents the best examples of impartial journalism.

## 'PRESS' VS. PRESS!

IT must be very easy to translate the state of the "Turkish press" into English.

When you say "press", that clears up everything!

### Does it really?

Everyone in almost every language of the world knows 'Press', coercion to monophony, "mainstream media's" drifting away with the tide, prisons, detentions, lawsuits, bans, forced handover of the media, proliferation of spin-doctors unrelated to journalistic identity and personality.

Lesser-known ones are not these "evils".

Lesser known ones are those who, despite these evils, believe in the journalistic identity, the spirit of journalism, the importance of pursuing the truth, and those who try to reach behind the scenes.

They are the reasons for censorship,

oppression and intimidation!

They are the ones who make journalism genuine, those who stubbornly pursue genuine journalism.

Whatever we criticize, anything we find wrong, unjust, relentless...

All of them emerge because there are also those people who try to seek and convey the truth, who persistently pursue the truth, and do not turn a blind eye to public suffering.

Since there is a "press"(media) that stubbornly pursues freedom, there is a "press" (oppression) that persistently attacks freedoms.

Be it in Turkey or abroad.

Our eyes, our minds, and our hearts should rather see the genuine journalism and recognize its senior, but now many younger, members.

Most of all, they should be talked about.

Rather, they should be kept alive by honoring their



**Umur  
TALU**

news, articles, photographs, testimonies; their journalistic struggle at every turn.

What I want to say is not the simple and crude consolation that the glass is half full when it's half empty.

Because, those who suffocate journalism and those who continue to nurture it are not in the same glass after all. In no way can they be the same water.

While some are molded, stereotyped, others struggle to overcome obstacles.

Let's encourage the journalists, especially young ones, who respect the public's right to receive information, freedom of press and expression, and the truth in all circumstances; who put their minds and efforts, their questions and knowledge, their resistance and struggle for this cause. Even when we say that there is no freedom of press in Turkey, let's also remember and remind that there is a press of freedom. This is not just "solidarity". For a long time, it has been distorted which news is really news. For quite some time now, in many editorial offices, voluntarily or forcibly,

"journalists" have been debating what will not be news, rather what will be news.

This is appreciating those who keep alive a "public responsibility" that has long been distorted in the grip of manipulation and imposition, censorship and self-censorship.

They are the most precious ones of the profession.

Of course, without forgetting the other dark days covered by today's darkness, when important and honorable names of journalism were killed one after another, especially those days when many journalists were murdered in the Southeast, the 80's and the 90's.

With respect to the legacy of those who always kept the enthusiasm, integrity, courage and responsibility of journalism alive even in those days.

With love to all those who keep that legacy alive in their minds, hearts, consciences, professional responsibilities, questions, inquiries, testimonies, recordings, communications, reporting, and independent comments today.



## 'NAR - Communication Against Violence Project' Unites

NAR' aims to raise consciousness of violence against women and LGBTI+ individuals, empower them against violence and minimize it by promotion of Women and LGBTI+ Focused/gender based communication through the means of face to face and mediated communication and change the violence language in media.



**JOURNALIST'S** responsibility is to the public and in a country where nearly 3000 women were murdered by their closest ones (ex/current husband, fiancée, boyfriend, father, brother, uncle) during the last 10 years. As the government tends to take a step back from protecting laws and measures with the support of pro-government media, recalling and reminding this responsibility becomes more important than ever. Under these circumstances, as an independent journalism association, we take our responsibility to the public as contributing to prevention of the violence against the women/LGBTI+ individuals through promoting gender-based journalism and communication (gender-based media outlets).

The Human Rights Fund is a tool of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands supports 'NAR- Women and LGBTI+ Focused Communication Against Violence Project'. Its purpose is to support activities by civil society organisations around the world, to encourage them to actively engage in the promotion and defence of human rights. İzmir Municipality is also an important supporter of the project. The project is focused on İzmir, Manisa and Muğla provinces. IGC has been implementing the project since September 2021. The project will last until November 2022. IGC tries to raise public consciousness about the meaning/forms of the violence, to inform the disadvantaged gender groups about their rights, laws/regulations which protect and empower women and LGBTI+ individuals.

The project united opinion leaders in İzmir. İzmir Municipality led the change with IGC fighting against violence. İzmir Barosu/Bar Association, Köy-Koop, (the president Neptün Soyer), İzmir Kadın Kuruluşları Birliği are the other supporters. They were informed about the project in detail and then signed contracts to become "NAR- Women and LGBTI+ Focused Communication

Against Violence Project" volunteers.

**İzmir Star Awards**  
İzmir Association of Journalists' efforts for raising awareness against violence pioneered a new social awareness and paved the way for an awarding organisation also. For the first time, in March 2022, İzmir Municipality organised 'İzmir Stars Awards' for the best practices regarding gender equality against violence. 46 national and international projects competed for the İzmir Star Awards in 6 categories.

The Journalists' Association of İzmir 'Nar- Women and LGBTI+ Focused Communication Against Violence Project' won the award in the category of the best NGOs' project between 5 other candidates.

### Gender-Based Communication Trainings

IGC did 30 hours education to 45 journalists on gender based communication to change the media language. Gender-based journalism refers a revised/alternative form of journalism that follows up the rights violations of the women/LGBTI+ individuals,

focuses on their right uses and gains, and it promotes news reporting from the angle of the disadvantaged gender groups through redefining the traditional news making and framing to change the negative role of the media to the positive through creating self-awareness among the media professionals about

the role they play in re-production of the violence and train them about the alternatives for reversing it.

### Outcomes of the Project

Outcomes of the training are news, short documentaries (6) about violence survivor women and LGBTI individuals, awareness creating billboards, radio announcements and jingles, public spots that are produced within the frame of gender-based communication in the sense of raising an empowering consciousness for violence survivors in particular and public.

### Editorial Support

Since December 2021, more than 40 editorial supported news stories have been published in 9 Eylül newspaper and project web site [www.nar-siddetekarsimedy.org](http://www.nar-siddetekarsimedy.org) with the help of the news board.

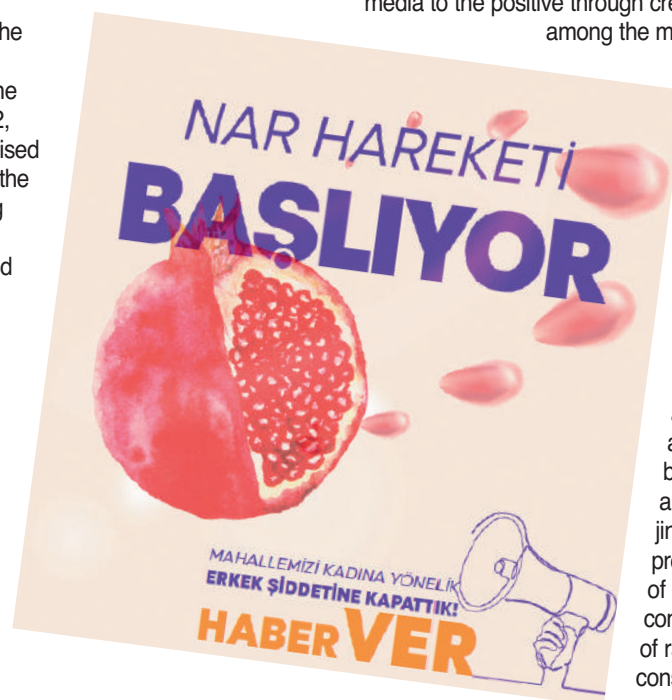
These news stories are also shared in 9 Eylül Newspaper social media links. Before the Nar project, there weren't so many news stories against violence in İzmir. This perspective also motivated other local newspapers about gender based news.

### Violence Map

One of the project's best studies is the violence map, which has not been done before. The violence map of İzmir, Manisa and Muğla, is complete. The results were announced at a press conference with broad participation. National and local news stories were published. Starting from İzmir Municipality, Manisa and Muğla Municipalities also learned about the violence map results in detail and started to work on their own maps. The scientific data regarding male violence towards women in Turkey is relatively old and has no regional base details. So, the IGC violence map report made violence visible. In 2019-2021 339 women were killed in Turkey. In İzmir, 34 women, in Muğla, 16 women and in Manisa, 9 women were killed by men.

### NAR Neighbourhood Meetings

The violence map stated the most violent neighbourhoods in İzmir, Manisa and Muğla. Now IGC is organising Nar Neighbourhood Meetings in these 8 violence intense neighbourhoods. The first Nar meeting was in Zeytinlik Konak on 11th of May, with assistance of a psychologist, sociologist and lawyer. Karabağlar, Buca and Çiğli Nar Neighbourhood meetings followed it with wide participation. IGC also organised Nar Meetings in 2 different provinces of Manisa with the support of Manisa Municipality at the end of May 2022. The next stop is Muğla. Even if the project is finalised, its effects will continue to be observed. IGC will always be a promoter of equality, gender based communication language in media, and an activist against violence.



## WE ARE GOING THROUGH A SIGNIFICANT PERIOD FOR PRESS FREEDOM

**FREEDOM** of press is the healthiest indicator of whether a country is governed by democracy or not. In democracies, the press, the 'fourth power' alongside the legislature, executive and judiciary, performs the duty of control on behalf of the people. Where there is democracy, there is freedom of press, and if there is freedom of press, there is democracy.

This year Turkey was only able to rank 149th out of 180 countries in the Press Freedom Index, in which the freedom of the press in each country is determined based on the same criteria. Eight of the countries were categorized as 'good', 40 as 'satisfactory', 62 as 'problematic', 42 including Turkey as 'bad' and 28 as 'very bad' in the index. Turkey, which was ranked 98th in 2005, falling behind Uganda, Cambodia,

Somalia and Uzbekistan this year, was placed in the shame table.

Certainly, there are reasons for this. Today, our media is literally struggling for existence under the oppression of the government and under very severe conditions. The public's right to receive information, freedom of expression and press are under greater threat than ever before. It feels like 'the window is open but we can't breathe'.

95 percent of the media organizations in the country are under the control of the government and managed practically from a single center. These media outlets, which are funded by public resources, have turned into a propaganda device of the government rather than a source for the public to receive news and to learn the facts.

Moreover, few critical and independent media portrayed as a target by the government because of being 'opposition' are under siege. The targeted journalists can be detained, arrested and sentenced to imprisonment on the pretext of treating 'terrorist' criminals.

RTÜK (Supreme Board of Radio and Television) and BİK (Press Advertising Agency), which should be autonomous, and the politicized Judiciary are being used as a 'punishment stick of the power' against the 'dissident' media. They are tried to be silenced and crashed economically with administrative fines, advertisement cuts and compensation cases.

On the way to the 100th anniversary of our Republic, we are going through a period in which freedom of expression and freedom of press have been eroded and the living space of the independent media has narrowed. The only way out is to continue the fight for democracy

and freedom of press more determinedly and decisively than ever before. We are never hopeless or desperate. There are professional organizations such as the Press Council that struggle to bring freedom of expression and press to universal standards in our country.

With the determination of upholding the ethical values of the media, the Press Council works devotedly to ensure that our media conducts its tasks as expected, carries out its duties freely and independently, undertakes its responsibilities with honor and without sacrificing an iota of independence and integrity. We know that with the strength we get from the people and the law, we bravely take a stand against the wrong, and make it our duty not to remain silent. Walking towards the future with hope is a mission assigned to us.

We believe that we will successfully overcome this period together.

President of the Press Council



**Pınar TÜRENÇ**



# 'Organised Journalists and Strong Solidarity for Press Freedom Project'

'ORGANISED Journalists and Strong Solidarity for Press Freedom Project' is a meeting and support point for unemployed and freelance journalists. Besides the project aims to contribute to the development of a favourable environment for the right of the freedom of information and press in Turkey. The Project started in January 2019 for the duration of 44 months.

Lastly, the project also aims to improve journalists' access to justice by means of legal aid; monitoring of cases; prison visits; campaigns and monitoring reports.

Within the project and in order to assist journalists in the performance of their work and enhance their employment skills, Press Academies were established in Istanbul and Izmir to provide journalists with a place where they can work, receive training, attend seminars etc.

**IGC role in the project**

**Working Place**

IGC has a significant role as a project partner. IGC has opened a Press Academy, live broadcast studio and provided a working place for the free and unemployed journalists' use in Izmir. Journalists can shoot their own news and make live broadcasts by using the studio in IGC.

**IGC Press Academy**

IGC has established a press academy to support journalists skills. Professional skills' trainings in line with the needs of the journalists. The education topics are selected to improve the skills of journalists on new digital media. Each individual programme with 15 participants will be equivalent to 12 full days (96 hours of training). 2 programmes are held each year, annually the goal is 45 participants beneficiary for each training term. Since 2019 IGC Academy has finished a total of 7 semesters of training that lasted for 12 weeks. The 8th programme is still continuing and will finish at the end of June. IGC Academy has trained more than 500 journalists.

**IGC Occupational Trainings:**

English: IGC has been implementing language courses for journalists for several years with the support of the project, and has been able to address the needs to improve business English for journalists.

**The Occupational Training Topics are:**

- Social Media
  - Digital Marketing
  - Video Shooting and Editing Practices Training
  - IGC Editorial Support Programme**
- IGC implements an Editorial Support Programme for unemployed and freelance journalists based in Izmir and from the surrounding region to support journalists to improve their skills and maintain their journalistic work. With the support of this IGC Editorial Support Programme, each journalist can be supported in the scope of this Programme for a maximum of 8 times during the project. The maximum amount per

The Journalists Association of Izmir has been co-implementing the project with the Journalists Union of Turkey (TGS) since 2019. The project aims to contribute to the development of a favourable environment for the right to freedom of information and press in Turkey.



beneficiary is potentially 8\*100 Euro, 800 Euro. Unemployed journalists will be able to maintain their journalistic work as freelance contributors to the 9 Eylül Newspaper with 3750 readers. IGC has supported 400 journalists to date.

**IGC Special Issues**

IGC also designs and publishes 7 special issues to be distributed with 9 Eylül Daily Newspaper during the project course. The special issues publish at least 10 articles from journalists that are eligible for support in the scope of the IGC Editorial Support Programme.

The themes are press freedom, fundamental rights, journalists rights, international refugee crisis and media's role, and similar issues that are on agenda of Izmir and regions' journalists, related to project objectives. 7 special issues have been published since 2019. Which are:  
**Struggle Against Violence 29 Kasım**

2019, 8 editorial supported news  
**Immigration and Refugees**

01.04.2020

14 editorial supported news

**Youth and Unemployment**

05.19.2020

18 editorial supported news

**Human Rights-**

12.30.2020

26 editorial supported news

'New Life in Pandemic' -09.10. 2021,

17 editorial supported news

**The Power of Democracy: Civil Society-**

11.29.2021

14 editorial supported news

**IGC is working on the last special issue which will be published in August.**

**IGC Regional Trainings**



IGC Regional Trainings were organised in Muğla, Aydın and Manisa once a year for the first 3 years of the Project by IGC, and targeted journalists in Izmir's neighbouring cities. IGC Regional training topics are local media and union organisation, press freedom and ethics, social media training, universal values and peace language. The project has been presented via these events: Journalists' capacities are empowered and solidarity among journalists is strengthened by promotion of the Project.

IGC Academy Muğla Training - 10.12.2019

31 journalists attended.

IGC Academy Aydın Training- 11.02.2019

42 journalists attended.

IGC Academy Manisa Training- 12.07.2019

27 journalists attended.

Due to the pandemic conditions, the regional trainings were implemented as regional special issues in 2020. Aydın, Muğla, Manisa special issues have published and supported local journalists by editorial support programme.

With the normalisation, IGC Regional Trainings have started again. Our first training was held in Manisa on 18th of September and 30 local journalists from Manisa attended. On 9th of October IGC regional training was in Muğla and 23rd of October IGC regional training was in Denizli. In total, 89 journalists attended the IGC Regional Trainings in 2021. The training topics were:

- Freedom of Expression and the Rights of Journalists**
- New Generation Media Broadcasting**
- Combating Hate Speech and Discriminatory Language in the Media**
- Video Journalism with Mobile Tools**

IGC Regional Trainings proved the local media needs support and solidarity more than ever. Local journalists interest to the trainings were high and and they need more training activities.



## Awards for freelance journalists

THE news coverages published within the scope of the editorial support program of "Organised Journalists and Strong Solidarity for Press Freedom Project" are awarded.

Murat Ervin was deemed worthy of an award in 2020, under news research and investigation section with "For sale not by the owner, because of the crises" news. During pandemic Ervin was one of the unemployed journalists supported by the Project. Some time later Murat Ervin started to work in 9 Eylül Newspaper, journalists' journal.

Kamacı: This Project kept me in profession

In 2022 Tuğçe Doğanelli Kamacı is also awarded

by Aegean Region Chamber of Industry Aytaç Sefiloğlu Journalism Contest. Kamacı's "Not the act of men, but the brain " news which is published in 9 Eylül Newspaper is awarded in interview section. Kamacı, thanking Izmir Journalists' Association President Dilek Gappi, "This Project make me stay in the profession while I am unemployed. You have a big share in this award. I will never give up writing" said.

Kamacı, make a call for the unemployed and freelance journalists not to give up and evaluate the opportunities of the Organised Journalists and Strong Solidarity for Press Freedom Project.



## FROM LOCAL TO INTERNATIONAL: WHAT JOURNALISTS NEED MOST IS ORGANIZATION AND SOLIDARITY

**COLLEAGUES** around Europe meet in Izmir on June 13-14 for the EFJ General Meeting. It is a great opportunity to discuss problems of journalism, challenges facing our profession and to learn from each others' experiences.

Press freedom as always is on top of our agenda. Oppression by the states, governments and media owners, challenges of digitalism and new media, decadence of quality journalism, fake news, post-truth, gender equality, the way migrants and wars are reported... The list of our problems and concerns is indeed longer.

I have to say that Izmir is the right place to discuss all these issues. In its history, with its culture and geographic location, Izmir has all we need for promising discussions about journalism. In our age when conflicts between nations and religions are escalating and journalism is forced to take sides in such conflicts, Izmir in Turkey comes to the forefront as a city of tolerance, understanding, peace and harmony. Plus, it is a city where journalism is deep rooted.

### TURKISH JOURNALISM FROM 1920S TO 2020S

Alexandre Blacque, one of the first journalists of the Ottoman Empire, was a French lawyer who settled in Izmir and published *Le Spectateur Oriental* (1821). Most of the first newspapers published in the Ottoman territory were published in Izmir under the leadership of the French. The idea of publishing a Turkish newspaper is based on these first French newspapers. Izmir is also the city that established the first Turkish newspaper published in Anatolia.

Today, it is difficult to say that the local press of Izmir has a situation equivalent to its historical richness, yet it is quite rich with 7 local dailies and 48 websites.

In Turkey power elites have always been influential on the media since the foundation of the Republic in 1923. The military coups from which Turkey suffered in 1960, 1971, 1980 and the "post-modern" coup in 1997 were not only indicators of the army's impact and role in Turkish society but also on Turkish press. There were always some tabus for Turkish press, even though they changed from time to time and journalists were extremely careful if and when they could touch those "sensitive" issues. Media freedom and freedom of expression were also under the threat of self-censorship because of those tabu issues. In the 80's there was a radical turning point in global media ownership structure; from media owners being traditionally journalist families to media owners being conglomerates having business in all sectors of the economy. It was a transition from owners whose main business was journalism to owners whose main business was everything except journalism. Those conglomerates were in all sectors of the economy from finance to trade and construction, from service sector to even arms production and in addition they owned the media.

This transition process was completed in Turkey in the 90s. Turkey had its first private TV channel in 1990. Until 2002, media owners had friendly relations with the governments, but they were not necessarily in the ideological alignment with the ruling party. Thus, there was some room for criticizing those in power. Yet the new media owners of Turkey, the conglomerated, had close ties with the government for they depended on public

tenders. Editorial independence meant nothing for the media owners whose priority was to have good relations with the government from where they get public tenders.

Journalism under AKP governments  
In 2002 Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power. That dependency of the media owners due to their business interests was not enough for Erdogan. During the first years of AKP governments, for the sake of relations with the EU and to weaken the anti-AKP / Kemalist army's influence in Turkish politics, a window of relative freedom was opened to the media. But, after 2008 with the second term of Erdogan, the more Erdogan consolidated his political power, the less freedom was left for the media. After a few years Erdogan got the mainstream media totally under control. Turkish media became more and more the victim of his deepening authoritarianism. Today Turkey's mainstream media is not only a supporter of the government for their business interests but also ideologically in line with the ruling party, a situation which makes criticisms impossible.

A state of emergency was declared following the Gezi protests of 2013, which started in defense of a park in Istanbul's Taksim Square but then turned into a country-wide protest against the government with the participation of millions.

During the state of emergency; 179 media organizations, including 53 newspapers, 34 TV stations, 37 radios, 20 magazines, 6 news agencies and 29 printing houses were shut down on the grounds that they belonged to "the Gulen Media", "the PKK Media" or "the Leftist Media".

US-based cleric Fethullah Gulen, whose movement is defined as an armed terror organization (FETO) since their failed coup attempt in July 15, 2016, was the main ally of Erdogan's AKP until 2013 and he was quite strong in the media. Following the coup attempt, Gulenist media was also suppressed and today except a few opposition TV channels and newspapers, almost 90 percent of media outlets are pro-government.

Hasan Fehmi Bey was the first Turkish journalist killed on April 6, 1909. From 1909 to 1923, until the declaration of the Republic, 10 journalists were killed. 7 journalists were killed from 1923 to the 1980 military coup. 8 were killed between 1980 and 1989. The 90s, however, were the bleakest years of journalist's murders because 37 journalists were killed in 10 years from 1990 to 1999. From 1999 to today 5 journalists were killed.

The years under Erdogan governments, especially the second half of his rule, turned into years of muzzling the press by imposing fines on opposition media, cutting their advertisement incomes, eliminating news outlets, prosecuting and/or imprisoning journalists, making them targets of harassment, hounding and threatening campaigns in social media. As a result of this, in recent years several international watchdog organizations have started to define Turkey, where according to Journalists' Union of Turkey (TGS) 23 journalists and media workers are behind bars today, as "the world's biggest jailer of professional journalists."

Despite his overwhelming control of the media, Erdogan is indeed not happy because the impact of pro-government media on the public is not as he wanted. Turkish society is polarized and people became much

more divided along party lines in terms of their main sources of news and the media brands that they follow. This turns the media into an echo chamber that merely reinforces existing partisan preferences. Plus, there is a rising distrust toward the media. According to a 2018 research study, 70 percent of respondents thought that the media "presents biased and untrustworthy information" and for sure the situation did not get better in the last 4 years.

Younger generations, as is the global trend, have become increasingly reliant on social media for news and information. Despite the lack of editorial control and thus being very fertile for misinformation and fake news, social media is also controlled by the government which is now preparing a new law to eliminate "misinformation". Critical voices in social media are hounded and harassed and even arrested for their tweets. The latest example is the Istanbul branch chair of the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) who was sentenced to about 5 years for her tweets 9 years ago.

### WHAT TO DO?

In these difficult times, as Turkish journalists who are conscious about the meaning of our profession, we are striving to get organized and to strengthen our solidarity in order to respond to the public's increasing demand for genuine journalism. In the age of fake news and post-truth we are striving to remain "truth-tellers".

When colleagues around Europe are gathered here in Izmir, we have to discuss how we can overcome the younger generations' disinterest in professional organizations and unions. We have to underline that the only way to resist media owners' and governments' oppression is to get organized and to join unions.

We definitely need solidarity! Solidarity among journalists at local, regional, national and international levels. Problems of Turkish journalism are not unique to Turkey. We have common problems globally. That necessitates getting organized internationally and working for international solidarity.

Unfortunately, in recent years young journalists have fewer and fewer role models, and they confuse the practice of some celebrity/star journalists with good journalism.

We have to underline again and again that journalism is the profession of truth-telling and only truth-telling, not being advocates of economic or political powers.

We should also realize that we are communicators and communication is not simply the act of transferring information from one place to another. Communication, as the Latin origin "communīcāre" means is "to share". Communication is a two-way process of reaching mutual understanding, in which participants not only exchange information, news, ideas and feelings, but also create and share meaning. In general, communication is a means of connecting people or places. When we can play our role as communicators, the world will definitely be a more peaceful place. Unfortunately, the world is going into a new age of wars. In such times, we should remember and declare that journalists are non-warring parties of wars. Being against war and violence is a part of the definition of our profession. We should keep in mind that we are not reporting for the victory of one party, but for peace.

I believe Izmir is one of the best places to voice such journalistic concerns. This is a great city where we can carry our solidarity from local to international levels.

## Important Phone Numbers

|  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| İzmir Gazeteciler Cemiyeti                           | 90 232 463 32 15                 |
| İzmir Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism  | 90 232 483 62 16                 |
| Emergency - 112                                      |                                  |
| Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany | 90 232 488 88 88                 |
| Consulate General of the Romania                     | 90 232 465 04 63                 |
| Consulate General of the Greece                      | 90 232 421 69 92                 |
| Consulate of the British                             | 90 232 463 52 41                 |
| Consulate of the Italian Republic                    | 90 232 463 66 76 - 232 463 66 96 |
| Consulate of the France                              | 90 232 421 42 34 - 35            |
| Consulate of the Norway                              | 90 232 421 92 80                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the USA                        | 90 232 464 87 55                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Belarus        | 90 232 421 31 81                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Czechia                    | 90 232 368 09 44                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Kingdom of Denmark         | 90 232 489 54 01                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Finland                    | 90 232 479 23 00                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Croatia                    | 90 232 446 28 70                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Holland                    | 90 232 464 02 01                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Ireland        | 90 232 402 53 53                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Spain                      | 90 232 435 91 81                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Sweden                     | 90 232 244 05 50                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Switzerland                | 90 232 479 02 12                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Iceland                    | 90 232 446 57 00                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Kosovo                     | 90 232 425 26 08                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Latvia         | 90 232 463 18 96                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Lithuania      | 90 232 371 51 50                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Luxembourg                 | 90 232 482 22 00                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Hungary                    | 90 232 463 41 61                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Malta                      | 90 232 422 31 18                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Poland         | 90 232 464 58 64                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Portugal                   | 90 232 495 00 00 / 20 24         |
| Honorary Consulate of the Serbia                     | 90 232 441 91 81                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Slovakia       | 90 232 464 45 64                 |
| Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Slovenia       | 90 232 425 99 83                 |

## PUTTING NEW SOCIAL MEDIA REGULATION AND TURKEY'S PRESS FREEDOM DEBATE IN PERSPECTIVE

IN recent decades, discussions in Turkey regarding limitations on speech and the press have intensified, attracting widespread global attention. From currently debated draconian Social Media Law that could practically impose bans on online communication platforms, to the seemingly arbitrary imprisonment of journalists with opposition views, regulation of speech during the rule of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) since 2002 has been highly contentious. One way to put these practices into an historical perspective could be focusing on the era of the foundation of modern Turkey, namely the late Ottoman and early Republican period, which stretched roughly between 1830 and 1945. It is in this period that significant fields of contemporary Turkey, such as politics, education, and the legal system, emerged, leaving an enduring legacy, in the context of which contemporary policies about freedom of press must be understood.

### MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATÜRK

This earlier era is associated with one of the most significant political characters in Turkey's history, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938), who played a momentous role in the transition from the Ottoman order to modern Turkey. In his single-minded efforts to realize his utopia, a modern, secular republic being part of the Western world, Atatürk brought about a drastic reshaping of Turkish society, and neither Turkey nor the Muslim world will ever be the same again, as rightly put out by Hanioglu. Although Mustafa Kemal was evidently not the sole factor that made the transformation of Turkish society possible, he was a radical and authoritative figure who marked the process with his own stamp. It is therefore important to examine his approach to speech as a sociopolitical phenomenon and its regulation, in order to understand the foundational framework in which speech has been handled in the Turkish context. His stamp is central to a consideration of tendencies in speech and society in Turkey.

Andrew Mango writes of Atatürk's practical experience as a military commander, the opposition he confronted from defenders of the Ottoman dynasty, the threat that the spreading communist and fascist ideologies in Europe and Asia posed to his leadership, and his knowledge of the severity of physical destruction throughout his nation. Equally relevant was his record as a disciple of Western Enlightenment ideals interpreted in

the late Ottoman context. Mustafa Kemal adopted a centralized approach to constructing the Turkish Republic, where opposition voices would be permitted only as long as they were deemed "useful" or supportive for his political program, the ultimate goal of which was to establish and protect the Republic he envisioned.

"From Palace to Palace: Tales of Turkish Journalism" Equally important to underline is how current policies have roots, not only in Atatürk's approaches but in those Ottoman times. In 2015, a popular book was published in Turkey on the history of journalism, entitled *From Palace to Palace: Tales of Turkish Journalism*. The title of the book refers to the introduction of the first newspaper by the Ottoman Palace, by the Sultan himself in 1831, and the current alarming situation of freedom of the press in Turkey. According to its author Ümit Alan, repression of press freedom by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan who also resides in a palace, White Palace (Ak Saray), illustrates an unfortunate continuity in this almost two-century-long trajectory of the press in Turkey.

How do the period of Atatürk's rule and his policies regarding speech and its regulation fit in this journey from one palace to the other? One possibility is to consider Atatürk's era as a radical, libertarian break from the Ottoman Palace's strict limitations on speech, since Atatürk himself was a devoted Republican opposed to the absolute monarchy of Ottoman rule. The second way to answer the question is

that, with regard to freedom of speech, Atatürk's period presented a significant difference neither from the rule of the Ottoman regime, nor from what followed afterwards until today, including the current AKP rule under President Erdoğan. The first approach, the idea of rupture, could be countered by showing that in many ways Atatürk's understanding was shaped by the prevalent debates that took place in the late Ottoman era. Despite his radical Republican overtones, Atatürk's approach to speech and its limits was, to a large extent, a revamped or "modern" version of the mindset of late Ottoman governments. The second approach, that Atatürk's period was essentially continuous and consonant with what preceded and followed it, is similarly inaccurate. Even the minimal gains regarding freedom of speech as a result of regime change towards a republic from a monarchy are sufficient to qualify this transition as "progressive," despite significant deficiencies of the Republican era.

During almost a century between Mustafa Kemal's

rule and AKP rule, although far from perfection in many respects, Turkey has become a multiparty democracy, a signatory of international laws protecting the rights of speech and expression, while journalism has developed professional standards and other forms of public discourse have become common features of Turkish democracy. Despite the transformations they brought along, Atatürk and successive Turkish governments inherited the utilitarian logic of speech from the Ottoman era, and applied it according to their own definitions of its utility. Atatürk's support for speech that primarily served to protect the new regime led to its careful regulation by modern means. This has been transformed into successive governmental approaches, in which some governments restrict speech very much in their own interest of retaining power outweighing the public interest. Some governments have resorted to archaic methods of regulating speech, such as imprisoning if not killing "dissident" public figures. Yet, the utilitarian understanding of speech has been a lasting legacy and current problems about limitation of speech in digital platforms can best be understood in this context.

#### Social Media: "A menace to society?"

As veteran Internet scholar Akgül has written, Internet censorship in Turkey has rested mainly on two pillars: preventing "undesired" political messages and fighting pornography. Turkey is no exception in the latter area; with regard to political messages, the scope of attacks on the "existing social system" is becoming increasingly vague. The ruling AKP and President Erdoğan are fervently seeking to transform the country into what the president calls the "New Turkey". AKP's idea of a "New Turkey," conservative and neo-liberal, embracing its Sunni-Muslim identity, becomes a Neo-Ottoman regional power. This vision carries with it a particular definition of utility, with regard to speech, as well as its regulation with many other measures. It casts a broad net as to what is unwanted and unconstructive.

A symbolic case is the recent limitation on Twitter, the

most commonly used communication platform, particularly during the Gezi events between May and June 2013. Against the backdrop of widespread complaints about the direct and indirect control of mass media by the government, Twitter's significance increased further following the appearance of corruption related material on a microblogging site about President Erdoğan and his four cabinet ministers. In response, Erdoğan

first labeled Twitter "a menace to society," then vowed to eradicate it, and the same day Twitter was blocked without a court order. Another method, milder than the wholesale banning of Twitter, has been the "removal request" ultimatums issued to Twitter by the government. According to Twitter's own statistics covering the period July 2014-July 2015, requests from Turkey are higher than the aggregate requests from all other countries. Furthermore, Internet usage is controlled at the access point: Internet cafes are subject to stringent regulations, which extend beyond limits defined by the law.

### NEW SOCIAL MEDIA LAW

The case of Twitter as well as most recent discussions around New Social Media Law dramatically recall the regulation of speech in the prepress period of the Ottoman Empire. Then the coffeehouses, as the most significant spaces for speech, were banned, monitored by spies, and seditious themes were prohibited by religious or legal rulings. Since then, the utilitarian logic of understanding speech has been inherited, while definitions of utility have changed as have the methods to set the limits of speech, in accordance with the priorities of successive governments.

Likewise, throughout the same trajectory, the ensuing struggle to advance freedom of speech in Turkey has become part of the fight for democracy generally, thanks of diverse actors in and around the media field including the professional press associations such as Izmir Gazeteciler Cemiyeti. It is through their persistence and increasing their capacities to pursue this historic fight, the space of press freedom could be expanded and will be so in the future.



Doğan TILIÇ



Altuğ AKIN



# Izmir's Media Gateway to the World



Turkey's largest International Press Center, which is established with the cooperation of Izmir Journalists' Association and Izmir Metropolitan Municipality, is opening its doors



**THE** International Press Center which includes a conference hall, television studio, workspaces for freelance journalists, International Media Communication Office, training laboratories, bookshelf and offices, will connect the world press with the media network. The center will be one of the common areas of struggle for freedom of opinion and press freedom of journalists from all over the world.

## SCHOOL FOR YOUNG JOURNALISTS

In the International Press Center, which will operate on an area of nearly 600 square meters, trainings will be offered to all professionals,

especially young journalists, to learn and use the technologies of the day. Within the framework of the determined training programs, "New Technologies in Visual and Audio Media", "New Media and Digital Applications", "Digital Marketing" and "English" lessons will be given to all professionals during the week. All professionals will benefit from these trainings free of charge.

## STUDIO AND CONFERENCE HALL

The center will also provide a working environment where foreign journalists who come to Izmir can prepare their news and pass their visuals. The same opportunities will

be provided to freelance journalists working in the field.

The established television studio will contribute to meeting all the production needs of the Izmir press. The studio will also provide services for live broadcasts, programs and productions of Izmir Metropolitan Municipality and local governments.

Wide participation organizations such as panels and conferences can be held in the conference hall for 60 people in the center.

These events will be broadcasted live in various channels.

## A NEW STRENGTH FOR MEDIA

The President of Izmir Journalists' Association Dilek Gappi stated that

the International Press Center will give great motivation and strength to the sector and said, "In countries where there is no freedom of press, the people cannot be free either. As the Izmir press, we always aim to increase our strength and increase solidarity. Our primary goal is for our colleagues to benefit from developments in the field of international media by opening Turkey's largest International Press Center. We have not and will not give up on creating a free and strong press, to be in dialogue with our colleagues who are pursuing their duties in our country and around the world, to work for the rights of our friends."



## JUST JOURNALISTS' PERSPECTIVE

**WE** read a lot of news, information and articles about the situation that the World press is in right now and even experiencing the exact situation. The press' problems are all the same across countries but of course it also changes across different countries. The studies we've done with the local newspapers of Izmir draws attention. And the subjects are very diverse. Economics, politics, environment, archeology and a lot of subjects that your mind can think of shows us the advantages of working on a regional newspaper brand. What I see as the "Commissionary President of Young Journalists of Izmir" is: me and my friends, when we



**Rana Beyza ÖZTÜRK**

have the opportunity, we can do deep research and investigation about the subject we want. Because what I know is, as a generation we search, improve and move forward.

In this sense, sharing the benefits of the changing World and digitalisation with our colleagues in an international conjuncture, making projects that can lead to new contents improve their value. For a considerable period of time we can make connections via the internet. We are in an era that anyone can be a journalist thanks to their smartphone and internet connection. It is not important for a social media user to confirm the accuracy of

information. And therefore what we need is focusing on investigative journalism.

What is important to us is staying positive, and keeping the information clear without any false information that can lead us to vital mistakes. Just as Boudrillard said: "We live in a world where there is more and more information, and less and less meaning." (Jean Baudrillard, Simulacra and Simulation). With the light of this quote what we can say is: it is very important while making news we have to share our information with colleagues.

Mutual projects we'll make in cultural sites are very important to understand each other better and will develop our responsibilities. We know that globalization is a very big part of our daily life. Even if the journalists get together twice in a year and share their opinions about the earth with each other, will improve their point of views. I find it very funny that a normal person has all the speed in the world in case of communication and yet journalists are so far away from each other. We want to know press freedom, economic statuses and the changing shape of the brave new age in different countries. For this to happen, my call to all journalists: Let's get together, see each other. Share what we hear, what we earn, what we see. And our posts will definitely improve.

Concessionaire on behalf of the Commercial Enterprise of Izmir Journalists' Association

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'Organised Journalists and Strong Solidarity for Press Freedom Project'



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## "PEACE JOURNALISM" AND NEWS MEDIA IN TURKEY...

**JOHAN** Galtung (1998) and former BBC reporters Jake Lynch and Annabelle McGoldrick (2005) were among the first who theorized and applied peace journalism as an alternative to conventional journalism (CJ). Peace Journalism (PJ) represents a new approach to mainstream journalism that could also name "malestream journalism" from a feminist point of view. Feminist news criticism explains why journalism's universally valued conventional codes and ethics end up with a biased new reporting in which women, LGBTI+ individuals, elderly, deprived, have-nots, and minorities are annihilated and misrepresented. For instance, while covering the conflicts, conventional journalism turns into war journalism (WJ) by using the official authorities as news sources in the name of accuracy,



**Sevdal ALANKUŞ**

which means valuing their (often male) propagandist voice over ordinary citizens who always become the first "casualties" of the wars. Although claims to be "objective," CJ uses the "we" versus "them" frame in which the others are depicted as a coward, tricky, treacherous, uncanny, unpredictable, and vicious as how women are constructed within the patriarchal dualistic frame of thinking. The "victory" of the winning side is pictured as conquering the other's (women's) body which we are familiar with sexist football analogies.

In contrast, as an approach enriched by a feminist angle, PJ offers journalism based on not propaganda of the officials but silenced segments of society. It focuses on the reasons for the conflict/war and encourages peace attempts, instead of giving numbers of deaths and damages through which

losses are rationalized and technology of the war machines are fetishized. In brief, PJ brings journalism grounded on new ethics that is others-based instead of being self and/or "we"-based ethic of liberal thought. It is a journalism displaces and re-defines the codes that turns the CJ into the WJ, including at most and first, the misogynous wordings of malestream journalism.

In Turkey, PJ never became a sincere practice of mainstream media due to not being genuinely after peace and/or not questioning CF's clichés. This was proven particularly between the years of 2009-2015 and when "solution to the Kurdish issue" was the official plan of the AKP government.

In Turkey's current political context, while pronouncing the "peace" even puts the journalist at threat, WJ is practiced in its most aggressive form when reporting internal conflictual issues or relations with neighboring countries. After all, Turkey's PJ

experience tells us the followings: First, even when peace is imposed on the strictly controlled media as a government plan, writing for peace does not guarantee finding the right words and codes for promoting peace. Second, even criticism of the oppositional media towards the government may quickly turn into unconditional support when so-called "national interest" issues are on the agenda.

Within this hegemonic political culture, alternative/independent media becomes the only address for practicing and promoting PJ, as long as their journalists succeed in re-define CJ's codes and ethics by knowing that being pro-peace does not spontaneously makes them a peace journalist. But, the weakness of independent/alternative media and expected new censoring regulations are the issues that concern the ones who are genuinely for the "peace at home and peace in the world."



## THE CITY WHERE THE FIRST NEWSPAPERS WERE BORN

**DUE** to the fact that Izmir is a port city, it has hosted many colorful cultures and various civilizations, from Levantines to Greeks and Jews.

The streets where synagogues, churches and mosques stood side by side for centuries have been the witnesses of a deep culture and a colorful social life.

Thanks to this magnificent legacy of polyphonic civilization, the foundations of the Turkish press were laid in these lands for the first time. Thus, one of the main veins in the history of the national press was born in Izmir.

From the XVIII century onwards, Greeks, Armenians and Jews performed the country's first intensive book publications.

At the beginning of the XIX century, however, the French and the Americans laid the foundations of publishing with a large number of books for missionary purposes.

After a while, Izmir became one of the most important centers of the Turkish press and the capital of the publishing world of Turkey.

### 1821 THE DATE OF THE FIRST NEWSPAPER

The first Turkish book printing in Izmir dates back to the 1870s. In the following years, books in Greek, Armenian, Hebrew, French and English were published.

According to historical sources, the first newspaper published in Izmir was Le Spectateur Oriental, which started its publication life in French in 1821.

However, the publication life of this newspaper was short-lived as it supported the Mora uprising.

After a while, an entrepreneur named Alexandr Blacque started to publish a newspaper with the French title Le Courier de Smyrne in Izmir, where the Levantines needed the press in particular.

Following this newspaper, we see the newspaper L'Impartial that was published in French and continued its activities uninterruptedly from 1841 to 1915.

The subsequent newspaper is cited as Journal de Smyrne in the sources. The efforts to publish the first newspaper in Greek in the Ottoman Empire were seen again in Izmir.

### NEWSPAPERS IN TURKISH

The first Turkish newspaper was published in 1868 in this city of multicolored culture. That year, the Provincial Printing House published the Aydın newspaper. However, the first official Turkish newspaper was Devir, published by Mehmet Salim on August 24, 1872.

The newspaper in Turkish published regularly in



Izmir was first printed on 13 November 1886. Subsequently, Tevfik Nevzat and Halit Ziya (Uşaklıgil), two sophisticated young men from the city, started publishing the newspaper Hizmet.

This was a newspaper of ideas and politics; it also covered economic problems and literary issues.

Certain representatives of the Turkish press in Izmir started publications as Anadolu, Duygu and Köylü newspapers.

Due to Izmir's colorful and harmonious population structure, many French, Greek, Hebrew and Armenian newspapers are also seen. Even in the unfavorable conditions of the First World War, a few Turkish newspapers managed to continue their publications in Izmir.

The highest number of publications was reached in the years of occupation of Turkey. Starting from 1915, new newspapers began to be published one after the other in Izmir.

Zeybek, Sada-yı Hak, Sulh ve Selamet, Duygu, Anadolu, and Hukukubeşer are some of them. Moreover, Hukukubeşer journalist Hasan Tahsin was the first person to resist and oppose the occupation of Izmir, and he paid the price with his life.

The first news about Mustafa Kemal, the great savior of Turkey, was published for the first time in the issue of Ahenk Newspaper, dated 15 July 1919, in Izmir.

If we are talking about the history of the press in Izmir, the pioneer city in the printing of newspapers and magazines, it is also necessary to mention Yeni Asır, which was first published in Thessaloniki in 1895 under the name Asır and moved to Izmir in 1924.

The newspaper Yeni Asır, which was started to be



published by Ali Şevket and would be the longest living newspaper in the city and Turkey, is still in publication. In addition, Hizmet, Halkın Sesi, İzmir Postası, Memleket, and Hürriyet newspapers are the ones published in the first years of the Republic in Izmir. Many magazines were also published in Izmir.

The Trade Journal, founded by Süha Sükuti Tükel in 1942, is one of the rare newspapers that survived from all these periods. As can be seen, the Izmir press has always been a quite active and influential press in the politics and economy of the city and Turkey.

From 1821, when the first newspaper was seen, to the 1950s, more than 500 local newspapers and magazines were published.

This great history gave, and still gives, strength to today's Izmir press.

Izmir press always maintains its strength. Also today, under the umbrella of the Izmir



Journalists' Association, the Izmir press struggles stiffly for freedom of press with its 76-year-old organized force, with local newspapers, Aegean supplements of the national press and digital media.



## THE MEMORY OF JOURNALISM IS MAINTAINED ALIVE IN IZMIR PRESS MUSEUM

Izmir Press Museum, which was brought to life with the initiatives of the Izmir Journalists' Association (IGC), is a memory center for the history of journalism in Turkey.

**THE** museum is located in the annex of St. Vukolos (Ayavukla) Church, which was built in the second half of the 19th century and currently serves as a cultural center.

Located in Basmane, one of the first settlements in Izmir, the museum evokes the feeling of a time travel in the history of journalism.

The history of the artifacts exhibited in the Izmir Press Museum dates back to 1870.

★★★★

Personal belongings of the great names of journalism, such as Uğur Mumcu, Abdi İpekçi, Çetin Emeç, Ahmet Taner Kışlalı, Ümit Kaftancıoğlu and Metin Göktepe, who left their marks on the Turkish press history with their struggle for the sake of principles of the profession of journalism, are exhibited in the exclusive section reserved for the commemoration of the murdered journalists.

Mumcu's typewriter and his first computer, the last

threatening letter received by Emeç and the sweater he was wearing on the day he was murdered, Kışlalı's computer and press card, İpekçi's fountain-pen and Kaftancıoğlu's bag are among these items.

★★★★

**'Young people are highly interested'**

In the museum, there are also special exhibition chambers for Hasan Tahsin, Atilla İlhan and İsmail Sivri, who served as the chairman of the IGC for a long time.

Various artifacts regarding the press history of the world, Turkey and Izmir are exhibited in the Hasan Tahsin Chamber. The first newspapers published in Turkey and examples of general press history can be seen in this room. It is also possible to track the historical advancement of different media equipments on sample devices, from typewriters to cameras.

With a historical television studio inside, Atilla İlhan

Chamber is one of the most interesting parts of the museum as well. Oğuz Matoğlu, IGC member and a retired journalist who is in charge of the Izmir Press Museum, says, "Young people are very interested in this room" where İlhan's desk and books, and selections from his television programs can also be seen.

★★★★

Remarkable artifacts about the history of the Izmir press are seen in İsmail Sivri Room, where the belongings of the previous presidents of the IGC are exhibited.

**Letterpress printing house, piquage room and dark room** On the ground floor of the museum, there is a printing room with a letterpress printing machine manufactured in 1870 and still working mechanically. Next to this room is a darkroom with all the tools that allow photographs to be developed and printed using traditional

methods. In the piquage room, there are piquage cardboard demonstrating how newspapers used to be prepared in the pre-computer era, and photographs depicting journalists performing "piquage" by means of cutting and placing the photos and preparing the news page one by one by hand.

The Press Museum of the Journalists' Association of Turkey, which opened its doors in Istanbul in 1988, was the first in this field in our country. The Izmir Press Museum, which was set up in 2012, was followed by the Kocaeli Press Museum in 2014.

According to Matoğlu, the distinguishing feature of the museum in Izmir is the personal belongings of the murdered journalists, donated by their families. Matoğlu emphasizes that they are trying to preserve these items with care and to display them to as many visitors as possible.