

**Turkey -- Guide to Major Turkish Daily Newspapers 2008**



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## **1. Media Environment**

### ***1.1. Istanbul, Turkey's Media Hub***

Istanbul is Turkey's historic, business, intellectual, media, and print capital, hosting the country's major national dailies and periodicals. The city is home to some 40 major dailies with nationwide reach and 30 provincial publications. The major national dailies are mostly published as morning editions seven days a week, with some printing Sunday or Friday extras. Because of the large Turkish expatriate population, some leading papers are also published abroad, mostly in Germany. According to figures announced by the Turkish Statistical Board (TUIK) on 20 June 2008, some 5,674 newspapers and magazines were in circulation in Turkey in 2007. Of those in circulation, 58.5 percent were periodical magazines. The newspapers were divided in the following manner: 91.6 percent were officially designated as "local newspapers," 2.5 percent as "regional newspapers," and 5.9 percent as "national newspapers."

Technological advances in recent years have furthered Istanbul newspapers' ability to reach wider national and international audiences and have allowed many of them to act as news agencies by incorporating breaking news at a fast pace. The advent of the so-called "plaza system" in Istanbul has also contributed to the city's dominance in the field of print media. Under this system, business-driven media groups have gathered their formerly scattered media outlets under one roof, thus enabling them to publish several national dailies with slight variations in political slant with the use of a common pool of information, assets, and staff.

### ***1.2. Big Business Controls Media***

Most of Turkey's mainstream dailies, both secularist and Islamist, are basically colorful, mass-appeal papers controlled by business conglomerates or influential sects. There is a diversity of opinion on domestic issues along factional party lines, but the tendency of conglomerates to shy away from controversy, the history of state intervention, and the popularity of nationalism discourage dissenting opinion on international developments that immediately impact Turkey. More diverse views appear in the mainstream press in periodic swings engendered by fluctuating domestic and foreign factors, and more consistently in small circulation sectarian, ethnic, political, organizational, and professional periodicals, which have limited distribution after restrictions by major media conglomerates or the courts.

### ***1.3. Legal Environment Governing Journalism***

Article 26 of the Constitution proclaims freedom of the press, and the state and media establishments annually celebrate the anniversary of the lifting of press censorship on 24 July 1908. The reality, however, is noticeably different. Under the original and recently amended Article 301 of the new Turkish Penal Code, journalists are subject to heavy penalties for crossing official taboos or vaguely defined Turkish national sensitivities. After being forced to resign from unions soon after the 1980 coup, journalists fear being fired for controversial articles. Lawsuits are also frequently brought against the authors of controversial articles. All this has created the conditions for the application of self-censorship on sensitive subjects, thus creating the impression that both the secularists and Islamists take a monolithic approach when it comes to fundamental ethnic and foreign policy issues.

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#### **1.4. *Secularism vs Islam***

Two major groups of mainstream media have emerged by 2008. The first is the secularist media. The primary representatives of this group are the Dogan Media Group [more formally "Dogan Publications Holding" or its Turkish acronym DYH] owned by businessman Aydin Dogan and the Cukuruva Media Group owned by businessman Mehmet Emin Karamehmet. At its fringes, this first group also incorporates the Kuvvay-i Milliye papers. The other is the emergent pro-government Islamic/liberal media promoted by the supporters of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government on behalf of various religious, business, and political entities like the moderate Islamic Fethullah Gulen sect, the Albayrak and Calik groups, and the liberal Second Republicans as a counterbalance to the more entrenched secularist media. At its fringes, the second group also includes radical Islamic-nationalist papers like *Vakit*, and National View organization leader and former Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's *Milli Gazete*. The Kadiri sect leader Haydar Bas's *Yeni Mesaj*, which in the Black Sea area promotes a mixture of Kemalism and Islam with strong undertones of anti-Westernism and anti-Christianity, is a hybrid of the two.

#### **1.5. *Ethnic Papers***

In addition to these two main Turkish media groups, there are also the long-established Greek, Jewish, and Armenian papers, the most prominent of the latter is the *Agos* paper, formerly owned by Hrant Dink who was murdered after trying to promote Turkish-Armenian dialogue over the genocide issue. Kurdish media have been evolving for the last 20 years as an ideological affiliate to the PKK despite constant harassment from the Turkish state.

#### **1.6. *Military Influence in Media***

The desire of the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) to play a major role in political life constitutes yet another influence on the media. The TSK's sway on the media has been strong during direct military interventions and subtle at other times in Turkish history. In addition to maintaining its own media outlets, including a web page, the TSK also attempts to influence the thinking of journalists and bureaucrats through various think tanks, seminars, and special training sessions at the Armed Forces Academy.

#### **1.7. *Concepts Unique to Turkish Media Environment***

A better understanding of the Turkish media also requires a brief explanation of certain terms used to characterize newspapers.

- **"Ataturkism" and "Kemalism":** Among secularists, circles wanting Turkey's Westernization generally describe themselves as "Ataturkist" and stress that part of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's legacy calling for "democratization," "modernization," and "Westernization." Staunch republicans, leftists, and anti-Westerners call themselves "Kemalists" and stress Ataturk's adoption of Leninist autarkic economic models and his brief alliance with Communist Russia. As a corollary, they regard the National Liberation War of 1920's as a struggle against the "imperialist" West and its "fifth column" -- the "local foreigners (the other indigenous groups in Turkey)." While the

Ataturkist press publishes photos of Ataturk in Western attire, the Kemalists prefer photos of him wearing a Caucasian fur cap or a military uniform.

- **Kuvvay-i Milliye [National Forces] Press:** This is a term that refers to the Kemalist press, the core of which is made up of *Cumhuriyet*, *Ortadogu*, *YeniCag*, *Aydinlik*, and *Yeni Mesaj*. These papers support those who believe Turkey has once again come under political and economic attack from the West and should therefore rise up and wage another "anti-imperialistic" war of liberation by reviving the spirit of the 1920's.
- **The "Second Republicans" [Ikinci Cumhuriyetçiler]:** A group of Turkish intellectuals led by the Altan brothers, Ahmet and Mehmet, who argue that the republic established by Ataturk fulfilled its mission and now has become a conservative and regressive entity. Thus, Turkey must begin the process of modernizing, liberalizing, and democratizing itself with the help of people with a new mentality through the establishment of a "Second Republic," which is neither Ataturkist nor Kemalist. The Second Republicans have a significant presence in the daily *Star* and are in full control of the daily *Taraf*. The most prominent members of this group also write in [www.gazetem.net](http://www.gazetem.net) for Internet readers.

## 2. Media Supportive of State-Sponsored Secularism

### 2.1. Dogan Media Group Papers

#### 2.1.1. Dogan Holding



**Dogan Holding**, ["Dogan Sirketler Grubu Holding A.S."] is a holding company, owned by the Dogan Group, providing management consultancy, finance, and internal audit services to its subsidiaries. It is active in the media, entertainment, energy, industry, trade, insurance, and tourism sectors. The company maintains a portfolio of several newspapers, periodicals, and television channels.

**Dogan Publications Holding [Dogan Yayin Holding (DYH)]** is Turkey's leading media and entertainment conglomerate, operating in TV and radio broadcasting and print and online media. The DYH publishes *Hurriyet*, *Milliyet*, *Radikal*, *Posta*, *Fanatik*, *Referans*, and more recently the *Turkish Daily News* -- the country's premier English-language newspaper -- giving it control of 40 percent of the 4.1 million Turkish papers sold daily. The DYH, through its control of the major national dailies, plays an important role in shaping public opinion, especially among those segments of society who fear the Islamization trend under the AKP. Not all its columnists, however, espouse anti-AKP sentiments as some liberal columnists in this group have been rather critical of the secularists' campaign against the AKP government.

### 2.1.2. *Hurriyet* [Freedom]



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Hurriyet* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- center-right, mass appeal daily; one of country's top circulation papers, owned by Aydin Dogan, head of the Dogan Media Group -- URL: [www.hurriyet.com.tr/](http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/)
- **Editor in Chief:** Ertugrul Ozkok
- **Circulation:** 504,782 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Contact Information:** Address: Hurriyet Medya Towers: Gunesli-34212 Istanbul; tel: (0-212) 677 03 44; fax: (0-212) 677 03 40.

**Key Journalists:** Oktay Eksi sets the tone for radical secularists. Ertugrul Ozkok sets the overall nationalistic tone of the newspaper. Mehmet Y. Yilmaz takes a nationalistic and anti-AKP position. Ahmet Hakan, once an Islamist, has now become a critic of the AKP. People's Rising Party (HYP) leader and member of parliament Yasar Nuri Ozturk, known as "the public theologian," writes on Islamic issues in an attempt to reconcile Islam with Ataturkism and as such is opposed to AKP's religious radicalism. Ferai Tinc touches mostly on foreign affairs, and Ercan Kumcu, as a former deputy president of the Central Bank, comments on economic issues.

**Editorial Line:** *Hurriyet* is a strongly nationalistic, pro-army, pro-state, and pro-secular paper.

**History:** *Hurriyet* was established on 1 May 1948 by the Simavi family and is presently owned by Dogan Holding CEO Aydin Dogan. During the Cold War, it was a sensationalist paper that influenced public opinion with its eye-catching nationalistic headlines, colorful pictures, and brief reports that either had nothing to do with the headlines or appeared to be completely unsubstantiated. In recent years, the paper has made considerable changes but retains many sensationalist characteristics.

While the paper now deals more seriously with political issues, the ongoing conflict between the statist and reformists continues to cause some editorial disarray. Columnists often disagree with the banner headlines, but they also attack each other personally, accusing one another of corruption or treason.

### 2.1.3. *Milliyet* [Nation]



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Milliyet* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- centrist, mass appeal daily; one of country's top circulation papers, owned by Aydin Dogan, head of the Dogan Media Group -- URL: [www.milliyet.com.tr/](http://www.milliyet.com.tr/)
- **Circulation:** 232,784 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Sedat Ergin
- **Contact Information:** Address: Dogan Medya Center, Bagcilar 34204 Istanbul; tel: 5056111; fax: 5056233

**Key Journalists:** Taha Akyol, a nationalist sociologist, attempts to reconcile secularism with Islam. Cetin Altan is a liberal man of letters, notable for his anecdotal columns. Hasan Cemal, once a firebrand pro-military agitator, now consistently takes a liberal position and opposes military intervention in politics and bellicosity in foreign policy. Sami Kohen is a liberal commentator on foreign affairs. Semih Idiz, a pro-nationalist commentator, focuses on international affairs impacting Turkey. Gungor Uras is an economist with great ability to explain complex economic problems in simple terms understandable to ordinary people.

**Editorial Line:** *Milliyet* is a nationalistic paper with a liberal slant. Though not as popular as *Hurriyet*, it is generally considered more serious and reliable. It is "favored by well-educated individuals and key opinion makers," says [www.doganholding.com](http://www.doganholding.com) in its profile of the paper.

**History:** *Milliyet* was established on 3 May 1950 by Ali Naci Karaca. The Ipekci family then owned it until 1979 when Aydin Dogan purchased the paper. In 2000, the paper briefly passed to the control of Idealist (Ulkucu) Korkmaz Yigit (owner of Turk Ticaret Bankasi and Kanal-E) but he had to give it up after the revelation of his ties with Mafia boss Alaattin Cakici. The paper is now one of the national dailies controlled by Aydin Dogan.

#### 2.1.4. *Posta* [Post]



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Posta* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- sensationalist mass appeal daily -- URL: [www.postagazetesi.net](http://www.postagazetesi.net).
- **Circulation:** 634,421 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Rifat Ababay
- **Contact Information:** Address: Dogan Medya Center Bagcilar 34204 Istanbul; tel: (0212) 505 61 11; fax: (0212) 505 65 20

**Key Journalists:** Mehmet Ali Birand is a liberal, moderately nationalistic columnist who, while cautious of radical Islam, seeks reconciliation rather than conflict. Rauf Tamer is a wealthy columnist who pens very short political columns. Guler Kazmaci, Mesut Yar, and Hakan Celik also pen brief columns.

**Editorial Line:** This paper has sensationalist headlines, mostly focusing on human interest items. Its only columnist of fame is Mehmet Ali Birand, whose columns in *Posta* are reprinted in other Dogan Media group papers. "The newspaper emphasizes the human dimension... and addresses Turkey's urban and rural population and appeals equally to both men and women. Its readership consists of middle to upper income wage earners," says a profile of the paper on the Dogan Holding website.

**History:** *Posta* was established on 23 January 1995 by Dogan Holding.

#### 2.1.5. *Radikal* [Radical]



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Radikal* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- center-left daily that targets intellectuals, owned by Aydin Dogan, head of the Dogan Media Group -- URL: [www.radikal.com.tr](http://www.radikal.com.tr)
- **Circulation:** 44,437 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Ismet Berkan
- **Contact Information:** Address: Yuzyil Mah. Dogan Medya Center, 34204 Bagcilar Istanbul; tel: (0212)505 61 11

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**Key Journalists:** Director Ismet Berkan sets the liberal tone of the paper. Perihan Magden is an outspoken critic of practices she describes as anti-liberal or anti-democratic. Murat Yetkin, a writer on military subjects, is considered close to the army. Altan Oymen is a radical secularist from the Republican People's Party (CHP). Namik Kemal Zeybek, a former minister of culture, is a Pan-Turkist with close links to the Nationalist Action Party (MHP) and Great Unity Party (BBP) and as such propounds Turkic cultural consciousness. Mahfi Egilmez, as a former deputy director of the Treasury, pens economic articles.

**Editorial Line:** The paper's staff is made up of both liberals and old-style nationalists who shape the paper's discordant editorial line. Recently, its most liberal and scholarly columnist Murat Belge moved to the new liberal daily *Taraf* arguing in an interview with Sabah on 1 June that he could not stay with the paper as it is "not committed to democracy from A to Z." *Radikal* reaches more liberal readers through its supplement called "Radikal 2," with articles penned exclusively by liberal writers.

The Dogan Group's own description of *Radikal* says it "is a niche market newspaper targeting well-educated urban readers with a current and intellectual editorial slant...*Radikal*'s readers are young, well-educated, middle-to-high-income earners. The newspaper's primary objectives are to increase its market share of total newspaper sales and help foster a more intellectual climate in Turkey" (Dogan Group advertorial as posted on [www.doganholding.com](http://www.doganholding.com) on 25 August 2008).

**History:** Established on 13 October 1996 by Dogan Holding.

#### 2.1.6. Referans [Reference]

### Referans

TÜRKİYE'NİN İŞ GAZETESİ

- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Referans* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- Business daily owned by Aydin Dogan, head of the Dogan Media Group; sister publication of *Turkish Daily News* -- URL: [www.referansgazetesi.com/](http://www.referansgazetesi.com/)
- **Circulation:** 15,107 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Eyup Can Saglik
- **Contact Information:** Address: Hurriyet Medya Towers, Gunesli 34212 Istanbul; tel: (0212) 677 00 00; fax: (0212) 449 60 47

**Key Journalists:** Eyup Can, a liberal political commentator close to the Second Republicans, usually comments on the link between political developments and the economy. Cengiz Candar pens political columns critical of anti-democratic forces trying to undermine the AKP government and is averse to bellicosity in foreign policy. Noyan Dogan, Seyfettin Gursel, and Baturalp Candemir write mostly on economic issues.

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**Editorial Line:** *Referans* is a liberal political and financial newspaper. According to Dogan Groups' own description, *Referans* targets "open-minded, sophisticated young business men and women in a rapidly changing Turkey" (www.doganholding.com).

**History:** *Referans* was established on 31 May 2004.

### 2.1.7. *Sozcu* [Spokesman]



- **Source Descriptor:** A Kemalist nationalist paper supportive of radical secularism, no website.
- **Circulation:** 109,168 daily (5-11 May 2008 period)
- **Editor in Chief:** Metin Yilmaz
- **Contact Information:** Address: Aytac Mahallesi, Atlas Sokak, Atlas Is Merkezi A Blok Kat: 5 Halkali-Istanbul; tel: (0212) 698 60 06; fax: 0212 698 49 49

**Key Journalists:** Sinan Aygun is the fiercely nationalist leader of the Ankara Chamber of Commerce who was briefly detained on 1 July 2008 in the investigation of the alleged Ergenekon conspiracy. Vural Savas is the former chief prosecutor and outspoken opponent of Islamists. Emin Colasan is a radical nationalist, and pro-army columnist with a reportedly extensive following. Other lesser-known columnists write about what they describe as the threat facing the secular state.

**Editorial Line:** *Sozcu* is considered to be a defender of republican principles and is distinctly anti-AKP government. Its masthead slogan reads: "Spokesman for the people, watchman of the republic," and it has a graphic of Ataturk's watchful eyes. Emin Colasan's and Vural Savas's columns confirm the secularist-Ataturkist credentials of this paper.

**History:** *Sozcu* is a Dogan Group daily that replaced Dogan Group's own 10-year-old *Gozcu* [Watchman] newspaper on 27 June 2007 following complaints that *Gozcu* had become too critical of the AKP government. *Sozcu* is the voice of the radical Kemalist opposition and acts as a defender of the Ataturk and republican principles by claiming editorial independence, despite being owned by the Dogan Group, in order to avoid strong government reaction, according to journalist Huseyin Akyol in his book *From News Press to Islamist Media* (January 2008) and a report in anti2k.blogcu.com.

### 2.1.8. *Turkish Daily News*



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Turkish Daily News* (Electronic Edition) in English -- English-language centrist daily owned by the Dogan Media Group -- URL: [www.turkishdailynews.com](http://www.turkishdailynews.com)
- **Circulation:** 2,802 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** David Judson
- **Contact Information:** Address: Hurriyet Medya Towers Gunesli 34212-Istanbul; tel: +90 (212) 6770000-2516580; fax: (212) 2454730

**Key Journalists:** Yusuf Kanli, editorialist, sets the tone of paper's secular and nationalist credentials. Editor in Chief David Judson mostly touches on editorial policy and management issues. Except for the work of these two commentators, the rest of columns are mostly translated versions of the Turkish originals penned in Dogan Media Group's Turkish-language papers by columnists like Ilter Turkmen, Mehmet Ali Birand, Cengiz Candar, Burak Bekdil, Cuneyt Ulsever, Semih Idiz, Gila Benmayor, and Cengiz Aktar.

**Editorial Line:** The *Turkish Daily News* is a liberal paper that targets mainly foreign diplomats. Since its readership is limited primarily to foreigners, it does not often censor controversial items. Dogan Media Group's own description of the paper says: "The *Turkish Daily News* is the leading source of local news for foreign nationals living in Turkey. According to market studies, 60% of its readers are foreign nationals, and 40% are highly educated Turkish citizens, of which 80% are university graduates ([www.doganholding.com](http://www.doganholding.com))." Dogan Holding's site also notes that despite its low hardcopy circulation, the paper's Internet version "currently receives over 450,000 hits a day, with registered readers numbering more than 40,000."

**History:** Turkey's first English-language daily was established by the Cevik family in Ankara on 15 March 1961 with help from the Turkish Foreign Ministry. Ilnur Cevik sold the paper to the Dogan Group in January 2000, at which time it was transferred to Istanbul.

### 2.1.9. *Vatan* [Homeland]



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Vatan* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- center-right, mass appeal daily; owned by Aydin Dogan, head of the Dogan Media Group -- URL: [www.vatanim.com.tr](http://www.vatanim.com.tr)
- **Circulation:** 199,448 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Tayfun Devecioglu
- **Contact Information:** Address: Buyukdere Cad. No: 123, 34349 Gayrettepe-Istanbul; tel: (0212) 354 54 54

**Key Journalists:** Gungor Mengi and Ruhat Mengi, as the major editorialists for the paper, set the paper's nationalistic, secularist, and anti-AKP tone. Rusen Cakir comments mostly on issues relating to the AKP, Okay Gonensin is a radical secularist commenting on domestic and foreign issues, and Asaf Savas Akat pens economic columns. The paper's director of publications and columnist Selahattin Duman is said to be challenging the Mengi couple's influence on the paper.

**Editorial Line:** *Vatan* generally carries a strongly nationalistic tone set by administrative board member and leading columnist Gungor Mengi and his wife Ruhat Mengi. In an attempt to provide more balanced reporting, the paper also hosts several liberal columnists.

**History:** *Vatan* was founded on 4 September 2002 by Zafer Mutlu's group, which had defected from *Sabah* newspaper. The paper has been supported by the Dogan Group since its inception but was not formally purchased by it until 13 March 2008. Since the purchase, *Vatan* has begun posting an active Internet page in an attempt to draw a broader readership.

## 2.2. *Cukurova Group Papers*

### 2.2.1. *Cukurova Holding*



According to the holding's own profile on [www.cukurovaholding.com](http://www.cukurovaholding.com): "The core business areas of the Cukurova Group are industry, construction, communication and information technology, media, transportation and services, trade, financial services, and energy. The Cukurova Group aims at taking a greater share of media and media-related industries in Turkey by providing both technical infrastructure and content simultaneously." *Cukurova Holding*, which belongs to Mehmet Emin Karamehmet, is mostly involved in digital media and has as its main newspaper outlets *Aksam*, *Gunes*, and *Tercuman*. The group's relative share in digital and print media is unknown.

This OSC product is based exclusively on the content and behavior of selected media and has not been coordinated with other US Government components.

### 2.2.2. *Aksam [Evening]*

The logo for AKSAM is displayed in a red rectangular box with the word "AKSAM" in white, bold, uppercase letters.

- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Turkiye'de Aksam* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- center-right daily owned by Cukurova industrial and financial group, headed by prominent industrialist Mehmet Emin Karamehmet -- URL: [www.aksam.com.tr](http://www.aksam.com.tr)
- **Circulation:** 191,193 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Serdar Turgut
- **Contact Information:** Merkezefendi Mah. Davutpasa Cad. No: 34 Zeytinburnu-Istanbul; tel: (212) 449 30 00; fax: (212) 4819561

**Key Journalists:** Serdar Turgut pens editorials on a variety of subjects, but his fame is mostly related to articles he once wrote on sexual subjects. Guler Komurcu, a radical nationalist, pens political columns -- she was briefly held on charges of participating in the Ergenekon conspiracy. Sedat Sertoglu writes political columns, and Deniz Gokce, Ali Tezel, and a number of other columnists write on the economy.

**Editorial Line:** *Aksam* is considered a pro-business, nationalistic paper. The impact of the paper comes mostly from its occasional exclusive reports or interviews rather than from its modest editorial board.

**History:** *Aksam* was considered one of Turkey's leading papers in the 1960's. The Cukurova Group purchased it in 1994. Today, the publisher is T Medya Yatirim [T Media Investment], a subsidiary of the Cukurova Group.

### 2.2.3. *Gunes [Sun]*

The logo for GÜNEŞ is displayed in a red rectangular box with the word "GÜNEŞ" in white, bold, uppercase letters.

- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Gunes* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- a sensationalist mass appeal daily -- URL: [www.gunes.com](http://www.gunes.com)
- **Circulation:** 163,589 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Murat Buyukcelebi
- **Contact Information:** Merkezefendi Mah. Davutpasa Cad. No: 34 Zeytinburnu-Istanbul; tel: (0212) 449 30 10; fax: (0212) 481 95 71

This OSC product is based exclusively on the content and behavior of selected media and has not been coordinated with other US Government components.

**Key Journalists:** Riza Zelyut is a prominent Alevi columnist who addresses political and religious issues. Other columnists mostly pen short articles on human interest issues.

**Editorial Line:** As an Alevi and a pro-secularist, Riza Zelyut sets the anti-AKP tone of the paper.

**History:** Karamehmet's Cukurova Group started publishing *Gunes* on 4 February 1997.

#### 2.2.4. *HO Tercuman [Interpreter of Events and People]*



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Halk'a ve Olaylara Tercuman* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- a nationalistic paper published by Mehmet Emin Karamehmet's Cukurova Group -- URL: [www.tercuman.com.tr](http://www.tercuman.com.tr)
- **Circulation:** 25,145 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Ufuk Buyukcelebi
- **Contact Information:** Davutpasa Caddesi, No: 34, Zeytinburbu-Istanbul; tel: (0212) 449 30 00; fax: (0212) 481 95 50

**Key Journalists:** Metin Ozkan writes on political and economic issues. Behic Kilic writes on the historic roots of political developments. Esfender Korkmaz writes on politics and the economy. Veli Saritoprak writes on socio-political issues. Aydin Menderes, son of former Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, writes both on domestic and foreign issues. Chief editor, Ufuk Buyukcelebi, was held briefly during the Ergenekon investigation.

**Editorial Line:** *Tercuman* is a pro-Ataturkist, and strongly nationalist paper that accuses the AKP government of acting as the tool of the EU.

**History:** Karamehmet purchased the trade name "*Tercuman*" from the Ilicak family in 2003 but did not publish the paper. When Nazli Ilicak launched her own paper the *Dunden Bugune Tercuman*, known as *DBTercuman*, in the same year, Karamehmet responded by launching the *HOTercuman* on 17 January 2003. Ilicak's *DBTercuman* eventually went bankrupt.

## 2.3. *Kuvvayi Milliye [National-Liberation Forces] Papers*

### 2.3.1. *Cumhuriyet [Republic]*

# Cumhuriyet

Bu ülkenin aydınlık insanları. Size Cumhuriyet yakışır.

- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Cumhuriyet* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- Kemalist daily -- URL: [www.cumhuriyet.com](http://www.cumhuriyet.com)
- **Circulation:** 82,637 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Ibrahim Yildiz
- **Contact Information:** Yeni Gun Haber Ajansi Basın ve Yayıncılık A.S, Prof. Nurettin Mazhar Oktel Sk. No: 2. 34381 Sisli/Istanbul; tel: (0212) 343 72 74 (20 hat); fax: (0212) 343 72 64

**Key Journalists:** İlhan Selçuk, Hikmet Çetinkaya, Mustafa Balbay, Cüneyt Arcayürek, Ali Sirmen, and Erol Manisalı all write very similar columns on the Islamic threat, especially the threat from the AKP and the West to the secular republic and Kemalism.

**Editorial Line:** *Cumhuriyet* is leftist, strongly nationalistic, and secularist, critical of both the Fethullah Gülen sect and the AKP government. It has also become deeply critical of the army leadership's unwillingness to take forceful action against the Islamists, even though it has long been considered a strongly pro-army paper. Allegations that the United States imposed the AKP on Turkey to promote moderate Islam, undermine the Turkish nation-state, and pave the way for the emergence of an independent Kurdish state in the region, have been a theme of commentary. Oral Calışlar, the paper's only liberal columnist, left the *Cumhuriyet* for *Radikal* because of what he described as its shift to anti-democratic radical secularism. Two of its most prominent columnists, İlhan Selçuk and Mustafa Balbay, were detained briefly in connection with the Ergenekon investigation.

**History:** The Nadi family started publishing *Cumhuriyet* on 7 May 1924 and ran the paper until 2001 when a group led by İlhan Selçuk took control of the paper and still owns it today.

### 2.3.2. *Ortadoğu* [Middle East]



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Ortadoğu* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- paper supportive of right-wing Nationalist Action Party (MHP) -- URL: [www.ortadogugazetesi.net](http://www.ortadogugazetesi.net)
- **Circulation:** 8,990 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Mehmet Muftuoglu
- **Contact Information:** Fabrikalar cad. No: 1 Besyol-Sefakoy/Istanbul; tel: (0212) 425 36 50; fax: (0212) 624 53 29

**Key Journalists:** Orhan Karatas, Ulvi Izzet, Mustafa Ertekin, Orhan Tahsin, and Taylan Sorgun touch on political issues, most propounding the MHP party line and criticizing the AKP for making concessions to the EU and minorities.

**Editorial Line:** *Ortadoğu* is a strongly nationalist paper in line with the Kemalist ideology. While not anti-Islamic, *Ortadoğu* is critical of the AKP, especially its attempt to introduce EU-related reforms and its policies toward minority ethnic groups. Nevertheless, it has expressed support for the AKP on some legislation, like the lifting of the headscarf ban.

**History:** *Ortadoğu* was established on 3 May 1972 to propagate the views of the MHP and act as its media organ.

### 2.3.3. *Yeni Cag [New Age]*



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Türkiye'de Yenicag* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- daily reflecting the views of hard-line nationalists inside the Nationalist Action Party -- URL: [www.yenicaggazetesi.com.tr](http://www.yenicaggazetesi.com.tr)
- **Circulation:** 54,316 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Hayri Koklu
- **Contact Information:** Cobancesme mah. Kalender Sok. No: 12 Yenibosna 34550/Istanbul; tel: (212) 452 40 40; fax: (212) 452 40 55

**Key Journalists:** Altemur Kilic writes on domestic and foreign issues with a very strong influence of nationalism and Kemalism. Arslan Bulut writes on political and economic issues also with strong anti-Western voice. Hulki Cevizoglu, a prolific author of books on Western and Papal conspiracies against Turkey, writes in the same vein. Sabahattin Onkibar, once a prominent columnist for *Türkiye*, writes on political issues as well as articles critical of the AKP. Former Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktas writes on Cyprus issues, propounding a hard-line position on the Cyprus issue.

**Editorial Line:** *Yeni Cag* is a Kemalist, strongly nationalistic paper. Allegations that foreign, especially Western, powers have diabolical designs on Turkey and calls for Turks to wage a new national liberation struggle against these powers are a theme in commentary. The paper is also critical of the AKP government, regarding its liberal reforms as a threat to Turkey's existence. The paper is especially hostile to Greece, the Greek Patriarchate, and alleged Greek designs on Pontus in the Black Sea region.

**History:** *Yeni Cag* started publication on 13 September 2002 as the mouthpiece of the radical opposition group inside the MHP. Its proprietor is Ahmet Celik who operates the paper on behalf of A Yayincilik ve Matbaacilik.

#### 2.3.4. *Aydinlik* [Enlightenment]



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Aydinlik* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- left-wing Kemalist weekly, owned by Dogu Perincek's Labor Party -- URL: [www.aydinlik.com.tr/](http://www.aydinlik.com.tr/)
- **Circulation:** Unknown.
- **Editor in Chief:** Serhan Bolluk
- **Contact Information:** Tel: (0212) 251 51 22

**Key Journalists:** Dogu Perincek, Sule Perincek (wife of Dogu), Mehmet Perincek (son of Dogu), Suha Baykal, and Emcet Olcaytu all write similar pro-Kemalist and pro-army articles critical of the AKP, the United States, and Armenian claims.

**Editorial Line:** *Aydinlik* is a pro-Kemalist, pro-army publication calling on Turks to wage a new national liberation war against Western imperialists. It also calls for the closure of the AKP, which it considers to be a tool used by the West to undermine the nation state in Turkey. It portrays Ataturk as a major leftist revolutionary. Although in the past the paper was highly critical of Islam, it has recently started to portray Prophet Muhammad as an important social revolutionary.

**History:** Labor Party (LP) leader Dogu Perincek established *Aydinlik* in the 1960's as a state-supported Maoist paper aimed at countering Soviet communism. Though it had a small readership, the paper's role in sharpening the political conflict in Turkey with reports of conspiracy has been considerable. Since the late 1990's, it has acted as the army's mouthpiece against the Islamist movement.

*Aydinlik's* sister television station, Ulusal Kanal, was established with the help of the army and frequently hosts retired generals.

The paper's editor Dogu Perincek, who also is the head of the Talat Pasha Movement that opposes Armenian claims of genocide, was detained in March in the Ergenekon investigation. Similarly, Ulusal Kanal Director Ferit Ilsever, *Aydinlik* Editor in Chief Serhan Bolluk, and journalist Adnan Akfirat were also detained on 21 March 2008 as part of the investigation.

### 2.3.5. *Yeni Mesaj* [New Message]

## Yeni Mesaj

- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Yeni Mesaj* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- pro-Islamic and pro-Kemalist daily expounding the views of Kadiri sect leader and head of the Independent Turkey Party Haydar Bas -- URL: [www.yenimesaj.com.tr](http://www.yenimesaj.com.tr)
- **Circulation:** 5,630 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Mehmet Emin Koc
- **Contact Information:** Address: Sefakoy Besyol Mah. Inonu cad. No: 96, Kucukcekmece, Istanbul; tel: (212) 4251066

**Key Journalists:** Murat Cabas, M. Hilmi Yildirim, Ugur Kepekci, Kevser Duyurum, and Zuhtu Kazanci praise Haydar Bas's economic model, criticize the AKP government, suspect Western designs on the Black Sea, and oppose interfaith dialogue with Christian churches.

**Editorial Line:** *Yeni Mesaj* advocates a mixture of Kemalist-nationalism and Islamism and openly claims to be the vanguard of the Kuvvay-i Milliye movement. It is strongly anti-Western and opposes any interfaith dialogue with the Christian world and hence is an opponent of the Fethullah Gulen sect, which seeks interfaith dialogue and globalization. As a Kemalist paper, it is also critical of the AKP, which it describes as a tool in the hands of the EU and the United States to undermine the Turkish economy and army.

**History:** *Yeni Mesaj* is one of the organs of Professor Haydar Bas's Independent Turkey Party (BTP). Together with the group's Meltem and Mesaj television stations, the paper serves as a propaganda tool promoting the ideas of Bas's book *National Economic Model*, which is seen by *Yeni Mesaj* columnists as an antidote to rapacious capitalism. Bas's model says the West is trying to partition Turkey with the use of the IMF and World Bank and therefore calls for a return to Kemalist autarky in place of this brand of globalization. (See the English-language text of the model at [www.milliekonomimodeli.com](http://www.milliekonomimodeli.com).)

### 3. Pro-Islamic, Liberal, Leftist Media

#### 3.1. *Vakit* [Time]



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Anadolu'da Vakit* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- Islamic fundamentalist daily -- URL: [www.vakit.com.tr](http://www.vakit.com.tr)
- **Circulation:** 69,435 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Ahmet Karahasanoglu
- **Contact Information:** 43. Ada No: 55 Istoc Bagcilar Istanbul; tel: 0212 659 20 56; fax: 0212 447 42 09

**Key Journalists:** Ali Ihsan Karahasanoglu is a critic of secularists, especially of their attempt to impose a headscarf ban. Abdurrahman Dilipak defends the Islamic way of life while expressing tolerance toward other beliefs, and he takes a nationalistic line on foreign issues. Hasan Karakaya often blames Jews for societal problems and criticizes Jewish and Armenian influence on Turkish society. Serdar Arseven argues that Zionism created hostility between Turks and Arabs to divide the Islamic world. Huseyin Ozturk writes on travel impressions and cultural issues but also criticizes the Turkish elite's "plunder" of the national wealth as well as missionary activity in Turkey.

**Editorial Line:** *Vakit* is critical of the perceived undemocratic intolerance of the secularist regime toward Islam. It advocates a place for Islam in society, deplors what it describes as Zionist-Western manipulation of Turkish media, and portrays Jewish, Armenian, and Greek citizens as foreign elements who pose a danger to Turkey. While supporting the AKP against secularists, the paper often expresses disenchantment with the AKP's inability to secure the internal cohesion needed to pursue forceful policies. In the eyes of the AKP, *Vakit* is bound to remain a marginal paper because of its radicalism, says *Aksam* editor Serdar Turgut (*Aksam*, 27 November 2007).

**History:** *Vakit* replaced *Akit* on 5 December 2001 after *Akit's* financial crisis brought on by various libel actions filed against it by secularists.

#### 3.2. *Sabah* [Morning]



The Calik Group bought *Sabah* as its first media acquisition. According to *Forbes* magazine, entrepreneur Ahmet Calik "owns one of the world's top ten denim producers," and "sells products to Diesel, Levi Strauss, Armani, Gap and other Western brands." Calik amassed his wealth in part through his relationship with the late Turkmenistan president, Saparmurad

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Niyazov, who appointed him the "official gatekeeper" for the "sale of Turkmen natural gas, oil, and electricity to Turkish market" (www.forbes.com). Calik Holding's own Internet site www.caliknet.com says: "Based in Istanbul, Calik Holding offers goods and services to a diverse range of customers including joint ventures, multinationals, and individuals operating in sectors such as construction, energy, textiles, finance, trade and logistics."

Regarding its newly founded media subsidiary "Turkuvaz Media Group," the site says: "Two separate banks [Turkish state banks] provided a loan for the USD 750 million of the USD 1.1 billion tender price [for the Sabah group on 22 April 2008]. Owing a 25% share in Turkuvaz Radio and Television Journalism and Publication Company, our Qatar media partner transferred to Turkuvaz A.S. USD 125 million in equities related to the partnership while Calik Holding transferred USD 375 million from its equity holdings. Hence, Turkuvaz A.S. obtained USD 500 million in equity capital from two of its partners. As a result of this capital structure, Turkuvaz Media Group notably has the highest paid capital of all media groups in Turkey... ATV-Sabah media group's publications, broadcast stations, and organizations now look to the future with greater confidence under the management of Turkuvaz A.S."



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Sabah* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- center-right, mass appeal daily; owned by Calik Group, close to the ruling Justice and Development Party -- URL: [sabah.com.tr](http://sabah.com.tr)
- **Circulation:** 401,430 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Ergun Babahan
- **Contact Information:** Address: Barbaros Bulvari No: 125, Cam Han, Kat: 5 Besiktas, Istanbul; tel: (0212) 354 30 00

**Key Journalists:** Erdal Safak, as the editor, sets the paper's nationalistic tone. Nazli Ilicak criticizes radical secularists and defends the AKP government. Mehmet Barlas, a liberal writer, is critical of the radicalism of secularists and broadly supportive of the AKP government. Ergun Babahan, Muharrem Sarikaya, and Yavuz Donat write on political issues with a nationalistic voice, and Engin Ardic is known for clear, direct columns on political issues.

**Editorial Line:** *Sabah* is a nationalistic paper supportive of the AKP government. Especially since its acquisition by the Calik Group, the paper has become critical of the CHP and a defender of the AKP.

**History:** *Sabah* was launched by the Bilgin family on 22 April 1985. The Savings Deposit Insurance Fund, which insures deposits in Turkey's banks, seized the paper on 1 April 2007

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after discovering instances of sales fraud between the paper's proprietor Dinc Bilgin and his partner Turgay Ciner. Turkuvaz Radio Television Newspapers and Publishers Ltd., a subsidiary of the Calik Group, acquired Sabah Publications Group on 22 April 2008.

*Turkish Daily News* reported on 24 April 2008 that "Calik Holding, known for its close relations with the AKP government, paid \$1.1 billion for the Sabah-ATV media group." By acquiring *Sabah*, the Calik Group also took possession of the ATV channel, Radio City, the *Takvim*, *Gunaydin*, *Yeni Asir*, and *Pas Fotomac* newspapers, as well as a series of magazines including *Bebegim ve Biz*, *Sinema*, *Sofra*, *Home Art*, *Samdan Plus*, *Yeni Aktuel*, *Para*, *Global Enerji*, *Transport*, and *Hukuki Perspektifler*. *Turkish Daily News* pointed out that "the financing of the acquisition triggered worries over the relationship between media and the government." The paper quotes academician Dogan Tilic as saying that "this sale, thanks to loans from state banks, is another sign of the disturbingly close relations between the media and political power in Turkey...With the AKP in power, a pro-AKP media group is being built."

To highlight *Sabah's* new affiliation with Prime Minister Erdogan, Cengiz Ozdemir wrote in the *Bugun* daily on 14 April that *Yeni Safak* owner Sadik Albayrak's two sons have been working for Calik Holding for many years. When Serhat Albayrak left Calik Holding to work for the *Star* newspaper, his brother Berat Albayrak, who is married to Prime Minister Erdogan's daughter Esra, replaced Serhat as the director of Calik Holding. Serhat is also a shareholder and board member of Calik Group's media company Turkuvaz. As a sign of further linkage between Prime Minister Erdogan and Sabah, Ahmet Tezcan, the adviser to Erdogan on media affairs, was appointed as adviser to Turkuvaz Media Group CEO Serhat Albayrak (according to a 3 September 2008 report on media site [www.superpoligon.com](http://www.superpoligon.com)). Ozdemir believes that under the new media ownership there will develop a "real competition between Aydin Dogan, Ahmet Calik, Mehmet Emin Karamehmet, and Turgay Ciner." The open clash in early September 2008 between PM Erdogan and Dogan Media Group CEO Aydin Dogan on the way Dogan's papers reported on the case of the charity organization "Light House" is also seen as a showdown between the secular and Islamic media.

### 3.3. *Yeni Asya* [New Asia]

## YENİASYA

- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Yeni Asya* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- an Islamic paper supportive of democratic reforms -- URL: [yenciasya.com.tr](http://yenciasya.com.tr)
- **Circulation:** 7,542 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Kazim Gulecyuz
- **Contact Information:** Address: Contr: Gulbahar Cd. Gunay Sk 7 Gunesli 34212 Istanbul; tel: (0212) 655 88 59; fax: (0212) 515 67 62

This OSC product is based exclusively on the content and behavior of selected media and has not been coordinated with other US Government components.

**Key Journalists:** Faruk Cakir, Cevher Ilhan, Ali Fersadoglu, M. Latif Salihoglu, and Sabah Dogen write on socio-political issues from a religious perspective, using old-style Turkish words taken from Arabic.

**Editorial Line:** The paper is pro-Islamic but not pro-AKP. *Yeni Asya* is critical of both secularists and the Islamist AKP government. In particular, it believes the AKP is impeding democracy by not adopting EU reforms fast enough. The paper gained brief prominence when its owner Mehmet Kutlular declared after the 1999 earthquake that it was God's warning to Turkey.

**History:** *Yeni Asya* began publication on 21 February 1970. The paper is one of the organs of the Nur Sect established by Said Nursi.

### 3.4. *Yeni Safak [New Dawn]*



Albayrak Group's Internet site at [www.albayrak.com.tr](http://www.albayrak.com.tr) notes that the business group was launched in 1952 in the construction sector. It then branched out into transportation, waste disposal in Istanbul, textile, and machine-making industry. It also operates the Port of Trabzon. Today, the group owns more than 50 firms. It established *Yeni Safak* in 1995 and later acquired TV NET. The media section of the group is administered by Ahmet Albayrak, the eldest of six brothers who run the Albayrak Group. The family is from Trabzon.

## Yeni Şafak

- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Yeni Safak* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- daily targeting Islamic reformists; close to the ruling Justice and Development Party -- URL: [www.yenisafak.com](http://www.yenisafak.com)
- **Circulation:** 102,235 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Yusuf Ziya Comert
- **Contact Information:** Yeni Dogan Mah. Kizilay Sok. No: 39 Bayrampasa/Istanbul; tel: (0212) 612 29 30; fax: (0212) 612 19 03

**Key Journalists:** Fehmi Koru (also writes under the penname Taha Kivanc) comments on political developments as a strong supporter of the AKP government; Ali Bayramoglu, as one of the liberal intellectuals who initiated the Second Republican movement, criticizes the military's involvement in politics and propounds liberal and democratic ideals. He also is sympathetic to the AKP; Kursat Bumin mostly writes on economic and energy issues; Tamer Korkmaz and Hakan Albayrak write on domestic and international political issues.

This OSC product is based exclusively on the content and behavior of selected media and has not been coordinated with other US Government components.

**Editorial Line:** *Yeni Safak* holds a pro-AKP government line and is considered to be moderately Islamic.

**History:** *Yeni Safak* started publication on 23 January 1995 as one of the media companies of the Albayrak family, which has been a longtime supporter of Prime Minister Erdogan. Reports abound that the Albayrak family was heavily involved in corruption ([www.scribd.com](http://www.scribd.com) carries a long list of corruption charges against Albayraks when Tayyip Erdogan was Istanbul mayor. See *Hurriyet* 28 April 1999 report on detentions of 59 Albayrak and Istanbul municipality officials over one of the contract scandals), using its influential political ties to amass wealth estimated at over \$1 billion. Its proprietor is Ahmet Albayrak who operates the paper on behalf of Diyalog Gazetecilik.

### 3.5. *Zaman [Time]*



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Zaman* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- moderate pro-Islamic daily supportive of Nurcu Sect leader Fethullah Gulen -- URL: [www.zaman.com.tr/](http://www.zaman.com.tr/)
- **Circulation:** 873,467 daily (5-11 May 2008 period)
- **Editor in Chief:** Ekrem Dumanli
- **Contact Information:** Address: Zaman Gazetesi, 34194 Yenibosna, Istanbul; tel: (0212) 454 1 454; fax: (0212) 454 14 67

**Key Journalists:** Ekrem Dumanli, one of the founders of the paper, comments on domestic and foreign issues. Turan Alkan, Bulent Korucu, Sahin Alpay, Ihsan Dagi, and Mumtazer Turkone write on domestic and foreign issues with an editorial consistency that avoids radicalism in religion and foreign policy.

**Editorial Line:** *Zaman* is an advocate of moderate Islam as propounded by Fethullah Gulen. Politically, it is supportive of the AKP government while being critical of the MHP and CHP.

**History:** *Zaman* was founded on 3 November 1986 as the first newspaper established by the Fethullah Gulen Group. It is said to be financed by reformist Islamic scholar and Nurcu sect leader Fethullah Gulen, who, though in exile in the United States, is believed to be gradually occupying an increasingly important place in Turkish media through the indirect acquisition of newspapers and television channels.

### 3.6. *Today's Zaman*

# TODAY'S ZAMAN

- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Today's Zaman* (Electronic Edition) in English -- website of English-language daily published by the Zaman Media Group, supported by Nurcu Sect leader Fethullah Gulen -- URL: [www.todayszaman.com](http://www.todayszaman.com)
- **Circulation:** 4, 401 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Bulent Kenes
- **Contact Information:** Address: Ahmet Taner Kislali Cad. No: 6 34194 Yenibosna, Istanbul; tel: (0212) 454 14 44; fax: (0212) 454 14 97

**Key Journalists:** Ekrem Dumanli, Kerim Balci, Andrew Finkel, Ali Bulac, and Nicole Pope write on political and cultural issues.

**Editorial Line:** *Today's Zaman*, which is published by the *Zaman* newspaper for foreign readers, is supportive of the AKP government and of moderate Islam as propounded by Fethullah Gulen.

**History:** *Today's Zaman* was launched in early 2007 as an adjunct to *Zaman* to secure a niche in the English-language media. *Today's Zaman* site says: "*Today's Zaman* is filled with national and international news in the fields of business, diplomacy, politics, culture, arts, sports and economics, in addition to commentaries, specials, and features. We have entered contractual agreements with leading newspapers like *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Times of London* to bring news and articles to our readers. We also enjoy the support of the Zaman media conglomerate and its sister agency, the Cihan News Agency, as well as feeds from The Associated Press, Reuters, the Anatolian news agency, and ANKA."

### 3.7. *Türkiye* [Turkey]



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Türkiye* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- nationalistic daily supportive of Islam as Ottoman cultural and historic legacy; owned by Enver Oren, CEO of Ihlas Holding and head of the Isikcilar sect -- URL: [www.ihlas.net.tr/TurkiyeGazetesi/](http://www.ihlas.net.tr/TurkiyeGazetesi/)
- **Circulation:** 142,118 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Nuh Albayrak
- **Contact Information:** Address: 29 Ekim Caddesi 34197 Yenibosna-Istanbul; tel: (0212) 454 30 00; fax: (0212) 454 31 00

**Key Journalists:** Abdullatif Uyan, Halil Delice, M. Ali Demirbas, Mehmet Oruc, and Mehmet Soysal write socio-historic articles that show the grandeur of Islam during the Ottoman period.

**Editorial Line:** *Türkiye* is a nationalistic, pro-Islamic daily supportive of the AKP government. The paper is one of the proponents of the so-called "Turkish-Islamic Synthesis" which aims at merging Turkish nationalism with Islam.

**History:** The Ihlas Group launched *Türkiye* on 22 April 1970 and has owned it ever since. Today, Isikcilar sect leader Mucahid Oren is its proprietor on behalf of Ihlas Gazetecilik. The paper's new director is Nuh Albayrak, who replaced Chief Editor Fuat Bol when the latter was elected AKP deputy in July 2007 (haber7.com report reprinted on [www.yeniurfa.com](http://www.yeniurfa.com)). Albayrak is a member of the pro-Gulen Journalists' and Writers' Foundation, according to [en.mfethullahgulen.com](http://en.mfethullahgulen.com).

### 3.8. *Milli Gazete* [National Newspaper]



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Milli Gazete* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- mouthpiece of the Felicity Party (SP), affiliated with Necmettin Erbakan's National View Organization -- URL: [www.milligazete.com.tr/](http://www.milligazete.com.tr/)
- **Circulation:** 50,855 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Necdet Kutsal
- **Contact Information:** Address: Cemal Ulusoy Cad. No: 38/A (34620) Bahcelievler/Istanbul; tel: (0212) 697 10 00; fax: (0212) 693 18 01

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**Key Journalists:** Mehmet Sevket Eygi is a scholastic writer on Islam through his articles on culture and history. Abdulkadir Ozkan writes on Islamic economies, criticizing the IMF and the practice of collecting interest. Zeki Ceyhan writes on political issues, criticizing the judiciary's biased attitude toward Islamic parties. Mahmut Toptas touches on the place of religion in man's life, and Ismail Muftioglu criticizes the AKP's economic policies.

**Editorial Line:** As the mouthpiece of the pro-Islamist Felicity Party (SP), *Milli Gazete* expounds strong nationalistic and Islamic views as well as anti-Christian, anti-Western, and anti-Jewish sentiments. The paper is critical of the AKP for breaking off from Necmettin Erbakan's Virtue Party, for disclaiming any association with the fundamentalist National View movement, and for allegedly undermining Turkey's economy in cooperation with foreigners.

**History:** *Milli Gazete* started publishing on 12 January 1973 as a supporter of the pro-Islamic National View movement.

### 3.9. *Bir Gun [One Day]*



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Bir Gun* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- leftist paper run collectively by various trade unions -- URL: [www.birgun.net](http://www.birgun.net).
- **Circulation:** 7,015 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Collective
- **Contact Information:** Address: Kemeralti C. No: 1-3 Kat, 4 karakoy 34425 Istanbul; tel: (0212) 249 88 49; fax: (0212) 249 88 43

**Key Journalists:** Baskin Oran, Fikri Saglar, Ercan Karakas, and Nese Yasin write on domestic political, labor and social issues, and support democracy and human and ethnic rights. Ali Bilge writes on the economy.

**Editorial Line:** *Birgun* gives prominence to domestic, trade union, and labor issues. At the same time, it is critical of both the AKP and the opposition for not being democratic or transparent enough. It believes that the state-sponsored secularism pervasive in Turkey allows the state to use Islam as a political tool.

**History:** This leftist paper, which was established on 14 April 2004, is supported and collectively run by such trade unions as Egitim-Sen, KESK, TMMOB, and TTB. It is currently being published by SES Iletisim AS. Bulent Yilmaz is its proprietor on behalf of the Birgun Yayincilik ve Iletisim Tic AS [Birgun Publication and Information Joint Stock Company].

This OSC product is based exclusively on the content and behavior of selected media and has not been coordinated with other US Government components.

### 3.10. *Bugun* [Today]



Logos of Koza Davetiye and its subsidiary gold mining company, which controls *Bugun*.



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Bugun* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- conservative paper supportive of the AKP government -- URL: [www.bugun.com.tr](http://www.bugun.com.tr)
- **Circulation:** 54,476 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Selahattin Sadikoglu
- **Contact Information:** Buyukdere Caddesi No: 147 Esentepe-Sisli/Istanbul; tel: (0212) 211 30 44; fax: (0212) 216 21 94

**Key Journalists:** Ahmet Tasgetiren, a pro-Gulen intellectual, writes on Islamic issues. Toktamis Ates, a nationalist and leftist Islamist and author of books on Ottoman history, writes on political issues. Nuh Gonultas writes on political issues. Ali Atif Bir writes on economic issues. Hakan Aygun writes on international affairs.

**Editorial Line:** *Bugun* is a conservative paper supportive of the AKP government and of Fethullah Gulen. It has Ottoman sentiments and often casts the West as jealous of Turkish power.

**History:** The Ilicak family began publishing the paper on 17 January 2003 under the name "Dunden Bugune Tercuman." Its present owner is Hamdi Akin Ipek, whose Koza Davetiye firm, which prints invitation cards, has a subsidiary that mines gold in Bergama. Reacting to claims that he bought *Bugun* to defend his gold mining business against environmentalists, Akin Ipek told *Sabah* on 17 November 2005 that he purchased the paper because he already had experience in the printing business.

**Alleged Links to Fethullah Gulen:** Hikmet Cetinkaya, in his 19 March 2008 column in *Cumhuriyet*, implied that *Bugun* is actually financed by Fethullah Gulen, prompting Akin Ipek to issue a denial ([www.meadyafaresi.com](http://www.meadyafaresi.com)), saying he is making enough money from his other businesses to support the paper. Upon being asked if rumors are true that he is the second-hand man of Fethullah Gulen, Ipek says: "I have known Fethullah Gulen Hodja for years. The

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Fethullah Gulen that I know is a man wholeheartedly attached to his state, nation, and country and is in love with his flag." As such, he adds, he supports Fethullah Gulen's educational activities in Turkey and around the world. In a statement to *Hurriyet* on 13 May 2008, Akin Ipek said: "I think that our Teacher [Fethullah Gulen] is one of the biggest obstacles to radical Islam in the country."

### 3.11. *Star* [*Star*]



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Star* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- daily owned by Turkish Cypriot businessman Ali Ozmen Safa; pro-AKP editorial policy supports liberalization of the Kemalist republic -- URL: [www.stargazete.com/](http://www.stargazete.com/)
- **Circulation:** 130,540 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Mustafa Karaalioglu
- **Contact Information:** Yeni Bosna Merkez Mahallesi Kavak Sokak No: /3/2 (Ser Plaza) Istanbul; tel: (0212) 496 20 00; fax: (0212) 496 21 79

**Key Journalists:** Mehmet Altan and Eser Karakas, leading Second Republicans, along with Ahmet Kecec, Mustafa Karaalioglu, Murat Birsal, and Ardan Zenturk, write mostly on domestic issues and support the AKP against attack from radical secularists; Salih Neftci, an author of books on financial subjects, writes on economy.

**Editorial Line:** *Star* maintains a pro-AKP line and supports it as a catalyst for the further advancement of freedom and democracy.

**History:** Established on 11 March 1999 by the Uzan family, *Star* is now owned by pro-AKP businessman Ali Ozmen Safa. *Star's* director is Mustafa Karaalioglu, who was previously the director of *Yeni Safak*. When Safa first took over the paper, the influence of the Second Republicans was more pronounced, but over time, pro-AKP sentiments have assumed dominance.

### 3.12. *Taraf* [Side]



- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Taraf* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- daily owned by literary publisher Basar Arslan; editorial policy supports liberalization of the Kemalist Republic -- URL: [www.taraf.com.tr/](http://www.taraf.com.tr/)
- **Circulation:** 20,713 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Alev Er
- **Contact Information:** Muhurdar Cd. No: 60 PK; 34710 kadikoy/Istanbul; tel: (0216) 348 99 22; fax: (0216) 449 10 64

**Key Journalists:** Ahmet Altan, Yasemin Congar, Nese Duzel, Etyen Mahcupyan, and historian Halil Berktay write pro-democracy articles that at the same time attempt to undermine the long-held official myths and taboos about the army, foreign policy, and ethnic issues. Etyen Mahcupyan is known for his sociopolitical analysis of Turkish society. Researcher Ayse Hur writes historic articles on the early years of the republic, strongly challenging official ideology on founding fathers, Armenian genocide, and ethnic cleansings in Asia Minor. Amberin Zaman, wife of present US Charge d'Affaires in Armenia Joseph Pennington, mostly writes articles that promote Turkish-Armenian reconciliation.

**Editorial Line:** *Taraf* advocates restructuring the Turkish republic through liberal, democratic reforms. With its recent reports on the turmoil inside the army, revelation of condemning confidential documents suggesting the army has anti-democratic designs, and its aggressive effort to confront the dark pages of Turkish history, it seems the paper is attempting to live up to its claim that its purpose is to firmly attack official myths and taboos, defend liberal democracy, and thus be different from the mainstream papers.

**History:** Founded on 15 November 2006 by writer-journalist Ahmet Altan, *Taraf* is backed by prominent Second Republicans.

**Alleged Links to Fethullah Gulen:** In a column in *Cumhuriyet* on 19 March 2008, Hikmet Cetinkaya alleged that Basar Arslan, the owner of the Alkim Printing House, which publishes *Taraf*, must have Fethullah Gulen's support. He justifies his claims by saying that Arslan could not make enough money from his printing business to launch such a paper and that *Taraf* is getting suspiciously positive reviews from pro-Fethullah Gulen *Zaman*. In response to these claims, Ahmet Altan says in a 2007 interview with *Sabah* that "I do not know how much money they [Basar Arslan's company] are putting into this. As it is prohibited for them to put certain questions to me, I too cannot ask them certain questions. But I can say this: There is nobody else behind this paper" (*Sabah* interview reprinted on Yenicag site [www.yenicaggazetesi.com.tr](http://www.yenicaggazetesi.com.tr)). In an interview given to the media affairs site

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www.dorduncukuvvetmedya.com on 21 July 2008, Basar Arslan describes as "lies" the claims that his paper is being financed by the Gulen community, adding that *Taraf* is a financial burden on his firm but that his group wants to persevere hoping that the venture will pay off eventually. Arslan says in difficult moments they are issuing loan debentures and that in this way they have obtained some loans from businessman Mehmet Betil. The website at www.demokrasi.tog.org shows industrialist Mehmet Betil as a board member of Toplum Gonulluleri [Society Volunteers, or the Turkish acronym TOG] Foundation, which, the site says, is financed by private donations and grants from the US Embassy and is supported by EU institutions and the Finnish Embassy.

### 3.13. *The New Anatolian*



- **Source Descriptor:** Ankara *The New Anatolian* (Electronic Edition) in English -- center-right daily founded by the Cevik family; targets foreign diplomats, English-speaking elites -- URL: [www.thenewanatolian.com](http://www.thenewanatolian.com)
- **Circulation:** Internet only
- **Editor in Chief:** Ilnur cevik

**Key Journalists:** Ilnur Cevik is the paper's only columnist writing on domestic and foreign issues.

**Editorial Line:** *The New Anatolian* consistently takes a position that is supportive of the AKP government and of talks with the Kurdish entity in northern Iraq.

**History:** *The New Anatolian* was established by the Cevik Family on 1 February 2005 with both print and online versions. Its hardcopy version was taken out of circulation in early April 2008 because of financial problems encountered by its proprietor and columnist Ilnur Cevik, who is the sole commentator in the Internet version of the paper.

### 3.14. *Evrensel* [Universal]

#### **EVRENSEL**

- **Source Descriptor:** Istanbul *Evrensel* (Electronic Edition) in Turkish -- far-left paper close to the Alevi Kurds and the unofficial organ of the EMEP party -- URL: [www.evrensel.net](http://www.evrensel.net)
- **Circulation:** 8,726 daily (5-11 May 2008)
- **Editor in Chief:** Name unknown
- **Contact Information:** Address: Eskisehir Mahallesi Dolpadere Karabatak Sokak No: 31/2 Sisli/Istanbul; tel: (0212) 233 20 36; fax: (0212) 233 18 60

**Key Journalists:** Kamil Tekin Surek writes on labor and economic issues with a critical attitude of the AKP government. Ragip Zarakoglu, as a prominent dissident challenging official Turkish taboos, especially in regard to the Armenian issue, writes on the merits of ethnic coexistence. Celal Emiroglu writes on labor issues. Serdar Derventli writes on issues of democracy, and Ustun Akmen writes on cultural issues.

**Editorial Line:** *Evrensel* is a far-left paper that voices the grievances of workers and the Alevi Kurds living in Istanbul's poorer neighborhoods. It is considered to be the unofficial organ of the EMEP (or EMEK) [Toil] party, which describes the paper as the "only daily of the working class." The paper is critical of all the Turkish Government's economic, labor, and ethnic policies, including those of the AKP. It propounds ethnic harmony.

**History:** *Evrensel* is a far-left paper that comes to public attention frequently for the mistreatment of its reporters by the police. It was founded in 1995, and after facing several bans, *Evrensel* appeared under the name *Yeni Evrensel* in 1998 and under the name *Gunluk Evrensel* in 2001. In order to emphasize continuity, the word "gunluk" appears as a minuscule adjunct to the title *Evrensel*. These minor word additions are a technique also used by banned Kurdish and Islamic papers to stress continuity when they reappear on the scene.