

Star

SABAH

Hürriyet

AKSAM

Takvim

Yeni Şafak

Milliyet

Türkiye

GÜNES

POSTA

NEW!!

ERDOGAN TAKES OVER JOURNALISM

How did Erdogan became Turkey's biggest media baron?
A new report on Turkey's hijacked mainstream press.

Turkey has held the notorious title **the leading jailer of journalists in the world** for quite some time now. Over 300 journalists have been detained as part of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's dragnet against critics, while thousands of others were left unemployed after their newspapers and TV stations were shuttered. The monopolization of the Turkish media, however, had been in the making long before the recent crackdown. Erdogan, through controversial takeovers of critical media outlets by himself or businessmen close to him, has replaced a plethora of media tycoons -- only to become one himself, the largest. According to the latest circulation figures, only one critical newspaper is left in the top 10 that is not controlled by Erdogan. Cumhuriyet, once a prominent and independent newspaper, is plagued with infighting, and its plummeting circulation has barely kept it in the top 20.

This report by Turkey Purge aims to provide a brief overview of how Erdogan has taken over the print media in Turkey. Though a similar pattern can be observed in other forms of the media sector, it is beyond the scope of this report.

Top 20 Turkish newspapers by circulation*

✓  Kalyon Group
290,760

✓  Demiroren Media Group
276,342

✓  Estetik Publishing
253,058

✓  Demiroren Media Group
194,952

✓  İhlas Group
128,240

✓  Demiroren Media Group
127,294

✓  Albayrak Media Group
111,555

✓  Kalyon Group
104,234

✓  Ethem Sancak Group
104,087

✓  Ethem Sancak Group
102,731

Top 20 Turkish newspapers by circulation*

✓	Ethem Sancak Group Star	100,342	✓	Ramazan Fatih Ugurlu akıit	51,165
✓	Kalyon Group fotoMaç	91,715	✓	Anadolum Gazetecilik Aydınlık	50,588
✓	Demiroren Media Group FANATİK	78,790	✓	Cumhuriyet Foundation Cumhuriyet	33,455
✓	Estetik Publishing KORKUSUZ	55,530	✓	Dogru Basın Yayın dogruhaber	25,007
✓	Kalyon Group Yeni Asır	51,202	✓	Karar Publishing KARAR.	18,046



Sabah is a daily newspaper with a circulation of 292,000 as of November 2018. The newspaper was initially established in Izmir by Dinc Bilgin on April 22, 1985. In 2007, a state agency accused its previous owners of fraud and seized the paper. It was subsequently sold to Calik Holding, whose CEO at the time was Erdogan's son-in-law Berat Albayrak. Today, Sabah is one of the most influential pro-government outlets, where the president's advisers moonlight as columnists.

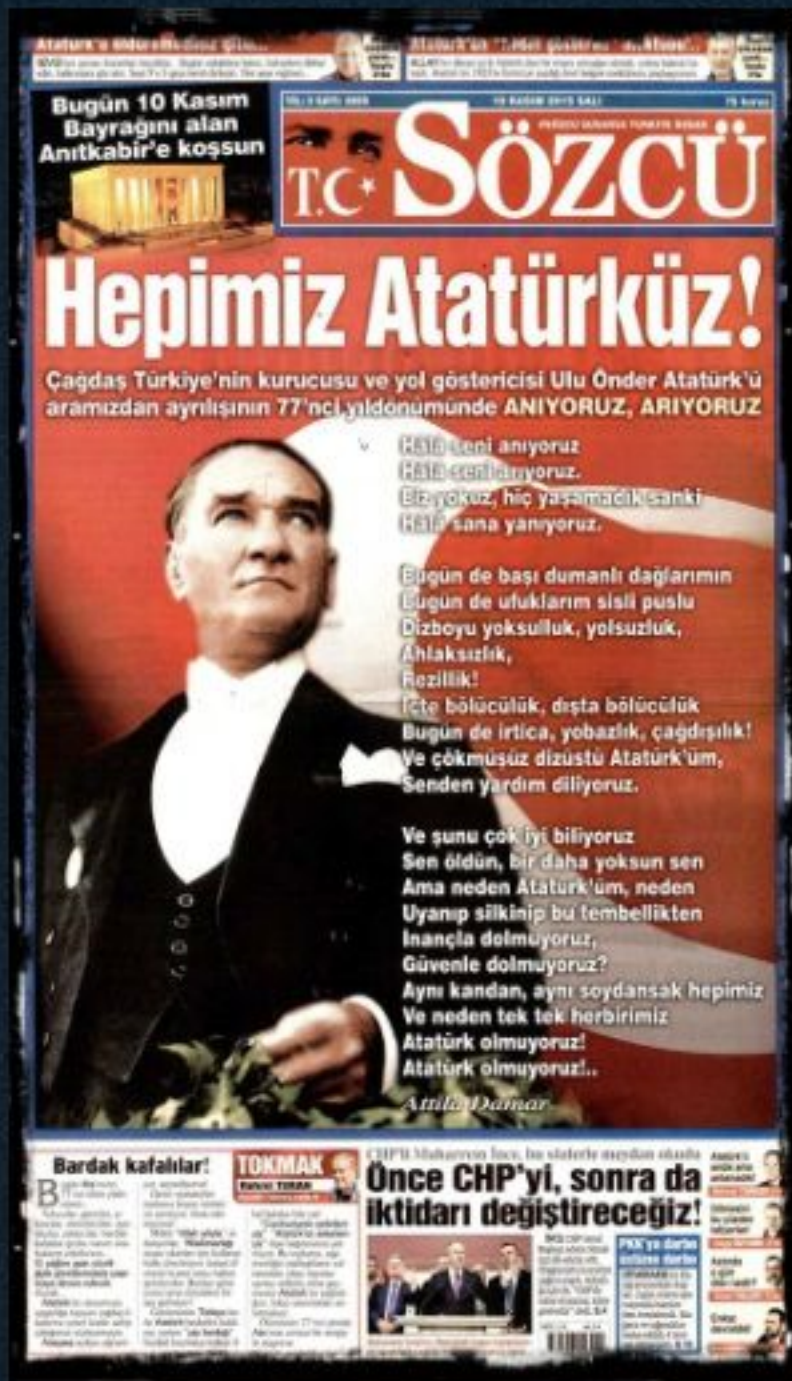
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Hürriyet

Hurriyet is a Turkish daily newspaper with a circulation of 265,455 as of November 2018. Founded in 1948, it has regional offices in Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Adana, Antalya and Trabzon, as well as a news network comprising 52 offices and 600 reporters in Turkey and abroad. In 2009, after the newspaper reported on a corruption scandal, the Turkish government slapped its owners with a \$2.5 billion fine. The newspaper was eventually sold to pro-gov't businessman Erdoğan Demirören in March 2018.

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Sözcü, a Kemalist daily with a highly critical editorial line vis-a-vis the AK Party gov't, was launched in 2007. Its origins go back to Gözcü, another newspaper established by the Dogan Group in 1996. Gözcü was taken over by its employees and its name changed to Sözcü in 2007. Sözcü is the only critical newspaper in the top 10 that is not controlled by Erdogan. Many of its reporters were arrested as part of the post-coup crackdown and its publisher Burak Akbay lives abroad in exile.

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Posta is a tabloid, appealing to a broad audience. Most of its pages cover entertainment and gossip under sensational headlines, not politics and the economy. The newspaper was established by Dogan Holding in 1995 and sold to pro-government businessman Erdoğan Demirören in March 2018. Its circulation hovered around 630,000 during its heyday in 2008. Posta today sells an average of 195,000 copies a day, according to the latest count.

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Türkiye

The pro-government İhlas Group established the right-wing, nationalist newspaper in 1970 and the conglomerate has owned it ever since. Türkiye has a daily circulation of 128,240 making it the fifth most sold newspaper in Turkey.

Aside from media assets which include the Türkiye newspaper and TGRT News TV, the İhlas Group has interests in construction (İhlas Construction Group), electric and electronic goods (İhlas Home Appliances Inc.), trade (İhlas Marketing), and energy and mining (İhlas Mining).

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This major Turkish daily, once home to notable Turkish media figures such as Peyami Safa, Burhan Felek, Abdi İpekçi and Cetin Altan, has been around for 68 years. Long considered more serious and reliable than its popular rivals like Hurriyet, Milliyet started favouring sensational coverage in 2012 after it was sold by Dogan Holding to the pro-gov't Demiroren Group. Many journalists have been sacked and the daily has turned into a staunch supporter of government policies ever since.

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✓ Yeni Şafak

This conservative daily newspaper was established in 1994 and has been owned by pro-gov't Albayrak Holding since 1997. The publication has often been accused of using hate speech to target minorities and opposition groups. In 2013, the paper became a sensation on social media when its editors admitted that they had fabricated some parts of an interview with Noam Chomsky. The interview altered his criticism of Erdogan's foreign policy into an assertion that Turkey "stood with the oppressed people in Syria."

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Takvim, established by Dinç Bilgin in 1994, was bought by Calik Holding in 2008, whose CEO at the time was Erdogan's son-in-law Berat Albayrak. A fervent supporter of the ruling AK Party, Takvim is an example of Turkish yellow journalism. In 2013, Takvim published a fake "interview" with CNN's Christiane Amanpour in which Amanpour supposedly confesses that CNN's coverage of the 2013 protests in Turkey sought to destabilize Turkey on behalf of international business interests.

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One of the oldest newspapers in Turkey, Aksam was set up in 1918. The newspaper had passed through many hands before being acquired by the state-run Savings and Deposit Insurance Fund in 2013. Shortly after the state agency took over control, a number of critical journalists were fired and Mehmet Ocaktan, a former AK Party deputy, served as editor-in-chief for some time. Pro-government businessman Ethem Sancak bought the newspaper that same year. The paper has a daily circulation of 102,731.

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Star was established in 1999 by the Star Media Group, drawing on the brand of the group's Star TV channel. In 2004, it was seized by the Turkish government, along with the other assets of the Uzan Group, which owned the Star Media Group. In 2008, the paper was sold to Turkish businessman Ethem Sancak, who voiced his adoration of President Erdogan during a speech on May 15, 2018. Star Gazete is now owned by one of Erdogan's close friends, businessman Hasan Yeşildağ.

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