



HOW DID THE MEDIA FRAME COP29?: TURKISH MAINSTREAM MEDIA & FOREIGN PRESS IN TURKISH

MEDYA COP29'U NASIL ÇERÇEVELEDİ?: TÜRKİYE ANA AKIM MEDYASI & TÜRKÇE DIŞ BASIN

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Abstract

This study examines how the Turkish mainstream media and Turkish foreign press frame Turkey's environmental policies in the context of the COP29 summit and how they address the differences in this process. The research reveals significant ideological differences in the news frames related to COP29 between the two media groups. From the Turkish mainstream media, Sabah and Hürriyet generally present the government officials' environmental policies and participation in COP29 in a positive light, while Cumhuriyet, Sözcü, and the Turkish foreign press adopt a more critical stance. Hürriyet and Sabah tend to link environmental policies with economic development and national success, whereas Cumhuriyet, Sözcü, and the foreign press highlight the insufficiency of these policies and their misalignment with global goals. The study also examines the differences in the sources used by both media groups. In Sabah and Hürriyet, official sources such as government representatives and the Ministry of Environment are predominantly featured, while in the foreign press, Cumhuriyet, and Sözcü, critical sources like independent experts and environmental organizations are more prominently used. Ultimately, this study reveals that the coverage of the COP29 process differs significantly between government-aligned mainstream media and opposition-leaning mainstream media as well as the Turkish foreign press, with each group employing distinct frames in their reporting.

Keywords: COP29, Climate Change, Turkish Mainstream Media, Turkish Foreign Press, Framing Theory.

Öz

Bu çalışma, COP29 zirvesi çerçevesinde Türkiye anaakım medyası ve Türkçe dış basının, Türkiye'nin çevre politikalarını nasıl çerçevelediğini ve bu süreçteki farklılıkları nasıl ele aldığını incelemektedir. Araştırma, iki medya grubunun COP29'a ilişkin haber çerçevelerinde belirgin ideolojik farklılıklar bulunduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Türkiye anaakım medyasından Sabah ve Hürriyet, genellikle hükümet yetkililerinin çevre politikalarını ve COP29'daki katılımını olumlu bir çerçevede sunarken, ana akım medyadan Cumhuriyet ve Sözcü ile Türkçe dış basın daha eleştirel bir yaklaşım sergilemektedir. Hürriyet ve Sabah, çevre politikalarını ekonomik kalkınma ve ulusal başarıyla ilişkilendirirken, Cumhuriyet, Sözcü ve dış basın bu politikaların yetersizliğine ve küresel hedeflerle uyumsuzluğuna dikkat çekmektedir. Araştırma ayrıca, her iki medya grubunun kullandığı kaynaklar arasındaki farkları da ele almıştır. Sabah ve Hürriyet'te, hükümet yetkilileri ve çevre bakanlığı gibi resmi kaynaklar öne çıkarken, dış basın, Cumhuriyet ve Sözcü'de bağımsız uzmanlar ve çevre örgütleri gibi eleştirel kaynaklar daha fazla yer bulmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma, COP29 sürecinin hükümete yakın ana akım medya ile hükümete muhalif ana akım medya ile Türkçe dış basında farklı çerçevelerle işlendiğini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: COP29, İklim Değişikliği, Türkçe Anaakım Medya, Türkçe Dış Basın, Çerçeveleme Teorisi.



INTRODUCTION

Industrialization and human activities have caused excessive emissions, triggering the climate crisis, which has worsened in the last century. This crisis leads to global warming, extreme weather, melting glaciers, rising sea levels, droughts, ocean acidification, biodiversity loss, pandemics, and migration. Solving the climate crisis requires collective, international action. Significant steps have been taken since the 1970s, including the creation of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1988. In 1992, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was signed, addressing human-caused global warming. The Kyoto Protocol in 1997 set binding emission targets for developed countries, and the 2015 Paris Agreement aimed to limit global temperature rise to below 2°C, with efforts to keep it below 1.5°C. The agreement emphasizes financing, capacity building, and transparency for developing countries (UNFCCC, n.d.).

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the highest decision-making body of the UNFCCC, reviewing national communications and emission inventories, and assessing the progress of climate change measures. The first COP was held in 1995, and subsequent conferences are hosted by different countries. The World Leaders' Climate Summit at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November 2024, gathered heads of state from 80 countries (Rehimov, 2024). Turkey, which joined the UNFCCC in 2004, has a unique status with "special conditions" under COP decisions. These conditions shape Turkey's responsibilities in the climate fight differently from other countries (T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı, n.d.).

COP meetings raise awareness about climate change and influence policy both globally and in Turkey. The media plays a crucial role in communicating these processes to the public. However, the coverage and presentation of climate issues are often influenced by political and economic interests, limiting broader discussions on the crisis. This highlights the need for more critical, science-based, and participatory climate reporting in Turkey.

This study aims to analyze how the COP29 process has been covered in Turkey's mainstream media and international Turkish-language press, thereby contributing to an understanding of how global issues such as climate change are framed through media discourse. The selection of Turkey as the case study is based on its unique position in climate change policies, as it shares similarities with developing countries while simultaneously maintaining distinct diplomatic and economic relations with various actors in international climate negotiations. The originality of this research lies in its examination of COP29's media representations in both local and international contexts and its investigation of how different political, ideological, and institutional orientations influence news framing in climate journalism. The study examines coverage from Turkey's mainstream media, including *Hürriyet* and *Sabah* (pro-government), *Sözcü* and *Cumhuriyet* (oppositional), as well as international Turkish-language outlets such as *BBC Türkçe*, *Sputnik Türkiye*, and *Independent Türkçe*. These outlets were selected to enable a comparative analysis of how different ideological and institutional perspectives shape the framing of COP29. While *Hürriyet* and *Sabah* provide insight into how the Turkish government's climate policies and official discourse are represented, *Sözcü* and *Cumhuriyet* offer an opportunity to examine how news framing is constructed from an oppositional standpoint. Meanwhile, international sources such as *BBC Türkçe*, *Sputnik Türkiye*, and *Independent Türkçe* contribute to understanding how Turkey's role in COP29 and its climate policies are framed within a global context.

In this context, the study focuses on the following questions:

- Are there differences in the framing of COP29 news between Turkey's mainstream media and Turkish-language foreign press?

- Which sources are prominent in the framing of COP29 news by Turkey's mainstream media and Turkish-language foreign press?
- How are Turkey's environmental policies represented in the framing of COP29 news by Turkey's mainstream media and Turkish-language foreign press?

The primary objective of this study is to identify how the selected newspapers present COP29 coverage and to analyze how these reports differ in terms of ideological orientations and international perspectives. The climate crisis is not merely an environmental issue but also a global challenge with significant economic, political, and societal implications. In this regard, media representations play a crucial role in raising public awareness of the climate crisis and shaping policymakers' agendas. Specifically in Turkey, media portrayals are vital for both local and international audiences to comprehend the country's approach to climate change. This study aims to contribute to the existing literature on climate communication in Turkey and serve as a reference point for future research. To achieve this, it will first analyze the broader climate change process and the policies developed in Turkey to address climate change. Subsequently, it will examine the key characteristics of climate journalism, identifying the main focal points in the framing of climate-related news. Finally, it will analyze how COP29 has been covered in Turkey's mainstream media and international Turkish-language press.

CLIMATE CHANGE, COP29, AND TURKEY'S CLIMATE POLICIES

Climate change, which refers to long-term changes in temperatures and weather patterns, manifests itself through destructive factors such as "intense droughts, water scarcity, severe wildfires, rising sea levels, floods, melting polar ice caps, devastating storms, and decreasing biodiversity." These changes in temperature and weather can occur due to natural causes such as solar activity or large volcanic eruptions; indeed, such changes have occurred throughout Earth's history. However, since the 1800s, with the acceleration of industrialization, human urbanization, and the use of fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and gas, as well as the entry into a consumption-driven cycle, the greenhouse gas emissions generated by these activities trap heat, causing global warming. As a result of these activities, the average surface temperature of the Earth has increased by 1.2°C, and without intervention, it is expected to rise by up to 3.1°C by the end of the century (United Nations, n.d.)

Climate change not only causes environmental consequences but also creates profound impacts in various areas such as food security, health, economy, energy policies, and social inequalities. This situation disproportionately affects poor and vulnerable communities, particularly in developing countries, while also exacerbating health issues related to air pollution, waterborne diseases, and temperature-induced stress. Additionally, it places significant pressure on energy policies; the reduction of fossil fuel dependence and the transition to renewable energy are prompting new economic and political equilibrium searches between countries (IEA, 2020; IPCC, 2021; WHO, 2023).

Although climate change is a global issue, its impacts are not observed in the same way across all geographies, and some regions are in a more disadvantaged position. In this context, African countries, island nations, and the Mediterranean Basin are among the regions most affected by climate change (IPCC, 2023). Turkey, located in the Mediterranean Basin—one of the most at-risk regions for climate change (Giorgi, 2006; IPCC, 2021)—is expected to face various risks such as temperature increase, depletion of water resources, drought, extreme rainfall, forest fires, and rising sea levels (Kurnaz, 2023). It is anticipated that Turkey will experience water scarcity by 2030 (Kamshylin, n.d.) and that temperature increases will lead to a 4°C difference in winter and a 6°C difference in summer (iklimBU, 2019).

The effects of climate change, while unequal, impact all living (O'Brien & Leichenko, 2019, p. 42) . Therefore, various international initiatives have been undertaken to prevent, slow down, or adapt to the effects of climate change. In this context, governments worldwide implement climate plans and strategies, hold environmental conferences, and civil society organizations and climate activists carry out various actions. Additionally, educational programs for the public are developed, and an informative process on climate change is conducted through the media. Among these efforts, the establishment of



the IPCC in 1988, the signing of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992, the Kyoto Protocol in 1995, and the Paris Agreement in 2015 have all formed significant milestones in the global fight against climate change. The Paris Agreement, adopted at COP21 held in Paris in 2015, stands out as the first legally binding global agreement on climate change. Under this agreement, the aim is to keep the global average temperature rise below 1.5°C, enhance climate change adaptation, and ensure financial flows that are compatible with renewable energy and regulatory compliance (Hutton, 2022).

COP, which includes representatives from countries that have agreed to join and adhere to the UNFCCC, is a forum where new measures aimed at a fair, orderly, and equitable transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems are negotiated. These annual meetings, held to clarify objectives, reach agreements on rules, or follow binding agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, are attended by representatives from Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Western Europe, and Other States. During COP29, held from November 11-24, 2024, in Baku, Azerbaijan, delegations consisting of heads of state, climate experts, and negotiators gathered to agree on coordinated action to combat climate change. The key issues discussed this year included climate financing for disadvantaged countries, which have a greater potential to influence the effects of climate change relative to their contribution, emission reduction, adaptation strategies, and biodiversity conservation (CISL, 2024).

Turkey is among the 80 countries participating in COP29. Since the late 1980s, Turkey has developed various strategies and laws, such as the Environmental Law No. 2872, to adapt to the impacts of climate change. It ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 2009 and the Paris Agreement in 2016 (Keleş, 2023). However, Turkey holds a controversial position due to its greenhouse gas emissions and the energy categories it uses. From 1865 to 2020, Turkey emitted nearly 11 billion tons of carbon, ranking 26th among countries with the highest historical emissions (Kara-Kaşka, 2022). Additionally, Turkey's current carbon emissions situation complicates its position in international climate change mitigation policies. In the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) prepared by Germanwatch, Turkey ranked 53rd out of 63 countries as of 2023. The index notes that while Turkey's performance in renewable energy usage is "medium," its performance in greenhouse gas emissions, energy use, and climate policies is categorized as "low" (CCPI, 2024). Despite increasing investments in renewable energy, Turkey has been criticized for not taking sufficient steps to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels.

In its updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) for 2023, Turkey stated that its greenhouse gas emissions will peak by 2038 and then begin to decline (İklim Değişikliği Bakanlığı, 2023). However, this target has been criticized both nationally and internationally due to its insufficiency in the fight against climate change, the lack of short-term goals, and the absence of a clear roadmap for emissions reduction. Despite Turkey declaring a net-zero emissions target by 2053, uncertainties persist regarding concrete policies and investments to implement this target (“[COP29] Türkiye'nin iklim politikaları performansı bu yıl da ‘düşük,’” 2024).

Although the roles of Turkey and other countries in the climate change process are addressed quantitatively through scientific data and meetings, and scientific evidence provides strong justifications for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, large-scale societal changes and actions cannot be achieved by science alone (O'Brien & Leichenko, 2019, p. 46). Therefore, in order to see the results of such binding agreements and processes on climate change, the media plays a significant role. However, how climate change news is framed in the media is a separate subject of investigation.

FRAMING CLIMATE NEWS

According to Entman, framing is defined as "selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation" (Entman, 1993). Framing is not limited to deciding which events are deemed newsworthy; it also involves deliberate choices about which elements of an event to emphasize, which aspects to overlook, and how to interpret them (Vliegthart, 2012). Therefore, framing reveals that media does not merely transmit information but also shapes how the public perceives and interprets events.



The way climate change news is framed significantly influences how the public perceives the issue and the direction in which they support political actions. By presenting climate change within a specific frame, the media can either highlight or constrain its connections to various domains such as the environment, economy, history, socio-economic structures, and demographic changes (Stecula & Merkley, 2019). Given that climate change is inherently interdisciplinary and complex, the frame selected in media representation determines how this complexity is simplified and made comprehensible. The decision to portray it as an environmental issue, an economic threat, or a political crisis directly impacts public awareness, attitudes, and actions regarding the matter. Therefore, framing strategies employed in news not only serve as a means of informing but also play a critical role as tools for shaping and guiding public perception and behavior.

Research on media framing of climate change emphasizes the importance of actors involved in the process. Boykoff and Boykoff's (2004) study highlights how early climate journalism balanced the perspectives of climate change believers and deniers. However, due to the rise of climate denialism, a shift occurred towards prioritizing scientific data and consensus. As a result, incorporating statements from political actors, civil society organizations, activists, citizens, journalists, and particularly scientific institutions has become crucial in framing climate change coverage.

Another notable aspect of framing is the selection of topics addressed. Climate change affects not only environmental issues such as extreme weather events, drought, global warming, ocean acidification, and biodiversity loss but also intersects with various elements like the economy, culture, and demographics. However, when framing climate news, treating topics such as migration, drought, wildfires, and economic inequalities as independent from climate change becomes a critical factor that alters the framing of the news.

Framing defines the scope and boundaries of a topic, but there is no consensus on how climate news is framed. Key classifications include Iyengar's (1996) episodic and thematic framing, where episodic framing focuses on specific events, while thematic framing presents a broader narrative. Boykoff (2008) proposed an issue-focused framing approach with five dimensions: ecological/meteorological (e.g., extreme weather), political-economic (e.g., political actors, economy), cultural and societal (e.g., activism, public health), scientific (e.g., studies, technologies), and general.

Another prominent framing approach in climate news is Nisbet's classification. Drawing from the works of Gamson and Modigliani (1989), Dahinden (2002), and Nisbet and Lewenstein (2002), Nisbet (2009) identified a range of frames and highlighted their applicability to climate news. These frames include:

- Social Progress, which encompasses processes of adapting to nature;
- Economic, addressing economic investments, market benefits or risks, and local, national, or international competition;
- Morality & Ethics, which approaches issues through definitions of right or wrong;
- Scientific & Technical Uncertainty, referring to the lack of consensus among experts;
- Pandora's Box, emphasizing the inevitability of catastrophic outcomes;
- Public Accountability, highlighting transparency in governance, participatory decision-making, and public responses;
- Middle Way & Alternative Path, combining contradictory or polarized viewpoints;
- Conflict & Strategy, focusing on disputes, gains, struggles, or losses among stakeholders;
- Unfair Burden, pointing to the inequity of expecting all countries to bear equal costs despite unequal responsibility for climate change; and
- Public Health, covering health issues caused by climate change.



These frames provide diverse lenses through which climate change issues can be communicated effectively (Nisbet, 2009).

Climate change, due to its complexity, is framed in various ways in the media, influencing public perception and political actions. Framing involves selecting events, emphasizing certain aspects, and shaping their interpretation and context. Studies show how media simplifies complex issues like climate change through framing strategies, including social progress, economic benefits, moral dimensions, scientific uncertainty, and health. These strategies not only inform but also shape public understanding and action. This study will analyze Nisbet's framing theory through COP29 news coverage in Turkish mainstream and foreign media.

In Turkey, there exists a determinist structure between the media and the government that operates in favor of the ruling power (Kılınç & Şeker, 2024). The government restricts the entire media landscape, including opposition outlets, through both structural regulations and punitive measures, aligning it with its own regime (Sönmez, 2015, pp. 96–98). The dominance of pro-government media conglomerates (*Demirören Group, Turkuvaz Media Group, Albayrak Group, Türk Media Group*) in the sector results in the prevalence of similar political narratives and a strong emphasis on supporting government policies (*Medya Sahipleri*, n.d.). Opposition media, which find themselves confined within a highly limited space within the mainstream landscape, attempt to offer a critical perspective on government policies but face constraints due to economic pressures and legal sanctions. In this context, international media outlets are expected to provide a more objective perspective on Turkey's policies by offering an external viewpoint.

METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

This study aims to analyze how the COP29 summit, held in Azerbaijan between November 11–24, 2024, was covered in Turkey's mainstream media and in international media outlets in languages other than Turkish. To evaluate the pre- and post-summit discussions, a total of 181 news articles published between October 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024, were descriptively analyzed using Nisbet's (2009) framing analysis. The sample included government-aligned Turkish mainstream media outlets *Hürriyet* and *Sabah*, opposition-oriented outlets *Sözcü* and *Cumhuriyet*, and non-Turkish outlets *BBC Türkçe*, *Sputnik*, and *Independent Türkçe*.

In addition to Nisbet's framing categories, the "scientific warning frame" was incorporated into the analysis. The rationale for including this frame lies in the limitations of the commonly employed "Pandora's Box" frame, which tends to emphasize apocalyptic scenarios and an irreversible future, often portraying the climate crisis as an unsolvable issue beyond individual or collective influence. In contrast, the scientific warning frame prioritizes content supported by scientific evidence, aiming to alert both the public and actors contributing to climate change in a way that highlights the possibility of mitigating its impacts. Therefore, this study extends beyond purely catastrophe-centered narratives by examining how solution-oriented and scientifically grounded news content is framed. Furthermore, content analysis (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, pp. 259–260) was employed to conceptualize, organize, and identify themes in the data. This included analyzing the individuals, institutions, and organizations cited in the news, assessing whether Turkey's environmental policies were mentioned, and determining the tone of news coverage concerning Turkey's policies. The collected data were first read twice to create a coding framework, after which frequency and cross-tabulation analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 22.



Table 1. Coding Scheme

FRAME	SIDES	SUBJECT	SOURCE	ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES OF TURKEY	TONE
Social Progress	Turkey	Climate Finance	National Political Actor	Available	Positive
Economic	Azerbaijan	Climate Justice	International Political Actor	None	Negative
Morality/Ethics	Israel	Climate Crisis	NGO Representative & Activist		Neutral
Scientific Uncertainty	Turkey, Israel, Palestine	Ecological & Meteorological	Business Representative		
Pandora's Box	Azerbaijan, Armenia, USA, Russia	Health	Scientific Source		
Public Accountability	African Countries	Migration	Newspaper & Journalist		
Conflict & Strategy	Afghanistan	Energy	Other		
Unfair Burden	European Countries	Economy			
Scientific Warning	Turkey, Azerbaijan, UN	Zero Waste			
Public Health	Turkic Republics, Turkey	Environmental Destruction			
Multiframe	General	Environmental Awareness			
Undetermined	Other	Security			
		Adaptation			
		Multiple Subject			
		Other			

According to the findings, the majority of news (%81) related to the COP29 process was produced in November, the month when the COP29 summit took place. Looking at the distribution of news across newspapers, it is observed that the most news coverage related to COP29 was provided by *Sabah* (%27.1), while the least was by *BBC Türkçe* (%6.1). Following *Sabah*, the newspapers *Hürriyet* (%19.3), *Cumhuriyet* (%16), and *Sözcü* (%12.2) covered the most news; the Turkish-language foreign press falls below the 10% threshold. *Sputnik Türkiye* provided 9.9% of the COP29 news, while *Independent Türkçe* covered 9.4%. This can be explained by Turkey's participation in the COP29 summit with the third-largest delegation ("COP29 Delege Sayısında Türkiye 3. Sırada," 2024), following Azerbaijan and Brazil, with 1862 delegates, and the mainstream media's coverage of all these delegates' actions. The low news coverage percentage in Turkish-language foreign press, below 10%, is related to these outlets focusing on a broader global context while dedicating less space to Turkey-specific news.



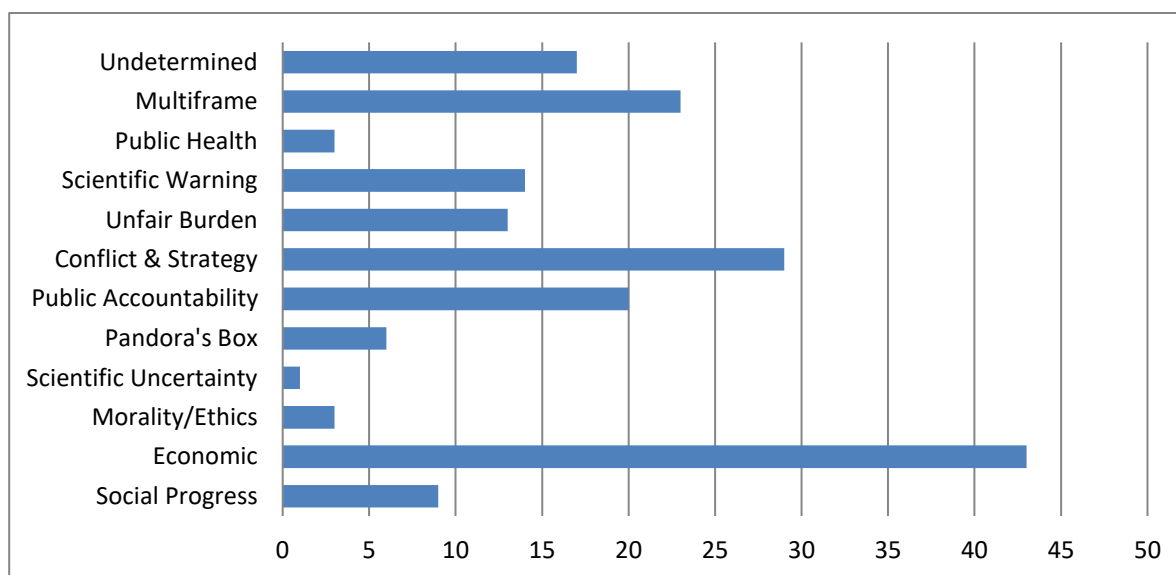


Figure 1. Distribution of Frames in COP29 News

The prominence of the economic frame in climate change news emerges through a strong emphasis on topics such as economic investments, market risks, and economic competition. In this context, renewable energy investments are frequently highlighted. For instance, Minister Bayraktar's statement, "At the forefront of these is renewable energy. In this field, where our country has significant potential, we recently announced an ambitious program for 2035," is often emphasized (AA, 2024). Within the conflict and strategy frame, the Israel-Palestine and Azerbaijan-Armenia conflicts are prominently featured, with their impacts on both the COP29 process and climate change being addressed. The frequent use of this frame may suggest that conflicts, wars, and various agreements have overshadowed the strategic moves of countries, parties, and actors during the COP29 process. Moreover, the frequent application of multiple frames indicates that climate change is being approached as a multidimensional issue.

Compared to these frames, the medium-frequency used frames include public accountability (11%), scientific warning (7.7%), and unfair burden (7.2%). The public accountability frame is constructed around the Turkish government's environmental policies, zero-waste achievements, and strides in the energy sector, with nearly all of this framing found in a positive tone regarding the Turkish government's environmental policies in the newspapers *Sabah* (70%), and *Hürriyet* (20%). The generally positive depiction of the Turkish government in these frames suggests a specific tendency in the media's framing strategies and reveals that the government's environmental policies are more likely to be supported by the media. The emphasis on policies such as the zero-waste project and strides in the energy sector demonstrates that the government is attempting to create a success story in environmental matters through media representation. Moreover, the fact that this framing is entirely positive in *Sabah*, and *Hürriyet* suggests that the media outlets do not exhibit a critical approach and that the news is lacking alternative perspectives.

Although the scientific warning frame is placed in the medium-frequency category overall, there is an imbalance in its usage distribution among the newspapers. While *Sabah* does not include the scientific warning frame at all, the newspaper that uses it the most (50%) is *Cumhuriyet*. For instance, *Cumhuriyet* incorporates scientific sources such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species ("Araştırma," 2024), directing attention toward scientific findings and potential regulatory measures. This data suggests that the use of the scientific warning frame in climate change news varies among media outlets in Turkey and can be influenced by the ideological positioning of these outlets. *Cumhuriyet*'s high usage of the scientific warning frame can be attributed to its adoption of a more critical and science-based journalism approach. On the other hand, *Sabah*'s complete omission of this frame indicates a preference for a "softened" or "government-focused" language regarding

climate change, likely due to its pro-government editorial policy, and suggests that it overlooks the scientific dimension of climate change news.

Another topic addressed with moderate frequency is the unfair burden (7.2%). Issues such as the inequitable distribution of the burdens caused by climate change are raised in this frame. The two newspapers that focus most on this frame are *Cumhuriyet* (31%), and *BBC Türkçe* (31%), while *Sabah*, and *Hürriyet* have only included this frame within the context of economic, public accountability, and multiple frame usage. An example of this can be found in a report published by *BBC Türkçe* (*COP29 neden trilyon dolarlık iklim zirvesi olarak anılıyor?*, 2024), which emphasizes that wealthy countries bear a historical responsibility, while developing nations cannot cope with the burden of climate change without climate financing. Conversely, in an example from *Sabah* (*Türk dünyası devletleri arasında ortak çevre bildirgesi imzalandı! Bakan Kurum*, 2024), although the climate crisis is acknowledged as a burden on developing countries, Turkey is portrayed as a "pioneering" actor through its expressed desire for a fairer world. In this context, the issue of unjust burdens is framed within a populist narrative. This difference in the use of the unfair burden frame clearly reflects the ideological positioning of the newspapers and their news strategies targeting their respective audiences. *Cumhuriyet* and *BBC Türkçe* present a more critical and global perspective, while *Sabah*, and *Hürriyet* prefer to address climate change in a more limited manner within the frameworks of economic and public accountability.

The least emphasized frames within the news are social progress (5.0%), Pandora's Box (3.3%), morality and ethics (1.7%), public health (1.7%), and scientific uncertainty (0.6%). The low emphasis on social development and adaptation issues suggests that the focus of climate change coverage tends to be on its economic or strategic dimensions rather than its societal benefits. The rare use of disaster-based frames reflects media outlets' tendency to avoid more alarming and speculative news. The insufficient emphasis on morality/ethics and public health dimensions indicates that the human and value-based consequences of climate change are not sufficiently highlighted in the public discourse. The frame of scientific uncertainty, which holds the lowest proportion, demonstrates that the news is generally constructed based on scientific consensus, and an attempt is being made to create a perception of reliability regarding this issue.

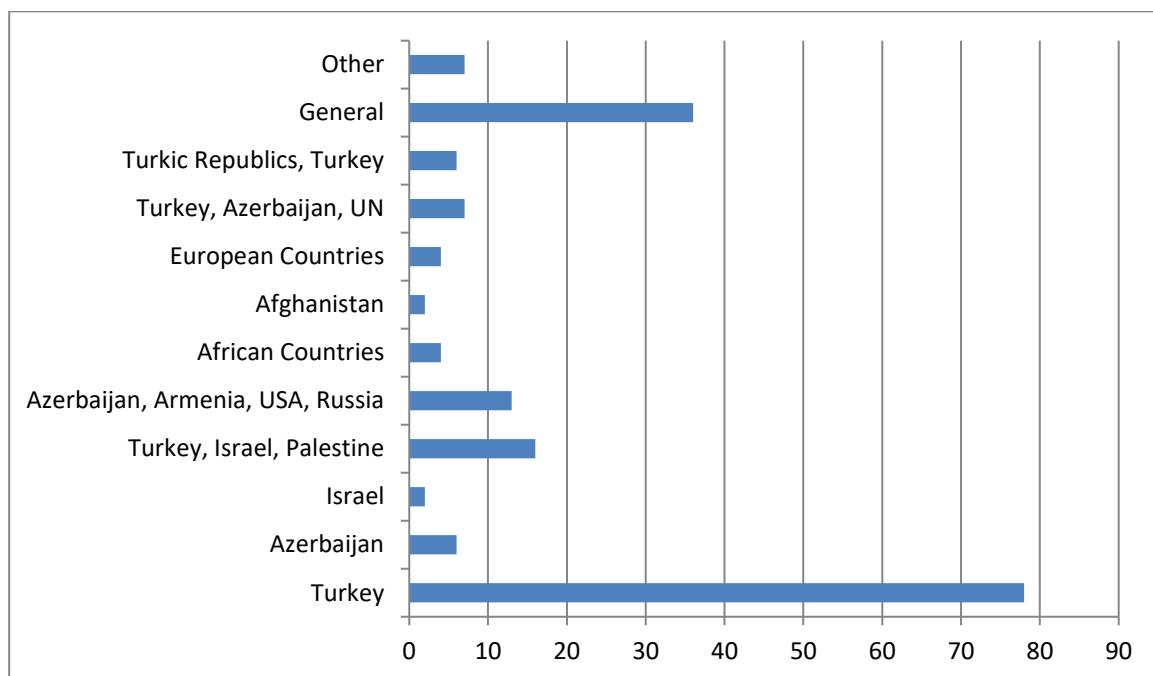


Figure 2. Distribution of sides in COP29 news

As seen in Figure 2, the party most prominently featured in the news was Turkey (43.1%), indicating that Turkey's national policies and positions on climate change were strongly reflected in the coverage.

The significant proportion of content categorized as neutral or not associated with any specific country (19.9%) suggests that some of the news was framed globally or in a general context. Frames involving multiple parties, such as Turkey + Israel + Palestine (8.8%), show that conflict dynamics were linked to climate change in the news. In this context, especially with the rhetoric of President Erdoğan, the attacks by Israel on Gaza were discussed, highlighting the devastation and environmental damage caused in the region, including chemical leaks (Usta, 2024). In news involving Azerbaijan, Armenia, the USA, and Russia, the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, as well as the policies and responses of the USA and Russia, were emphasized. These news stories were not directly related to climate change but focused on Azerbaijan's policies, particularly regarding its role as the host of COP29. Specifically, Azerbaijan's hosting of COP29 was criticized in some reports (“COP29 İklim Zirvesi'nin ev sahibi Aliyev,” 2024) for the country's dependence on fossil fuels. These criticisms were primarily found in alternative media outlets, such as *BBC Türkçe* and Independent Turkish, while mainstream Turkish media did not give much space to these criticisms. Instead, mainstream media presented the COP29 summit as a proud event showcasing the environmental sensitivity of the Turkish world (“Emine Erdoğan, COP29'da BM Genel Sekreteri Guterres İle Görüştü - Son Dakika Flaş Haberler,” 2024), highlighting the message that the Turkish people are an environmentally conscious nation.

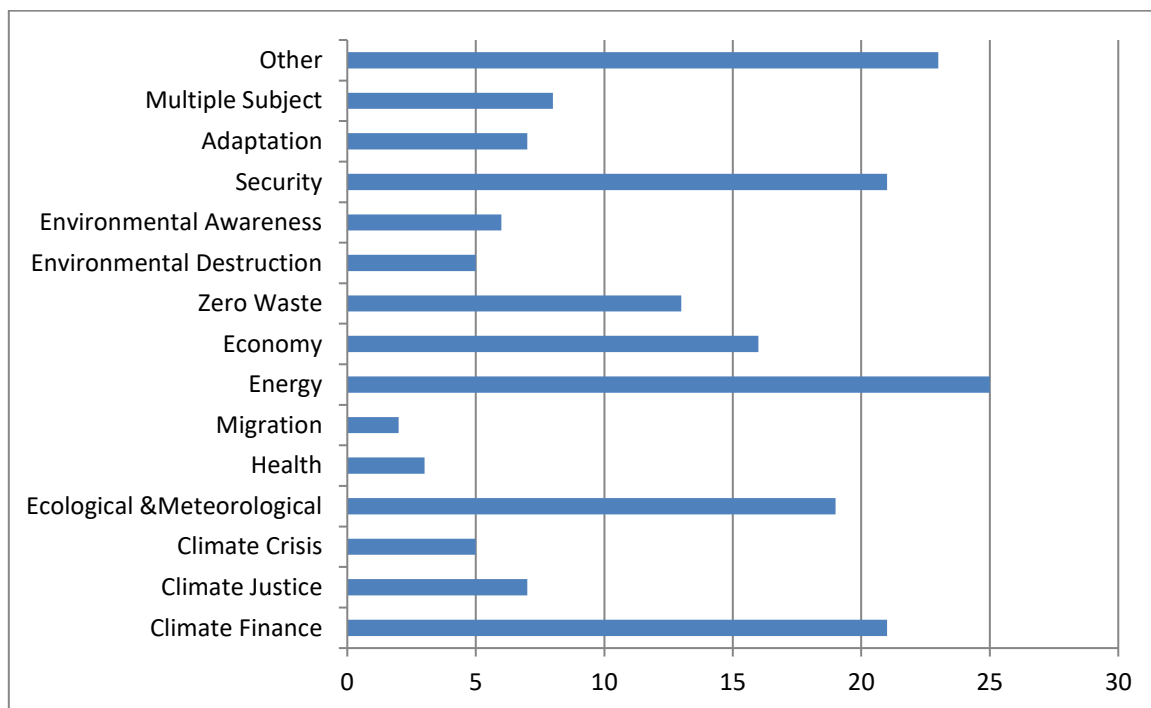


Figure 3. Distribution of Topics in COP29 News

When examining the topics covered in the news, as shown in Figure 3, it is observed that the most frequently framed topics are renewable energy, climate finance, and security. This indicates a strong focus on the role of the energy sector and financial resources in combating climate change. The energy topic includes important issues such as the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy and energy efficiency. In this context, Turkey's advances in energy and the statements of Energy Minister Alparslan Bakraktar are prominently highlighted (AA, 2024). Climate finance addresses financial aid to developing countries, green investments, and economic mechanisms such as carbon credits. Among the issues discussed during the COP29 process, climate finance is one of the primary topics, so it can be said that the importance given to this issue in the newspapers is well-placed.

The topic of security is mainly emphasized due to the conflicts between Israel-Palestine-Turkey and Armenia-Azerbaijan. Turkey's criticism of Israel's attacks on Palestine and its refusal to allow Israeli President Herzog to use its airspace to attend COP29 has emerged as a significant security issue during this process. Similarly, the peace agreement expected to be signed between Armenia and Azerbaijan,

along with the tensions it has caused, is frequently encountered in the news. Among the topics most frequently emphasized, zero waste stands out. In this context, the activities of First Lady Emine Erdoğan in the zero waste process have been highlighted, and Turkey's environmental policies have been presented in a positive tone. Indeed, only the newspapers *Sabah* (54%), *Hürriyet* (38%), and *Sözcü* (8%) have covered the issue of zero waste. This situation shows that especially *Sabah* and *Hürriyet* newspapers have adopted a supportive approach toward Turkey's environmental policies, aiming to emphasize Turkey's positive progress in the environmental field by focusing on the zero waste project.

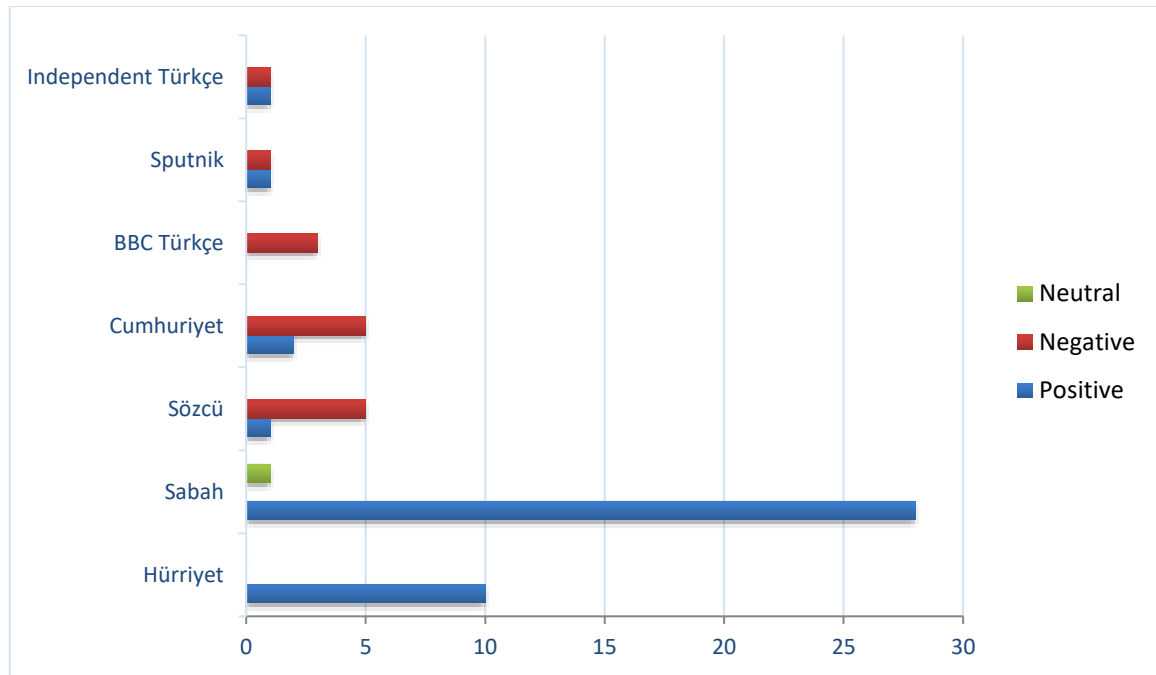


Figure 4. Newspapers' Approaches to Turkey's Environmental Policies

32.6% of the news articles framing COP29 also addressed Turkey's environmental policies. When examining the tone of these articles, it was found that 72% were positive, 25% were negative, and 3% were neutral. Looking at the distribution of these articles across newspapers, as shown in Figure 4, *Sabah* is clearly leading in providing a positive tone regarding Turkey's environmental policies. *Hürriyet* follows, and in this newspaper, Turkey's environmental policies, particularly on zero waste and renewable energy, are conveyed in a positive light. This trend can be explained by the newspapers' proximity to the government and, furthermore, can be interpreted as an effort to remind readers of the environmental policies Turkey has implemented thus far and to highlight their international recognition, rather than discussing the COP29 process itself. Additionally, these types of news articles serve to reinforce national success and the legitimacy of policies, pushing the global context of COP29 to the background.

In *Cumhuriyet* and *Sözcü*, Turkey's environmental policies have not been given much coverage; the news that has been presented has conveyed these policies in a critical tone. The criticisms of these policies include the uncertainty of the coal phase-out policy (Anter, 2024), the continuation of subsidies for fossil fuels (Ceylan, 2024), and Turkey's participation in the COP29 process with a large delegation, leading to waste and a carbon footprint (Gülen, 2024). Similarly, *BBC Türkçe*'s criticism of Turkey's environmental policies is related to the lack of a plan for phasing out coal, which was not mentioned during the COP29 process (“Türkiye iklim yol haritasını paylaştı, 2053’e kadar ‘net sıfır’ gerçekçi mi?,” 2024).

These different frames reveal that the tone of news in Turkish media is shaped by ideological and institutional inclinations. Media outlets close to the government present environmental policies as national successes, while opposition and independent media emphasize that these policies are not

aligned with global goals and are insufficient. This situation indicates that the COP29 process and environmental policies in Turkey have been covered in a highly polarized manner in the media.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how mainstream Turkish media and Turkish-language foreign press framed environmental policies in the context of the COP29 summit and how they reflected the differences in this process. The findings reveal that Turkey's participation in the COP29 process and its environmental policies were addressed in different ways, influenced by the ideological differences and media strategies between mainstream media and Turkish-language foreign press.

The media sector in Turkey is largely concentrated in the hands of pro-government corporate groups, which significantly influences news content. The research has revealed that there are distinct differences in the news frames of mainstream Turkish media and Turkish-language foreign press regarding COP29. The news in mainstream Turkish media generally adopts a positive tone, focusing on Turkey's progress and successes in environmental policies. In particular, news related to Turkey's zero waste projects and renewable energy investments is prominent in newspapers like *Hürriyet* and *Sabah*. In these reports, Turkey's environmental policies and participation in COP29 are primarily presented as achievements of the government and are often linked to economic development. The economic frame has been the most commonly used approach in these reports.

In contrast, the Turkish-language foreign press, particularly outlets like *BBC Türkçe*, tends to adopt a more global perspective in their reporting. In foreign press outlets, the overall framework of the COP29 summit and the global climate change struggle are emphasized, with Turkey's role in this context being addressed from a more critical perspective. The foreign press has highlighted the challenges Turkey faces in aligning with global climate change goals. In this regard, conflict and strategy frames have emerged, with an emphasis on Turkey's misalignment with global targets.

Media ownership structures and editorial independence are among the primary factors driving these framing differences. Since mainstream media outlets in Turkey are largely controlled by pro-government business figures, they tend to reinforce official narratives and government policies. These outlets primarily rely on sources from government officials and institutions such as the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change. In contrast, opposition media and Turkish-language foreign press take a more critical approach to environmental policies and make comparisons with international standards. The foreign press, with more critical voices, emphasizes Turkey's shortcomings in addressing climate change.

The news articles in *Sabah* and *Hürriyet* generally present Turkey's environmental policies as a success story. These media outlets frame the government's environmental policies and participation in COP29 as the result of environmentally conscious projects and investments. Topics such as zero-waste projects and developments in the energy sector are portrayed as Turkey's positive contributions to the environment. In this context, presenting environmental policies in connection with economic development and national success aligns with the ideological stance of most media outlets. In contrast, *Cumhuriyet*, *Sözcü*, and the Turkish foreign press place a stronger emphasis on criticisms of Turkey's environmental policies. In these media, the inadequacy of Turkey's environmental policies and their inconsistency with global targets are frequently highlighted. The challenges Turkey faces in fully aligning with the Paris Climate Agreement form the basis for these critiques. Additionally, the foreign press has reported on efforts to generate public support for Turkey taking more steps in combating climate change.



This study reveals that there are significant differences in the coverage of the COP29 summit between Turkey's mainstream media and Turkish-language foreign press. While the mainstream media in Turkey generally presents environmental policies in a positive frame, the Turkish-language foreign press adopts a more critical perspective towards these policies. The sources used by both media outlets reflect these framing differences: the mainstream media in Turkey tends to rely on official sources and individuals close to the government, whereas the Turkish-language foreign press prefers more independent and critical sources. Turkey's environmental policies have been presented as a success in mainstream media, while in foreign press, they have been addressed in terms of inadequacy and inconsistency. This situation demonstrates that the ideological tendencies of media outlets play a decisive role in shaping the perception of environmental policies and influencing public awareness.

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