

UNIVERSITY IN THE NEWS 2022

MEDIA MONITORING REPORT



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TARGETING AND HATE SPEECH TOWARDS LGBTI+ STUDENTS

In the first two installments of the University in the News report series, we examined examples of students being targeted and labeled as "enemies of religion" and "terrorists" due to their activities, press statements, or participation in protests.

In the third installment, we closely examine news articles that directly target LGBTI+ students based on their mere existence.

We have observed that almost all the news articles targeting LGBTI+ students also contain hate speech. In the 11 articles we examined, this targeting and hate speech were carried out through terms such as "deviance" and "provocateur." Many of the articles were related to statements made by groups that defined LGBTI+ students in this way. The sentences of anti-LGBTI+ groups were prominently featured in the news articles. On the other hand, the words of LGBTI+ students appeared only in one or two articles as part of the targeting. Let us also note that we came across mentions of Pride March and a few rare LGBTI+ identities in quotation marks.

1. HOW WERE THEY DEFINED?

“LBT, LGB, LGBT, LGBTHDPKK...” While preparing the University in the News reports, we sometimes encountered examples that gave the impression of someone pressing down on all the silent letters. In all the examples we examined for this report, the term “LGBT” was present.

We encountered the term “LGBT+” twice and the term “LGBTİ+” once in the texts. For example:

- “The planned LGBT+ picnic at Istanbul University was canceled due to the reaction of the students.” ([Yeni Şafak](#))
- “Istanbul Governorate did not grant permission for the 19th Istanbul LGBTİ+ Pride March that was planned to take place today at Maltepe Rally Area.” ([ahaber](#))

However, none of these usages appeared in a positive or neutral manner. The term “LGBT” was frequently used in negative, targeting, and hate speech-containing expressions such as “[LGBT deviants](#),” “[LGBT provocation](#),” “[LGBT siege](#),” and “[LGBT's address of provocation](#).” In the following sections, we will take a closer look at these descriptions.

We cannot say that the definition becomes free from negativity when the term “LGBT” was used alone or when we came across phrases that initially appear neutral, such as “[LGBT event](#),” “[LGBT demonstration](#),” or “[LGBT picnic](#).” In such texts, the framing of the news around “deviance” continued to have the influence of underlying hate-filled expressions.

2. HOW WERE THEY TARGETED?

In all the news articles issuing LGBTI+ individuals, the predominant theme was “deviance.” Furthermore, we also came across mentions of “provocation” and “global gangs” in relation to them.

LGBTI+ students were subjected to hate speech within the context of these themes. The texts also included references to the names of student clubs that organized their activities.

2.1. DEVIANCE



“The National Vision youth stands against deviants. The Istanbul University Beyazıt Campus branch of the Anatolian Youth Association (AGD) has announced that they will not allow the activities of the deviants called LGBT, showing an honorable stance against immorality.”

[Milli Görüş](#), 17.06.2022

“Deviance” and “deviants” were among the most frequently used expressions of hate speech we encountered in the news. When we searched for “deviance” in the search box, we found corresponding results in all of the news articles.

In 5 out of the 11 news articles, the term “deviant” was included in the headlines.

- “No tolerance for deviance” ([Milli Gazete](#))
- “The National Vision youth stands against deviants.” ([Milli Gazete](#))
- “AGD triumphed over LGBTist deviants.” ([Milli Gazete](#))

- “AGD responds strongly to the deviant group LGBT: Stop this disgraceful rush!” ([Milli Gazete](#))
- “AGD calls on the government: Put an end to the activities of deviant associations.” ([Milli Gazete](#)).

Although not explicitly stated in the headlines, the source of the term “deviance” mentioned in the news articles was the statements made by various groups against the LGBTI+ community, which were present in 10 out of the 11 articles. The news frames propagated the statements of anti-LGBTI+ groups while neglecting to include alternative perspectives or the statements of the accused actors.

İstanbul Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi'nde LGBT+ üyeleri tarafından 'onur haftası' için planlanan organizasyona pek çok sivil toplum kuruluşu 'Sapkinlığın karşısında fitratın yanındayız' başlıklı hazırlanan bildiriyle tepki gösterdi.

[Yeni Şafak](#), 18.06.2022

Yaklaşık 150 sivil toplum kuruluşunun katılacağı "Aileni ve neslini koru, sapkinlığa dur de!" mitingi, yarın saat 15.00'da Saraçhane'de başlayacak.

[Yeni Şafak](#), 17.09.2022

Açıklamada; eşcinsellik gibi anormal bir olgunun etrafında inşa ettikleri sahte algılarla insanları kandıran, sönmeye yüz tutmuş saman alevi mesabesindeki **sapkın** örgütlerin mağduru oynamalarına izin vermeyeceklerini belirterek, "Eşcinselliğin bir **sapkınlık** olduğu hakikatini psikoloji, biyoloji ve tıp bilimleri başta olmak üzere tüm ilim dallarında anlatmaya, **sapkın** örgütlerin istismar ettiği çocuklarımıza terapi

[ahaber](#), 25.06.2022

On the other hand, there were instances where the term “deviants” was directly used in the news text. For example, “Deviants’ picnic canceled” ([Yeni Şafak](#)).

2.2. PROVOCATION, GLOBAL GANG ACTIVITY

“Provocation” was another theme that emerged alongside the emphasis on “deviance.” The picnic organized by LGBTI+ students for Pride Month was labeled as “provocation.”

İstanbul Üniversite İletişim Fakültesi önünde toplanan Müslümanlar, bugün yapılması planlanan LGBT etkinliğine izin vermedi. Konuya duyarlı vatandaşlar “Ülkemizde sapıklık istemiyoruz” sloganlarıyla kirli provokasyonu defetti.

“...Concerned citizens countered the dirty provocation with slogans like ‘We do not want perversion in our country.’” ([ahaber](#), 17.06.2022)

Additionally, we also came across news articles that heightened the emphasis on “provocation” with the use of the term “global gang.” The reference to a “global gang” aligns with the vague external enemy perception of the circles of government. According to this narrative, LGBT is seen solely as an extension of a global conspiracy plotted against Turkey.

GÜNDEM

Üniversiteye LGBT kuşatması: Küresel çetenin hedefi gençler

Gençler, üniversitelerde kurulan LGBT kulüpleri tarafından kuşatmaya alındı. Hem devlet hem özel üniversitelerde kurulan ve LGBT dernekleri tarafından fonlanan kulüpler öğrencilere, “akışkan kimliklerimiz” ve “üçüncü bir cinsiyet” adı altında LGBT’yi özendiren, üçüncü cinsiyete sürükleyen etkinlikler ve atölyeler düzenliyor.

“University under LGBT siege: The target of the global gang is the youth”, [Yeni Şafak](#), 17.09.2022

3. WHOSE VOICES WERE ACCOMMODATED?

In all of the news articles we reviewed, statements against LGBTI+ individuals were included. The main focus of the news articles often revolved around statements made in response to an event or activity organized by the LGBTI+ community.



[Millî Gazete](#), 16.06.2022

Statements targeting LGBTI+ individuals were predominantly featured in the news articles, often accompanied by photographs and full texts. We also observed that the news articles were occasionally enriched with statements from those participating in the announcements. However, it is noteworthy that there was no direct inclusion of the voices of LGBTI+ students in any of the news articles.



[Millî Gazete](#), 27.06.2022

In two news articles, the words of LGBTI+ students managed to find their way into the text, so to speak. While the statement against the ban on the 19th Pride March was explicitly mentioned in the text, it was included visually within a news content.

İSTANBUL VALİLİĞİ "ONUR YÜRÜYÜŞÜ"NE İZİN VERMEDİ

İstanbul Valiliği, bugün Maltepe Miting Alanı'nda gerçekleştirilmek istenen 19. İstanbul LGBTİ+ Onur Yürüyüşü'ne izin vermemiştir.

İstanbul Valiliği'nin paylaşılan açıklamasında şu ifadeler kullanılmıştır:

VALİLİĞE TANIDIĞIMIZ MÜDDET DOLDU!

Vali Ali Yerlikaya bu sırada "kadınların dışarıya bile çıkmasını yasaklamak isteyen" İsmailağa Cemaati liderinin cenazesindeydi. Yani halkı kin ve nefrete teşvik ettiği için önlem alınmasını istediğimiz güruh ile bir aradaydı.

Nefret kampanyalarının örgütlenmesine engel olmak bir yana çağrımıza en ufak bir tepki bile göstermeyen kamu kurumlarının ve devlet bürokratlarının bu nefret suçunun bir parçası olduğunu ve sorumlu olduğunu ilan ediyoruz.

İster polis ister örgütlediğiniz paramiliter güçlerden LGBTİ+'lara ve İstanbul Onur Yürüyüşü'ne yönelik gerçekleşecek olan saldırının **sorumlusu ve suç ortağı sizsiniz!**

Buradan Türkiye halklarına sesleniyoruz:

Baskılar, tehditler bize vız gelir; biz lubunyalor en ufak bir çatlıktan bile nefes alır, varlığımızı şonlatırız, çünkü her yürüyüşümüz onur yürüyüşü bizim. Bu baskılara bir arada direndiğimizde olacağını ise hepimiz için için biliyoruz. İçimiz bir cesaret parıltısı bekliyor "artık yeter" demek, bir arada yaşamı mümkün kılmak için özgür ve eşit yaşamı savunan herkesle **Direneceğiz Lubunya!**



"İl sınırlarımız içerisinde provokatif eylem ve olayların meydana gelebileceği, açık yer toplantısına katılacaklarda dahil olmak üzere halkın huzur ve güvenliğinin, kişi dokunulmazlığının, tasarrufa müteallik emniyetin, genel sağlığın ve genel ahlakın, başkalarının hak ve özgürlüklerinin korunması, olası şiddet ve terör olaylarının önlenmesi, provokatif eylem ve olayların yaşanmaması için söz konusu açık yer

"The time allowed for the governorship has expired!" [ahaber](#), 25.06.2022

In another news article related to the picnic that LGBTİ+ students wanted to organize at the university, threats against the event and precautionary warnings for the aftermath were mentioned in a news text titled "[LGBT Provocation in Beyazit](#)":

- LGBTists organized themselves on social media with slogans such as 'Whose Beyazit is it, huh?' and 'Are we ready to paint Beyazit in rainbow colors?'"

- “Due to the threat posed by Shariah-based gangs, the picnic has been canceled. If you are in the vicinity of Beyazıt, we advise you to move in large groups and safely leave Beyazıt.”

HOW WAS HATE SPEECH USED?

Hate speech was present in all the news articles we examined.

Let us take a closer look at the definition of hate speech used in KaosGL's [Media Monitoring Reports](#):

In summary, any discourse that humiliates, excludes, criminalizes, deems as sinful, and calls for combating based on an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity, labeling it as deviant, perverse, poisonous to families, young people, and children, constitutes hate speech. (p.93)

Let us delve deeper into the texts that follow the definition. The majority of the news articles were about the Pride Picnic planned to be held at Istanbul University. Instead of focusing on the subjects as the participants of the Pride Picnic, the news articles covered the statements made against the picnic.

As detailed in the above statement, all of these news articles defined sexual orientations and gender identities as “deviance.”

In the anti-statements, which were the focus of these news articles, direct references to “[the one condemned in the Quran](#)” were included. The antagonism created through emphasis on the sin and the opposition to religion distinguished itself via the division between being “[Muslims](#),” “[citizens](#),” and the “LGBT”.

In addition to the statements made, the definitions and sentences in the news articles also perpetuated this division. In a news article about the reaction to the Pride Picnic, it was stated, “A large number of Muslims gathered in front of the faculty, continuing their reactions against the LGBT event.” ([Yeni Şafak](#))

An example sentence highlighting the religious opposition frame is found in the news article titled “LGBT Provocation in Beyazıt,” which includes the announcement of the Pride Picnic: “The picnic, announced to take place 1.5 hours after Friday prayers, stirred up the citizens.” ([Yeni Şafak](#))



“26 people were detained during the unauthorized LGBT demonstration at Istanbul University.” [Yeni Şafak](#), 18.06.2022

We also came across examples where the activities of LGBT+ individuals were criminalized by emphasizing them as “unauthorized.” The news about the cancellation of the Pride Picnic following the statement titled “[We Stand by Creation Against Deviance](#)” could serve as a good example in this regard.

The news article included a statement that directly used hate speech by referring to the picnic as “deviance.” The expression “A large number of Muslims gathered in front of the faculty, continuing their reactions against the LGBT event” was used in relation to the statement. The subsequent sentences mentioned that “However, some individuals who wanted to continue the unauthorized demonstration caused disturbances in the area” regarding the Pride Picnic.

The framework of the analyzed news articles was shaped by hate speech such as “[not allowing LGBT to prevail](#)” and “[not allowing deviance](#).” The news articles repeatedly portrayed a narrative where local, national, and male individuals were depicted as defenders of the family, children, and ultimately the state against the perceived “LGBT siege.”