

İSTANBUL GELİŞİM UNIVERSİTY



SosyoCom

MONTHLY EVENTS AND NEWS BULLETIN

FEBUARY 2025 | NUMBER 60

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The Invisible Labor Behind Artificial Intelligence: Ghost Workers

Asst. Prof. Eren Efe

The Department of Public Relations and Publicity

In 1769, Wolfgang von Kempelen developed a chess-playing automaton for the Empress Maria Theresa of Vienna. This figure, dressed in Ottoman garb, was known as the "The Mechanical Turk" and attracted considerable attention in Europe. The automaton's success was actually achieved by a chess master hidden in a secret compartment of the table, guiding the moves. This historical example symbolizes a situation similar to the invisible human labor behind artificial intelligence systems today.

The development of artificial intelligence technologies has fundamentally changed working patterns. A global underclass workforce has emerged, particularly in unskilled, repetitive tasks such as data labeling, content moderation, and translation. These tasks are being handled by technology companies through a "crowdsourced" model, where tasks are broken down into small pieces and performed by a large number of people at low wages. This makes the data production necessary for artificial intelligence economical. According to the World Bank and the ILO, workers employed on digital platforms account for between 3.3% and 12.4% of the global workforce. Gray and Suri describe this invisible labor as a "ghost workforce." These workers face challenges such as low wages, insecurity, and a lack of benefits. Platforms, however, exempt them from legal protections by classifying them as independent contractors.

For example, more than 2 million people in the Philippines perform data labeling work. Companies like Scale AI pay these workers low wages and delay payments. OpenAI pays Kenyan workers less than \$2 per hour to ensure the security of ChatGPT. In Finland, prisoners are employed for natural language processing. These examples demonstrate that AI systems are powered by invisible and precarious labor.

Ultimately, the "automatic" miracle of AI is made possible by a global, invisible human workforce, brought together through flexible exploitation networks developed by digital platforms. Just like the chess master behind the Mechanical Turk, the success of AI is largely driven by a "ghost workforce" that is exploited. However, by making this workforce invisible, companies create the illusion that the machine does everything on its own, creating a magic of "artificial intelligence."



Res. Asst. Demet TAC
The Department of Economics and Finance

Diamond: The Sparkling Story of an Illusion



A diamond is one of the hardest and most resilient minerals on Earth. Its carbon atoms, woven into a perfect crystal lattice, make it nearly invincible against time, temperature, and pressure. Yet, the true power of this stone comes not from its physical endurance, but from the meaning etched into our minds. Today, the images of "eternal love" and "absolute luxury" that we associate with diamonds are not products of nature, but of a story skillfully woven by economics, politics, and advertising. This story is so powerful that it has made the diamond one of the world's most valuable objects, despite having almost zero practical use and being a debatable investment vehicle.

"Men grow cold
As girls grow old
And we all lose our charms in the end
But square-cut or pear-shaped
These rocks don't lose their shape
Diamonds are a girl's best friend"

Marilyn Monroe, 1953

This story began in the late 19th century with the founding of the De Beers company by Cecil Rhodes. De Beers established absolute market dominance by monopolizing the diamond mines in South Africa. By intentionally restricting supply and artificially keeping prices high, it twisted the principle that "value comes from rarity" to its own advantage. With this move, the diamond was transformed from an ordinary stone into a symbol of Western wealth and power.

The diamond's metamorphosis into a global icon occurred in the atmosphere of uncertainty and devastation left by World War II. Just as societies were seeking permanence and security, De Beers launched what is perhaps history's most unforgettable advertising slogan at the perfect time: "A diamond is forever." In this single phrase, the immortality of love and the durability of diamond converged. Hollywood then embellished and cemented this image. In films, the diamond engagement ring became an indispensable element of marriage proposals, the ultimate symbol of romantic success. Marilyn Monroe's performance of "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend" took the diamond beyond mere jewelry, making it an integral part of a woman's social identity.

However, there was always a shadow behind this glittering image. Forced labor in African mines brought the concept of "blood diamonds" to the world's attention. Mounting international pressure from the 1990s onward gave birth to the Kimberley Process. This system aimed to prevent diamonds that funded wars from entering the legal market. Yet, this mechanism has often been criticized for allowing ethical concerns to take a back seat to economic interests.

The 2000s introduced a new actor capable of changing the rules of the game: lab-grown diamonds. Chemically and optically identical to their natural counterparts, these stones were promptly labeled as "fake" or "inferior" by the industry. Because in a world where supply was controlled by monopolies, the diamond's real value was sustained not by its use or exchange value, but by that emotional story told for centuries.

Therefore, the story of the diamond is a grand stage where colonialism, monopoly capitalism, ingenious marketing, Hollywood's magic, and human emotion intersect with the economy. Marilyn Monroe's famous song is the very embodiment of one of the most sparkling and successful narratives of modern consumer culture.



Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend

Where Do The Boundaries of Artistic Creativity Begin?

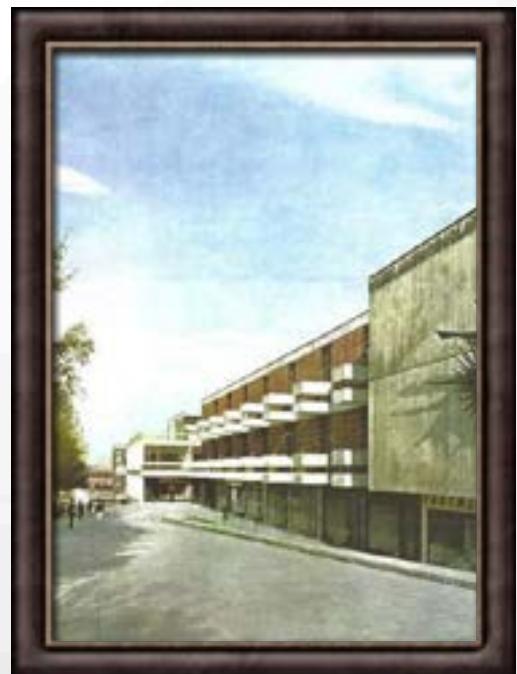
Assoc. Prof. Taylan Maral
The Department of New Media and Communication

Culture
Art and
Literature

Art is one of humanity's oldest languages. From cave paintings to digital canvases, humans have expressed their emotions, beliefs, and dreams through art. With the advancement of technology, the tools have changed in every era, but the essence of art, the search for meaning, has remained constant. Today, the newest stop on this quest is artworks produced by artificial intelligence. Now, a painting is drawn not by a brush but by an algorithm; a melody is produced not by an ear but by data. This situation forces us to rethink the limits of creativity. Artificial intelligence relies on data learning methods in art production. By scanning millions of images, sounds, and words to create new forms and ideas, the resulting work is fueled not by human intuition, but by probabilities and statistics. Nevertheless, the results can create a surprisingly emotional impact. This is because the power of art lies not only in the creator's intention, but also in the viewer's perception.

This development brings an ancient question about the nature of creativity back to the forefront: Is it human emotion that makes art valuable, or is it the resulting aesthetic form? If creativity is the ability to produce a new form, then artificial intelligence fits this definition. However, if the essence of art is to create meaning, then the emotionless production of machines is lacking. Nevertheless, the true value of AI art lies in prompting humans to question their own creativity. In this new era, the artist transcends the role of producer and becomes a guide. They establish an aesthetic language through codes and direct emotional impact through algorithms. Ethical questions also arise in this process: Who is the true owner of a work? Is it the person who collects the data, the engineer who designs the system, or the artificial intelligence that brings the work into being?

The art of artificial intelligence does not offer a creation process independent of humans. On the contrary, it expands the human imagination and multiplies the fields of expression. Perhaps the future of art will take shape in the joint creation of humans and machines, as Kurzweil suggests. Because the creative process, by its very nature, is a variable, evolving, and self-defining action. Technology is not the end of art; we will see if it will be a new beginning where humans confront their own creativity.



This image is generated by
Artificial Intelligence.

İstanbul Manifaturacılar Çarşısı



İMÇ (İstanbul Drapers' Bazaar): The Silent Museum of Public Art

Res. Asst. Dilek Kızılırmak
The Department of New Media and Communication

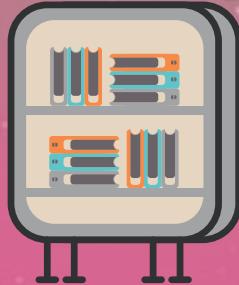
İstanbul Drapers' Bazaar (İstanbul Manifaturacılar Çarşısı, IMÇ) holds a special place in Türkiye's collective memory, also remembered as the İstanbul Plakçılar Çarşısı (Record Sellers' Arcade), where the stars of famous singers once rose to fame. Located in the Fatih district, the market stands as a hidden open-air museum amidst the city's restless pace. IMÇ reflects the traces of 1960s modernist architecture. It is not only a center of commerce, but also a custodian of Türkiye's contemporary art heritage. If you wish to gift yourself a small yet meaningful visual journey over the weekend, a walk through IMÇ may offer more than you expect.

The façades of the blocks are adorned with works signed by pioneering Turkish artists. Kuzgun Acar's metal composition "Kuşlar" (Birds) is one of the most iconic pieces of the complex, carrying the poetic power of modern sculpture onto the walls. Füreya Koral's ceramic panel constructs a rhythmic narrative through color and texture, while Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu's mosaics, themed "Abstract Composition" and "İstanbul," bring the city's cultural diversity to the surface through powerful patterns. Eren Eyüboğlu's mosaic work adds a warm, human-centered tone to this collective narrative.

Nedim Günsür's mosaic panel "Atlar" (Horses) is a striking piece that transfers the energy of motion onto stone. Yavuz Görey's decorative fountain sculpture creates a brief resting place within the market; though it lacks the sound of water, its form evokes a sense of serenity. Ali Teoman Germaner's (Aloş) metal relief reminds us of how industrial materials can be transformed into artistic expression. Sadi Diren's ceramic work completes the artistic fabric of IMÇ as another significant component.

With a coffee in hand, wandering between the blocks allows you to listen to the silent yet profound stories told through stone, metal, and ceramic. This walk is not merely an art tour but a quiet journey through time that touches upon Türkiye's modernization narrative. If you are looking to begin your weekend with tranquility yet intellectual richness, IMÇ awaits you.

<https://imc.org.tr/sanat>



Post Truth

Res. Asst. Dilek Kızılırmak

The Department of New Media and Communication

Director: Alkan Avcioğlu

Screenwriters: Gizem Avcioğlu & Alkan Avcioğlu

Year of Production: 2025

In English, the prefix post adds the meaning of “after, beyond” to the word it precedes. When combined with truth, however, it takes on the opposite meaning. Post-truth, or “Gerçek Ötesi” in Turkish, is a concept used to describe a world where lies replace facts and unwavering devotion to what one wants to believe takes the place of reality.

As its title suggests, Post-Truth portrays a world where everything is fake, and images become mere copies of copies. Described as “a fake film about the real world,” this documentary is the first feature-length film entirely produced using artificial intelligence tools. Created by the artist Gizem Avcioğlu (Vikki Bardot) and the director Alkan Avcioğlu, the documentary was developed over a 15-month period.

The film not only examines the nature of reality but also captivates the audience with its strong narrative, sounds, effects, and vibrant colors. Drawing inspiration and making references to thinkers and artists such as Jean Baudrillard, Slavoj Žižek, Godfrey Reggio, and Adam Curtis, Post-Truth explores the increasing artificiality of our world.

The film highlights the post-modern individual who places themselves at the center, accepting no truth beyond their own beliefs, while these convictions are amplified and deepened in the digital world. The increasing isolation of the individual becomes the most striking truth revealed in a fake film. In a narcissistic world, the only real thing is “YOU.”

As AI-generated characters say, “I feel like everything is fake now” or “Nothing real remains,” viewers are prompted to question their own reality. Are the people we encounter online real? Are the product reviews we read trustworthy? Are the stories told by bots, or by lying humans? Can a slightly distorted truth still be considered real?

While answering questions that are difficult to comprehend, the documentary keeps our minds engaged with new questions, offering a rich and intense narrative experience. Even realizing the artificiality of the world at the tip of your fingers can provide a small sense of relief amidst this overwhelming information bombardment.

Enjoy the film...

Bullshit Jobs - David Graeber

Res. Asst. Dr. Emre YÜKSEL

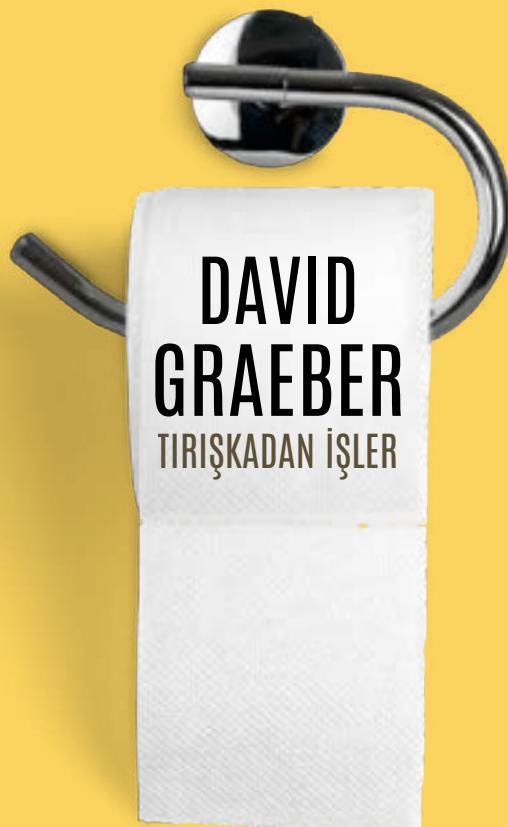
The Department of New Media and Communication

Bullshit Jobs, written by anthropologist David Graeber, examines the prevalence of meaningless jobs that offer no real contribution to society in the modern capitalist system. Based on an article first published in 2013, this book was expanded into a book in 2018 after receiving significant attention. In his book, Graeber argues that some white-collar jobs, in particular, are essentially "unnecessary" but are perpetuated by the system's bureaucratic structure.

According to the author, the capitalist system has increasingly produced "meaningless" and "non-contributory" jobs. Many of these jobs serve no purpose other than perpetuating the system's bureaucratic structure; they neither directly contribute to production nor create social benefits. Yet, these positions persist for reasons such as status, visibility, and hierarchy.

One of the most striking aspects of the book is its demonstration that the people who hold these jobs are also aware of this situation. Many workers Graeber interviewed openly acknowledge that their work is unnecessary. Some say they're forced to fill their days with false pursuits, while others say no one would notice if their work disappeared. This awareness creates a deep sense of dissatisfaction, worthlessness, and alienation in employees. When people can't make a productive or meaningful contribution, they experience not only an economic but also an existential void.

In "Bullshit Jobs," Graeber emphasizes that labor is not just a means of subsistence but also a fundamental element of human dignity and social meaning. Therefore, he argues that the true need of modern societies is not to create more work, but to create more meaningful work. The book is a powerful social critique that questions the apparent rationality of the business world and calls for a rethinking of our work culture.



SUCCESSION

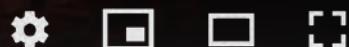
RES. ASST. DR. EMRE YÜKSEL
THE DEPARTMENT OF NEW MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

HBO's award-winning series, Succession, is a sharp-witted, dark comedy and drama that reveals the inner workings of one of the most powerful families of the modern era. Created by Jesse Armstrong, the series centers on the power struggle of the Roy family, owners of media giant Waystar Royco. The family's aging leader, Logan Roy, faces health problems and the prospect of retirement, sparking a massive battle for the throne among his children. This struggle reveals not only control of a company but also a profound psychological battle over power, love, loyalty, and betrayal.

One of the most striking aspects of the series is the depth of the characters and the sharp dialogue. Each character's ambitions, shortcomings, and vulnerabilities are masterfully conveyed to the audience. Logan's children—Kendall, Roman, Shiv, and Connor—are emotionally wounded yet ambitious individuals who grew up in their father's shadow. The series powerfully explores the toxic nature of family relationships and how the desire for power can warp the human psyche.

In terms of visual storytelling, Succession is notable for its cool color palette, minimalist cinematography, and documentary-like camerawork. This style reflects the emotional distance of the characters and the coldness of the corporate world within the story. Nicholas Britell's score adds a distinct weight to the series' atmosphere, creating a tone where classical music themes intertwine with modern intrigue.

Critically acclaimed, Succession is not just a "family drama" but also a profound allegory about the brutal face of capitalism. It masterfully depicts the pursuit of power, the fear of losing it, and a world where love and self-interest intertwine. The series combines the darkest aspects of human nature with clever humor and dramatic intensity.



THE LITERARY ANATOMY OF A REAL MURDER: IN COLD BLOOD*

Asst. Prof. Ahmet Sinav
The Department of New Media and Communication

With cool detachment, Truman Capote's work, described as a 'non-fiction novel,' deals with a real murder committed in 1959 in the town of Holcomb, Kansas, USA. The book details the brutal murder of four members of the Clutter family in their own home, as well as the events leading up to, during, and following the crime.

On the one hand, the work describes the orderly, respectable and peaceful life of the Clutter family, while on the other, it delves deeply into the pasts, personalities and descent into crime of Perry Smith and Dick Hickock, the perpetrators of the murder. Capote presents the events not in a chronological structure but through parallel narratives; this allows the reader to enter the worlds of both the victims and the killers simultaneously. The motive for the murder is a simple expectation of robbery; however, the absence of money in the house further deepens the senseless and tragic dimension of the incident.

The fear, insecurity, and search for justice that arise in the town after the murder are conveyed in detail. The police investigation, the collection of evidence, and the arrest of the suspects are narrated in a meticulous journalistic style. The trial process that begins after Perry and Dick's capture brings ethical and legal debates such as crime, punishment and the death penalty to the fore.



Book: *In Cold Blood*
Author: Truman Capote
Date: 1966

AKADEMIC PLAYLIST



A SELECTION FOR THE FINAL DAYS OF THE YEAR

RES. ASST. MUSTAFA NURKAN BİTLİSLİ

THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

December emerges not merely as a marker of the year's end, but as a state of pause—one that signifies looking back, noticing unfinished sentences, and standing alongside what has yet to be said. This selection centers on an unhurried state of mind at this particular threshold of the year. The songs included here accompany not the exuberance of grand celebrations, but rather the brief silence that precedes the year's end. Without denying the weight of the past months, they leave the door slightly open to a new beginning.

We wish you an enjoyable listening experience. Please click [here](#) to access the playlist.

141		Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas - Remaster...	A Jolly Christmas From Frank Sinatra
142		River	Blue
143		Yeni Bir Gün Doğdu Merhaba	Sarı Çizmeli Mehmet Ağa
144		Last Christmas	LAST CHRISTMAS
145		Cold Little Heart	Love & Hate
146		Fairytale of New York (feat. Kirsty MacColl)	If I Should Fall from Grace with God (Expan...
147		"Heroes" - 2017 Remaster	"Heroes" (2017 Remaster)
148		Snow (Hey Oh)	Stadium Arcadium
149		Right Time Baby	Yağmur
150		Brand New Day	Brand New Day





CULTURAL ADAPTATION IN EDUCATION

Res. Asst. Dr. Emre Yüksel

The Department of New Media and Communication

Cultural adaptation in education means a student's ability to establish a balance between their own cultural identity and the cultural structure of the educational environment. This adaptation directly impacts a student's sense of belonging, motivation, and academic performance. Scientific research shows that learning environments that recognize and respect a student's cultural identity increase achievement. For example, educational scholars such as Banks (2015) and Gay (2018) emphasize that culturally responsive teaching approaches increase student engagement and the quality of learning.

Cultural adaptation does not only mean that the student "fits in" with the educational system; it also involves the educational institution's adaptation to students' cultural diversity. Mutual harmony is necessary for students to participate in the learning process without suppressing their own identity or conflicting with the school's values. Educators developing cultural awareness, adopting a non-prejudiced approach, and incorporating diverse cultures into their teaching materials form the basis of this process.

The responsibility for ensuring cultural adaptation falls on both the educator and the institution. Expecting absolute "fit" from students can lead to assimilation, which can undermine their desire to learn. Conversely, when a teacher integrates a student's cultural background into the learning process, the student both maintains their identity and strengthens their academics.

Ultimately, success in education depends on the quality of cultural adaptation. True success lies in the development of a student in a multicultural learning environment that is at peace with their own cultural identity. When education is conducted with an understanding that values cultural diversity as a richness, lasting learning occurs at both the individual and societal levels.

Furthermore, cultural adaptation strengthens not only individual success but also social relationships and social integration within the classroom. In classrooms where students come from diverse cultural backgrounds, when mutual understanding and empathy develop, the learning environment becomes safer, more participatory, and more productive. Vygotsky's social learning theory also argues that learning is shaped by social interaction; therefore, cultural interaction is a fundamental element of cognitive development. When educators adopt a culturally inclusive approach, they support not only academic success but also democratic values, tolerance, and social harmony. In this respect, cultural adaptation is more than a mere process of "adaptation," it is a transformational process that strengthens the human aspect of education and equips individuals with the ability to coexist amidst diversity.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation



Shaping the Future: The Vision of Digital Mastery

Asst. Prof. Abdulkadir Büyükbingöl

The Department of New Media and Communication

"The authors of "How Google Works" describe themselves as technological optimists who believe that technology's power will make the world a better place. This optimistic outlook is based on solid reasoning. From geological and meteorological sensors to computers that record economic transactions and smart devices that monitor vital signs, vast and varied amounts of data are being collected and processed — at a level that would have been considered science fiction not long ago. Today, we have virtually unlimited computing power to analyze all that data. Quantum computers will take this capability to even greater heights. With limitless data and limitless computing power, we are moving toward a world where great creative minds can solve great problems — a kind of playground for innovation. When microprocessors, mobile phones, and the internet were in their infancy, no one could have predicted how far they would go. Now, the question is no longer about making precise forecasts of what will happen in five years, but imagining what could happen. This question keeps imagination alive.

No matter which sector we examine, a bright future lies ahead. In healthcare, for example, the tracking of complex bodily systems has become easier — and will continue to become even easier — with real-time specialized sensors. When these data meet detailed genetic analyses, unprecedented abilities will emerge to prevent diseases or cure existing ones. Consequently, smarter and more personalized health policies will only require good-faith efforts to become part of our lives. Augmented reality (AR) weaves real-world environments with additional data, creating an enhanced experience through computer-generated sensory forms. This technology allows consumers to experience a product or service in ways never before possible. Trying on new clothes in a virtual fitting room, changing their color, adding jewelry, or getting friends' opinions has already become common. Over time, online shopping may feel as vivid as walking into a store.

As a pathway to the future, digital technologies have also become engines of profitability, efficiency, and performance. A study identified companies that have achieved these capabilities as digital masters — organizations that are 26% more profitable and generate 9% more revenue than their industry averages. It appears that what makes these companies digital masters is not what they invest in, but how they lead change.

Digital masters have developed competence in two crucial dimensions:

- a. Digital Capability (What technology is): The ability to use technologies such as social media, mobility, analytics, and integrated devices.
- b. Leadership Capability (How to lead change): The capacity to envision and manage transformation through forward-thinking leadership.



For these companies, social media, mobility, and analytics are not end goals. They are tools used to get closer to customers, empower employees, and transform business processes. In all digital master organizations, leaders ignite transformation with strong top-down leadership. They strive to create a clearly defined and radically different vision of the future, engage their employees in this purpose, build strong links between technical teams and other staff, and govern the process with robust management.

Research has categorized digital mastery into four levels:

- a. Beginners:** This group waits for certainty before taking action. They possess only basic digital skills and fall behind competitors, often using legal or privacy concerns as excuses for inaction.
- b. Fashionistas:** They jump on every new digital trend without waiting, but lack strong leadership and governance. Beneath the shiny surface, nothing truly changes.
- c. Conservatives:** The opposite of the fashionistas. They have useful digital capabilities but act with excessive caution. They scrutinize every digital investment, which can be beneficial in regulated sectors such as healthcare and finance.
- d. Digital Masters:** They have overcome challenges that hinder competitors. They know where and how to invest, and their leaders are determined to guide their companies confidently into the digital future.

Strong digital capabilities make new digital initiatives easier and less risky, while strong leadership creates synergies, saves resources, and motivates employees to pursue new opportunities. Excelling in both digital and leadership capabilities elevates companies to higher levels of financial performance. Digital masters go beyond websites and mobile apps to completely transform the customer experience, guiding customers effortlessly while placing customer data at the heart of every interaction. They move beyond social media polls and focus groups to truly hear the voice of the end user, while mobile technologies help sustain customer loyalty. A digital master does not simply replace the old with the new; instead, they leverage existing valuable assets through digital technologies, seamlessly weaving together physical and digital experiences. Innovation emerges from this creative integration.

In organizations that achieve digital operational excellence, leaders make better decisions because they have access to better data. Employees collaborate regularly with colleagues they've never met in person and remain connected to headquarters anytime, anywhere. Here, social media and continuous data flow are used to transcend organizational boundaries and hierarchies. As knowledge, connectivity, and computing power have become cheaper, innovations that once shocked humanity have now become ordinary. By combining these technological advancements with a powerful leadership vision, digital masters are not only increasing their own profitability but also shaping the future of their entire industries.

GEN Z'S FURY: YOUTH MOVEMENTS IN MADAGASCAR AND NEPAL TOPPLE LEADERS!



Across different corners of the world, youth-led protests driven by Generation Z have shaken political systems to their core. In both Madagascar and Nepal, movements sparked by young people rapidly turned into mass uprisings that brought down ruling governments.



Across different corners of the world, youth-led protests driven by Generation Z have shaken political systems to their core. In both Madagascar and Nepal, movements sparked by young people rapidly turned into mass uprisings that brought down ruling governments.

In Madagascar, demonstrations that began in September 2025 over water and power outages quickly escalated into a nationwide revolt. Organized largely through social media, the “Gen Z Movement” channeled the frustration of a generation demanding accountability. When CAPSAT, a special military unit, sided with protesters, President Andry Rajoelina fled the country, leading to the establishment of an interim military administration.

A similar wave soon swept Nepal. There, anger over social-media restrictions, youth unemployment, and corruption exploded into the “Gen Z Protests.” The movement, which lacked formal leadership, relied heavily on digital coordination across online platforms. Demonstrators flooded the streets calling for “clean politics” and to “reclaim the future.” Their sustained pressure forced Prime Minister K. P. Sharma Oli to resign.



Developments in both nations highlight how Generation Z is no longer confined to the digital sphere but is increasingly reshaping politics itself. Analysts argue that these uprisings mark a pivotal moment: the emergence of a globally connected, tech-savvy generation ready to confront entrenched power structures. Many believe the events in Madagascar and Nepal could inspire similar youth movements elsewhere, signaling the dawn of a new “digital-age revolution” as the decade progresses.

Meanwhile, similar youth-led unrest has erupted across other regions. In Serbia, students and young professionals have staged massive protests since late 2024, accusing President Aleksandar Vučić’s government of corruption, media manipulation, and democratic backsliding. Demonstrations have been largely peaceful but persistent, symbolized by the image of a “rotten apple” representing political decay. The protests, coordinated through online forums and university networks, have shaken the ruling party’s authority ahead of upcoming elections.

In Morocco, the so-called “Gen Z 212 Movement” — named after the country’s international dialing code — began in September 2025. Frustrated by unemployment, rising costs, and the government’s spending priorities, thousands of young Moroccans took to the streets demanding better education, healthcare, and social justice. Though authorities initially cracked down, the movement has forced officials to acknowledge deep generational grievances.

Together, these uprisings underscore a global truth: the digital generation is no longer just scrolling — it’s revolting.



Savoring in Modern Psychology: Exploring the Power of Positive Moments

Res. Asst. Dr. Emre Yüksel

The Department of New Media and Communication

Savoring is a concept that has been gaining increasing attention in modern psychology, referring to the individual's ability to notice positive experiences, extend them, and feel them more deeply. With the rise of the positive psychology movement, savoring has taken on an important role in both academic research and popular psychology practices. As people have become more sensitive to negativity and as stressors in modern life have grown, the need to consciously enhance positive emotions has become more apparent. For this reason, savoring has become central to approaches aimed at increasing emotional resilience and overall life satisfaction.

Current psychological literature highlights three fundamental dimensions of savoring: savoring in the moment, anticipatory savoring, and savoring through reminiscing. This classification helps us understand how individuals experience positive emotions across different temporal perspectives. Research shows that developing savoring skills increases happiness levels, facilitates coping with stress, and alleviates depressive symptoms. Therefore, many therapeutic approaches—especially mindfulness-based therapies—have begun incorporating savoring techniques.

The popularity of savoring extends beyond clinical psychology; it frequently appears in self-help books, personal development trends, and social media content. As people realize that they often overlook small moments of joy in the fast-paced and demanding rhythm of daily life, savoring practices have become more valuable. Simple actions such as noticing the aroma of a cup of coffee, reliving a pleasant moment through a photograph, or excitedly planning an upcoming event enhance the practicality of savoring.

In conclusion, savoring has become a powerful and widely used tool in both scientific research and individual well-being practices. By helping individuals more fully recognize the positive aspects of life, it holds an important place among modern approaches to mental health and happiness.



SOCIAL AGENDA

THE PEAK OF CONSUMER CULTURE: THE BLACK FRIDAY PHENOMENON

Asst. Prof. Ahmet Sinav

The Department of New Media and Communication

Black Friday emerged in the United States as the Friday following Thanksgiving Day and has gradually evolved into a globally embraced consumption phenomenon. The term was first used in Philadelphia during the 1960s, initially referring to the heavy shopping traffic and crowded streets of the city. Over time, however, it became closely associated with the retail sector's sales strategies. Today, Black Friday is not merely an economic event but also a symbolic indicator of modern consumer culture. It is regarded as one of the most prominent examples of consumption-oriented growth strategies in contemporary economic systems and, through the impact of digitalization, has transformed into a global economic phenomenon.

As a result of capitalist production models and the ideology of mass consumption, this phenomenon influences individuals' purchasing behaviors on both psychological and sociological levels. The concept of "fear of missing out" (FOMO), in particular, weakens consumers' rational decision-making processes and turns shopping into a form of social experience. Moreover, with the rise of digitalization, Black Friday has expanded beyond physical stores and become a global online phenomenon through e-commerce platforms.

Black Friday represents not only a sales strategy but also a complex economic dynamic that affects the balance between consumption and production in modern capitalist economies. From a critical perspective, while Black Friday generates short-term economic stimulation, it contradicts the principles of sustainable consumption in the long run. Overconsumption leads to problems such as the depletion of environmental resources and the disruption of the production-consumption balance. Therefore, Black Friday serves not only as an indicator of economic dynamism but also as an important subject of sociological inquiry for analyzing the effects of consumer ideology on individuals in modern societies.

Black Friday is not merely an economic occurrence but also a symbolic representation of the consumer society. It creates a sociocultural space where individuals construct their identities, statuses, and sense of belonging through consumption practices. The discourse of discounts and opportunities drives individuals through competition and the pursuit of pleasure, generating a collective shopping ritual. From a sociological standpoint, Black Friday functions as a tool that legitimizes the consumption-centered values of the neoliberal system. Thus, it becomes a space where economic behavior, social norms, and cultural symbolism intersect.



Time to Socialize

Res. Asst. Zehra Makar Çelik
The Department of Business Administration (English)

IGU THEATRE CLUB

If you're passionate about theatre and want to take your place either on stage or behind the scenes, the IGU Theatre Club is just for you! Through peer-learning and interactive workshops, you'll develop your skills in acting, improvisation, diction, and stage performance—while becoming part of a fun and creative team.

Every rehearsal is an experience, and every play is an unforgettable memory!

The stage is set — it's your turn to shine!

Don't forget to follow our club on social media for events and announcements!

Instagram: igutiyatro



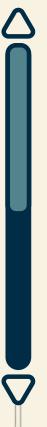
Agenda at IGU

How Did We Welcome the New Year?

Some of us were at home, some enjoyed live music, and maybe some of us stepped into the new year counting the stars (and a few probably fell asleep before midnight). Here's to a year where we keep our hopes brighter than before and move confidently toward our goals!

Instagram: iguiisbf

Twitter: iguiisbf



Let's Socialize!

Let's Move Again

Let's study hard for the finals so we can truly relax and enjoy the break.



We have compiled some of the prominent events in Istanbul in January for you.

Res. Asst. Asel ATAÖGLU
The Department of Business Administration (English)

Type of Event	Name of Event	Location	Date
Concert	Ogün Sanlısoy	Dorock XL Kadıköy	3 January Saturday
Theatre	Amadeus	Zorlu PSM - Turkcell Sahnesi	6 January Tuesday
Stand Up	Ata Demirer	Zorlu PSM	7 January Wednesday
Stand Up	Sabotaj	Beşiktaş Akatlar Kültür Merkezi	11 January Sunday
Concert	Soft Analog	Blind İstanbul	16 January Friday
Concert	Rober Hatemo	Hayal Kahvesi Aqua Florya	17 January Saturday

January in İstanbul

IGU STUDENT



HATICE SEZER
A 2ND YEAR STUDENT FROM THE
DEPARTMENT OF NEW MEDIA AND
COMMUNICATION

I am Hatice Sezer, a second-year student in the Department of New Media and Communication at the Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences. When choosing my department, I was actually quite undecided. There were many departments similar to New Media and Communication, and I knew that people who did not graduate from these fields could also work in the sector. I saw this as a more challenging competitive environment compared to other departments. The question "Am I making the right choice?" often crossed my mind.

However, from the very first moment I started university, this question was replaced by a completely different feeling. The attitude of our lecturers toward us, their guiding approach, and their support in every matter made me feel truly fortunate. Whenever I experienced a problem—whether academic or not—their doors were always open. Over time, I began to say, "I'm glad I chose this department." Rather than a place where only lectures are delivered, I encountered an understanding that truly values students' personal development.

As a New Media and Communication student who has now completed half of the second year, I can clearly say this: this department is not only one that offers theoretical knowledge, but also one that changes one's perspective and teaches a more critical approach to everyday life and media. I now question the background of a piece of news, an advertisement, or any content I see on social media much more. Questions such as "Why was this content presented this way?", "Who is its target audience?", and "What is it trying to convey?" arise in my mind naturally.

For this reason, I can say that one of the most important things this department has given me is awareness. I learned that media is not merely something to be consumed; when used correctly, it is a powerful medium that can be produced, directed, and transformed. Today, we are all productive consumers—that is, "prosumers." Thanks to the courses we take, I strive to develop myself in many different areas, from news writing and content production to digital media literacy and communication theories.





Another aspect in which I believe I was very fortunate was my internship process. During this period, I had the opportunity to see the field firsthand. Observing how what we learned in theory is reflected in practice helped me understand the profession I want to pursue more clearly. Through this experience, I was able both to test myself and to observe the dynamics of the profession more closely.

The opportunities offered by our department have also been among the factors that increased my motivation. The opening of a content production room called the Podcast Studio this year is a concrete indication that our education is not limited to coursework alone. Producing, experimenting, and developing in a space dedicated to our own field is a great opportunity for us as students.

The point where I feel most advantaged in the New Media and Communication department is that we gain competencies applicable to both traditional media and digital/new media. The courses we take do not confine us to a single field; on the contrary, they encourage us to think multidimensionally and to produce across different platforms. This makes me feel freer and better prepared for the future.



IGU Graduate



Hello, my name is Burhan Emre İpek. I am a graduate of the Department of New Media and Communication at the Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences at İstanbul Gelişim University. During my university years, I served as the founder and president of the Digital Media and Communication Club. In order to apply the theoretical knowledge I gained at school to professional life, I participated in many extracurricular training programs and completed internships.

In my first year at university, I completed a six-month internship in the field of social media specialization. Afterwards, I received training in Digital Content and Broadcasting at AcunMedya Academy and earned the right to join a paid internship program, where I took my first steps toward a career in video editing. Later on, I began my professional career as a video editor at an international YouTube company.

After graduation, realizing that gaining such experiences would be more difficult, I decided to try different sectors. I turned to more social fields such as bartending and barista work. Thanks to working part-time, I was able to participate more actively in my university life. The courses I took from my valuable professors guided me toward the idea of becoming an academician, and this field—one I had never previously considered—became a goal for me. Until my graduation, I worked as a student employee in the Public Relations and Promotion Directorate of our university. After graduating, I have continued to work here on a full-time basis. During this period, I began my master's degree and have been progressing on the path toward an academic career.

What İstanbul Gelişim University has contributed to me has shaped my future, and this process is still ongoing. I believe that the years I look back on and say "I'm glad" are owed primarily to this university and to my valuable professors.



Burhan Emre İPEK
A Graduate Student from the Department
of New Media and Communication



Sahra ERSOY

A Student from the Department of Sociology (Major) & The Department of
New Media and Communication (Double Major)

My name is Sahra Ersøy. In the year I was to advance to my second year in the Department of Sociology at İstanbul Gelişim University, I started a double major program in the Department of New Media and Communication by meeting the required GPA and ranking within the top 20 percent. The main reason I initially chose Sociology was my idealistic perspective. Although I was able to observe many pathological conditions present in society, I felt inadequate in fully defining them or producing solutions. Therefore, I chose the Department of Sociology for my undergraduate education in order to first increase my own awareness and then, as a competent individual, contribute to initiating certain changes. While I am aware that this may seem overly romantic to some, I did not want to be an empty young person without ideals.

As a fourth-year Sociology student, I am now able to identify social problems and pathologies that I initially aimed to understand, and to produce solution-oriented ideas in a professional, fair, and—most importantly—ethical manner, with full awareness of their scope and representations in the literature. I aim to continue the ethical transformations I have begun to implement within my immediate environment in a more institutional and naturally broader framework after graduation and once I formally enter my profession.

My decision to pursue a double major after completing my first year in Sociology stemmed not only from being an idealistic young person but also from remaining grounded in reality. In today's conditions, graduating from a university alone is often insufficient to access employment opportunities. This reality motivated me to expand my knowledge base, work in more than one field, and develop competence not only within a single discipline but also in interdisciplinary studies. Although there were many other fields that attracted my interest alongside New Media and Communication, I chose this department because I believed it offered broader future opportunities. As a member of Generation Z—positioned between the digitally immigrant Generation Y and the fully digital-native Alpha Generation—I was aware that the future lies in the digital age. While I intend to work in Sociology in the future, realizing that new media opens up new areas in many aspects of contemporary society—such as socialization, employment, political participation, and the representation of identities—led me to believe that the Department of New Media and Communication would provide me with a valuable new perspective to practice sociology more comprehensively.

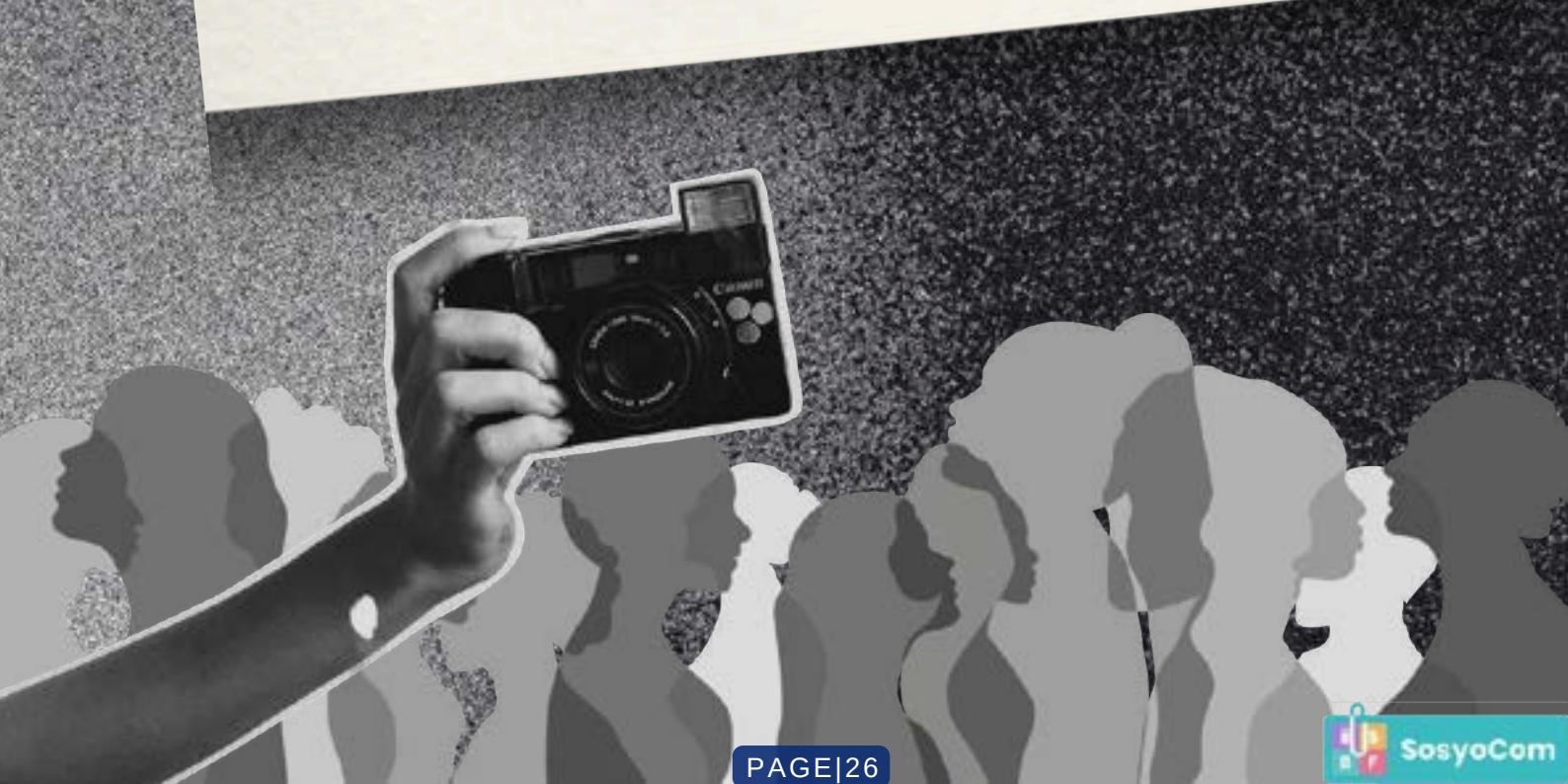
Currently, as a third-year student in the Department of New Media and Communication, I closely follow developments in artificial intelligence, social media, and other technological advancements, as well as their societal impacts, and I can clearly see how accurate my initial prediction was. In the New Media and Communication program, we do not only learn the dynamics of social media and how to become a social media specialist; we also learn coding, how to use design software, the history of artificial intelligence, how to use AI more effectively, photography, as well as journalistic ethics and practice.

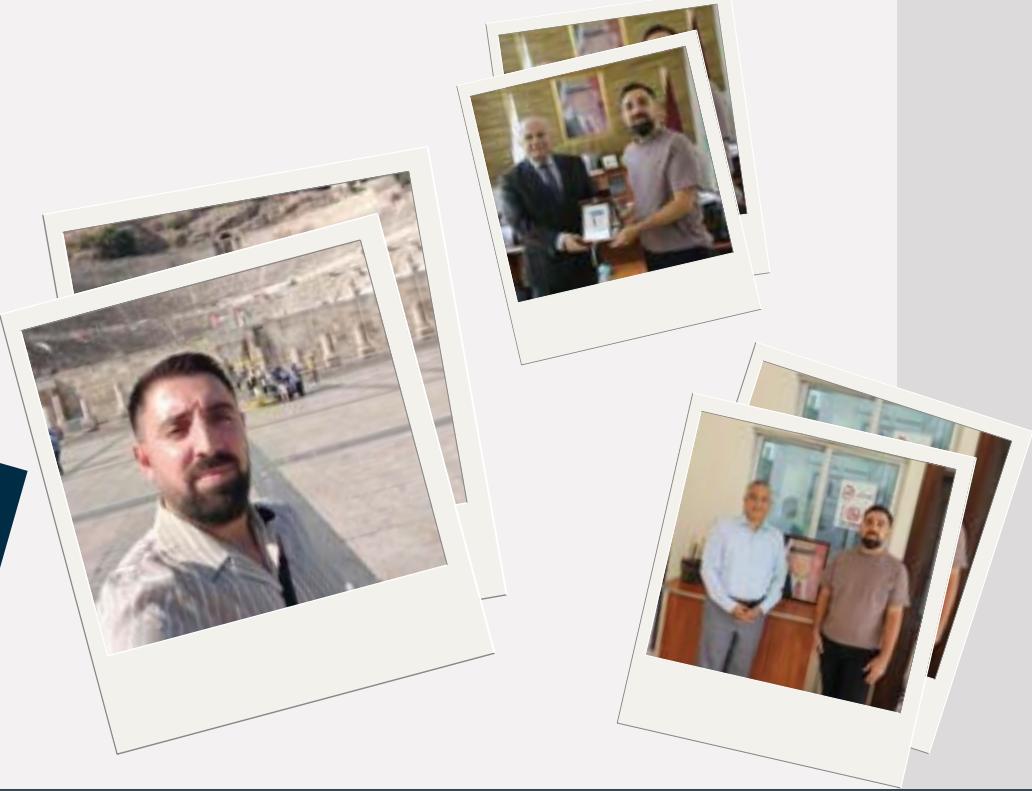
In the Sociology program, in addition to courses covering every branch of sociology—from sociology of art to sociology of migration—we also take courses that integrate sociology with important fields such as politics, psychology, and philosophy, including subjects like social psychology. The fact that topics I aim to work on in the future—such as identity crises and the political and media representations of identities—are shared focal points of both departments is highly functional for me in terms of acquiring sufficient competence for my future goals.

If you wish to study in a department where you can learn deeply rooted concepts with great depth that shape social life from economic to gender dimensions—thus enabling you to play an active role in society and to reshape social reality into a form that is not suffocating to inhabit, both for yourself and for others—I recommend Sociology. If you aim to access the new job opportunities of our era, become more competent in digital technologies as today's new means of production, and explore a new space in which you can exist in the construction of identity, I recommend New Media and Communication. And if, like me, you find aspects of interest in both fields and can envision yourself working in both, I strongly suggest taking advantage of double major opportunities.

I understand that studying in two different departments simultaneously may seem intimidating, as I initially shared the same concerns. However, confronting this fear and making this decision has turned out to be one of the best decisions I believe I have made for my academic career.

Sincerely,





Erasmus+ Staff Mobility Experience – Isra University (Amman, Jordan)

As part of the Erasmus+ Staff Mobility program, I had the opportunity to visit Isra University in Amman, the capital of Jordan, during the spring semester of 2025. This visit was a highly productive and insightful experience, both academically and culturally. The strong institutional relationships established between Istanbul Gelişim University and Isra University throughout the mobility period helped me complete the mobility without any problems. I believe it is quite appropriate and positive that the Erasmus+ Staff Mobility program extends its reach to regions beyond Europe, contributing to the development of educational institutions and intercultural interaction.

Isra University stands out with its academic infrastructure, welcoming faculty, and open approach to international collaboration. The projects carried out across its 10 faculties and its student-centered education approach provide a strong foundation for the sharing of knowledge and experience between universities. The university's library, laboratories, study and socialization areas, as well as the quality of the education provided, meet contemporary university education standards and clearly demonstrate its great potential. During our conversations, I observed a positive commitment to student exchange and academic collaborations. Throughout the process, I witnessed the exceptional work of all academic and administrative staff, especially Dr. Mohammad Makhloof, who helped me understand the academic and spatial aspects of Isra University, the demographic, cultural, and architectural structure of Amman, and who embraced Jordan's welcoming culture.

Jordan is a country with deep historical and cultural ties. In this context, I believe that joint projects with universities in Jordan and the region, similar to Isra University, through programs such as Erasmus+ Staff Mobility, will not only facilitate knowledge transfer but will also contribute to the development of intercultural understanding. I believe such mobility is strategically important, as it provides students and faculty with the opportunity to become familiar with higher education systems in the Middle East. I believe that in the future, the scope of the program will be expanded and different regions will be included in the scope of Erasmus+ Staff Mobility.



Local Flavors: Kastamonu Cuisine

Res. Asst. Dilek Kızılırmak

The Department of New Media and Communication

Kastamonu is one of the cities in Türkiye that, when it comes to culinary culture, has often failed to receive the attention it truly deserves; yet a closer look clearly reveals that it is home to one of Anatolia's most deeply rooted and richest cuisines. According to various compilations and studies, Kastamonu cuisine includes more than 800 different dishes, nearly 500 of which are unique to this region alone. In addition, with 38 types of soups, 51 types of bread, and hundreds of original recipes, Kastamonu stands out as one of the cities with the most extensive culinary repertoires in the country. This diversity makes Kastamonu cuisine not only local, but also culturally significant and worthy of closer examination.

The foundation of this richness lies in the city's historical and geographical position. Kastamonu has been a settlement area since ancient times and is located at the intersection of the Black Sea and continental climates. This unique position has directly shaped both the variety of ingredients and cooking techniques found in its cuisine. While the mansion cuisine that developed during the Ottoman period was largely based on meat dishes, pastries, and desserts, rural areas—closely connected to their geography—offered a wide range of vegetable and herb dishes, mushroom varieties, different types of bread, and long-lasting foods such as tarhana, homemade noodles, dried vegetables, pickles, and grains. These products represent the most distinctive reflections of the region's strong pantry culture.

The region's vast forested areas have made mushroom diversity an essential element of the cuisine, while traditions of transhumance and animal husbandry have increased the prominence of meat-based dishes. Kuyu kebabı is one of the most symbolic examples of this culinary heritage. The slow cooking of lamb for long hours in underground pits reflects a culinary understanding rooted in patience, labor, and collective production. Banduma, with its balance of yufka, meat broth, and walnuts, is both filling and symbolic. Eti ekmek, prepared with skill and speed, is another distinctive dish that leaves a lasting impression when done well. Meanwhile, Taşköprü garlic, Kastamonu pastırma, and çekme helva are geographically indicated products that give Kastamonu international recognition.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Kastamonu cuisine is its continued resistance to today's fast-consumption culture. This cuisine does not lend itself to haste. Recipes are passed down not in grams, but through memory. "Eyeballing" is not a sign of imprecision here, but rather of accumulated experience refined over generations. In Kastamonu, meals are shaped by a culture of togetherness; cooking and eating are practices that carry the rituals of gathering and sharing.

Although Kastamonu cuisine may still lack sufficient visibility today, it continues to be one of Türkiye's strongest local cuisines thanks to its diversity, historical continuity, and deeply rooted production culture.

ABOUT ACADEMIC LIFE

PUBLICATIONS

Asst. Prof. Ifedolapo Olabisi Olanipekun's article titled "Effects of the Paris Agreement on New Energy Investments: Do Energy Risks Play a Role? Evidence from (Multivariate) Time-Varying Quantile Regression" was published in Energy.

Asst. Prof. Reyhan Özeş Özgür's article titled "Renewable Energy Scenarios in Türkiye: Economic Impacts, Environmental Consequences, and Sustainable Development Perspectives" was published in Sustainable Development.

Res. Asst. PhD. Kartal Doğukan Çıkı's article titled "A Netnography Research to Explore the Components of Visitors' Experiences in Geoheritage Sites: Case of Huangshan UNESCO Global Geopark (China)" was published in Geoheritage.

Assoc. Prof. Festus Victor Bekun's article titled "The Role of Environmental Tax Policy, Natural Resource Rents, and Outward Foreign Direct Investment in Advancing Clean Energy Consumption in BRICS-T Countries" was published in International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology.

Res. Asst. Ahmet Can Şenlik's article titled "From Awareness to Action: Understanding the Role of Economic Costs and Perceived Convenience in Tourist Mobility Decisions" was published in Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity.

Asst. Prof. Merve Vural Allaham's article titled "Overview of Economic Relationships Between Türkiye and Turkic Republics" was published in Ege Academic Review.

Assoc. Prof. Ayşe Meriç Yazıcı's article titled "Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture: A Pathway to Improved Environmental Outcomes?" was published in Sustainable Development.

STAFF AGENDA



ACADEMIC-ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- Asst. Prof. Ünal ALPAY has been appointed to the position of Asst. Prof. in the Department of Psychology.
- Res. Asst. Kerem KUTAL has been appointed to the position of Res. Asst. in the Department of Political Science and International Relations (English).
- Res. Asst. Hasan Ferruh KOÇ has been appointed to the position of Res. Asst. in the Department of Management Information Systems (English).
- Res. Asst. Muhammet Ali KAYACIK has been appointed to the position of Res. Asst. in the Department of English Translation and Interpreting.
- Prof. Yasemin YULAF has been appointed to the position of Prof. in the Department of Psychology.

ACADEMIC STAFF DEPARTURES

- Res. Asst. Tayyibe KARAGÖZ has left the Department of Economics and Finance (English).



Dear IGU Alumni and Students,

A NEW ONLINE RECRUITMENT PLATFORM

that matches the skills of alumni with qualities requested by employers has opened. You can reach out and apply for open positions by subscribing to the platform.



IGU Alumni Tracking System

The Alumni Tracking System (Metsis) has been launched to determine and follow the current status of our graduates, such as their employment and higher education careers, and to generate statistical data. Moreover, Istanbul Gelisim University aims to strengthen its relations with its graduates and contribute to their employment process through the METSiS platform. IGU alumni can subscribe to the platform for free. (metsis.gelisim.edu.tr)

Our graduates who are members of the platform can update their profiles and follow job postings.

How to subscribe to the METSiS platform?

1. Enter the platform (metsis.gelisim.edu.tr) via internet-connected devices.
2. You can follow the job postings by clicking on the jobs.
3. You can create an account from the New Candidate section to apply.
4. After creating an account, you can see job postings from the jobs section on the top and apply for open positions.

M A S T H E A D

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Res. Asst. Tuğçe GÜL BABACAN

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