

## MERT CAN YILMAZ

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### Experience

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#### Research Engineer & Senior Analyst at Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP)

*Uppsala University Department of Peace and Conflict Research (DPCR), Uppsala, Sweden (Sep 2018 – Present)*

I am currently a Research Engineer and Senior Analyst at the UCDP, where I develop tools and methods to support conflict data collection and analysis. As part of the Peace Science Infrastructure (PSI) initiative, in collaboration with the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), my work focuses on improving the efficiency and quality of data through automation and technical solutions. Since joining UCDP, I have progressed through several roles and gained extensive experience in coding, managing, and analysing conflict data from a wide range of global contexts.

*\*I was on parental leave from September to December 2024.*

#### Previous positions at the DPCR:

President of DPCR Alumni Association (Jun 2021 – Jun 2024) | Representative of the TA Staff at the DPCR Board (Oct 2021 – Jun 2023) | Analyst at UCDP (Jul 2021 – Jun 2023) | Junior Analyst at UCDP (Jul 2019 – Jun 2021) | Teaching Assistant at the Violence and Impacts Early-Warning System (Feb 2019 - Jun 2019) | Intern at the Violence and Impacts Early-Warning System (Nov 2018 - Jan 2019) | Intern at UCDP (Sep 2018 - Oct 2018)

#### Co-Founder of *Yapay Gündem*

*Yapay Gündem, Türkiye (Jan 2024 – Present)*

I co-founded Yapay Gündem ([www.yapaygundem.com](http://www.yapaygundem.com)), a forward-looking platform dedicated to examining the ethical and societal implications of artificial intelligence. I lead content strategy and development, while also facilitating stakeholder engagement within Türkiye's technology and ethics ecosystems. My work centers on promoting responsible AI practices, emphasizing transparency, fairness, and accountability. I regularly publish opinion pieces and contribute to public discussions through articles, events, and panels.

#### Other previous positions

*Teyit, Ankara, Türkiye (Mar 2018 – Dec 2023)*

I began at Teyit -an independent fact-checking organization- as a Contributor, producing content aimed at combating misinformation. Promoted to Editor in January 2019, I led editorial efforts and developed content strategies to enhance public trust and media accuracy. From September 2021, I worked as a Research Consultant, directing research projects on misinformation ecosystems and their societal effects. This role included collaboration with academic and media organizations to innovate verification methods and foster media literacy in Türkiye.

### Education

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#### MA in Theology - Master's Programme in Religion in Peace and Conflict

*Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden (Aug 2022 – Jun 2023)*

Master's Thesis: Yilmaz, Mert Can (2023). Divine Alignment: A Survey-Based Study on How Religion Influences Expectations for AI Alignment.

#### MSSc in Peace and Conflict Studies

*Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden (Aug 2017 – Jun 2019)*

Master's Thesis: Yilmaz, Mert Can (2019). Justifying Rebellion: A Study on When Individuals Justify Rebellion-Related Political Actions.

#### BA in Political Science and International Relations

*Bogazici University, Istanbul, Türkiye (Sep 2012 – Jun 2017)*

### Certificates (Selection)

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Value-Based Leadership Training, *Sconternas Folkhögskola and H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf's Foundation for Young Leadership*, 19 May 2024.

Ethics of AI, *London School of Economics*, 15 May 2024.

IBM Data Science Professional Certificate, *IBM*, 5 Jul 2022.

## Skills and Languages

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**Data Management & Analysis:** Python, SQL, R

**Data Visualization:** Tableau, Power BI

**Design and Publishing:** Photoshop, InDesign, After Effects

**Languages:** Turkish (*Native*), English (*Fluent*), Swedish (*Intermediate*)

## Publications (Selection)

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Vesco, P., Randahl, D., Hegre, H., Högladh, S., & Yilmaz, M. C. (Forthcoming). The underreported death toll of wars: A probabilistic reassessment from a structured expert elicitation. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

Öberg, M., & Yilmaz, M. C. (2025). Measurement issues in conflict event data: Addressing some misconceptions about what drives differences between human-coded event datasets. *Research & Politics*, 12(3).

Simon, É., Olsen, H. B., Carreño, R., Mishra, R., Arefyev, N., Yilmaz, M. C., Øvrelid, L., & Veldal, E. (2025, September). Abstractive event analysis of armed conflicts: Introducing the UCDP-AEC dataset. In *Proceedings of the 5th Workshop on Computational Linguistics for the Political and Social Sciences*. Association for Computational Linguistics. Hildesheim, Germany.

Cavus, Gulin and Mert Can Yilmaz (2024). Democracy Rewired? A Mid-Year Assessment of the AI-Media-Democracy Nexus with Insights from the 2024 Turkish Local Elections. *Yapay Gündem*.

Yilmaz, Mert Can and Muratcan Zorcu (Eds.) (2023). Cumhuriyet'in Yüzüncü Yılında Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Üzerine Makaleler (Articles on the Republic of Türkiye in the Centenary of the Republic). Turkiska Student- och Akademikerförningen.

Yilmaz, Mert Can (2023). The State of Information Disorder: 2023 Turkish Presidential and General Elections. Teyit.

Yilmaz, Mert Can and Berrak Pinar Uluer (Eds.) (2021). İkidiillik Çalışmaları ve Avrupalı Türkler (Bilingualism Studies and European Turks). Turkiska Student- och Akademikerförningen.

Cavus, Gulin and Mert Can Yilmaz (2021). "Covid-19 Pandemisi Sürecinde Yanlış Bilgi Sorunu: 5G Komplo Teorilerine İlişkin Bir Vaka Çalışması" (*Misinformation in the midst of Covid-19 Pandemic: A Case Study on 5G Conspiracy Theories*) in *Pandemi Neoliberalizm Medya (Pandemic Neoliberalism Media)*. Ayrinti Yayinlari.

## Peer Review Experience

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Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, APA, 2026

## Media Appearances/Interviews (Selection)

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Dagens Nyheter, Svensk kartläggning: Minst 29 000 civila har dödats i Gazakriget (At least 29,000 civilians have been killed in the Gaza war) 19 Jun 2025.

Hürriyet, İsveç'te yaşayan iki Türk gencinden büyük başarı (Impressive achievement by two young Turks in Sweden), 12 Jun 2025.

Deutsche Welle, Yerel seçimlerde yapay zeka risk yaratıyor mu? (Does AI pose a risk in local elections?) 24 Mar 2024.

Uppsala University Researching Peace podcast, AI, Peace, and Conflict, 13 Oct 2023.

BBC News, İsrail-Filistin: Gazze, Google haritalarında neden bulanık görünüyor? (Israel-Palestine: Why is Gaza blurry on Google Maps?), 17 May 2021.

## Editorial Works (Selection)

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Producer at Uppsala University's Researching Peace podcast (2021 – 2024) and Department of Peace and Conflict Research YouTube channel (2023 – 2024)

Podcaster at the 2<sup>nd</sup> season of Teyit's t cetveli

Co-editor of the Teyit's mini documentaries: Let us burst your bubble (19 May 2020), R.I.P Turkish mainstream media (5 Aug 2019), Algorithms: Friends or foe? (8 May 2019), Syrian refugees: Could they influence Turkey's local elections outcome? (28 Mar 2019), Why we believe fake news (27 Dec 2018)

Turkish editor of Craig Silverman's "Verification Handbook for Disinformation and Media Manipulation" (Dezenformasyon ve Medya Manipülasyonu üzerine Doğrulama El Kitabı), Oct 2020.

## Current Civic Affiliations

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Alternate Board Member, *Swedish Association of University Teachers and Researchers (SULF) Uppsala* (Dec 2025 – Present)

Member, *Svenska Freds* (Mar 2024 - Present)