



TURKEY

Country profile

AREA 783,356 km²

POPULATION

 80,81 mln

GDP per capita
\$7,615



CURRENCY ₺

Turkish lira (TRY)

Language TURKISH

COUNTRY BACKGROUND



National Flag

Turkey is one of the few countries that does not have an official national coat of arms or national emblem. The symbol on the cover page of Turkish passports is simply the star and crescent as found in the flag of Turkey.

Location: Southeastern Europe and Southwestern Asia, bordering the Black Sea, between Bulgaria and Georgia, and bordering the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, between Greece and Syria. Geographically, Turkey sits in two continents, Europe and Asia, although around 97% of its land area is on the Asian side.

Capital: Ankara. Istanbul is the largest city in Turkey and the third most populous urban area in Europe; it is the only city in the world built on two continents.

Climate: temperate; hot, dry summers with mild, wet winters; harsher in interior

Ethnic Make-up: About 70-75% of the population are ethnic Turks and about 30-35% of the population consists of recognized (Armenians, Greeks and Jews) and unrecognized (Kurds, Circassians, Albanians, Georgians etc.) minorities

Religions: Muslim 99.8% (mostly Sunni), other 0.2% (mostly Christians and Jews)

Government: republican parliamentary democracy

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Turkey became an EU candidate country in 1999 and, in line with EU requirements, went on to introduce substantial human rights and economic reforms. The death penalty was abolished, tougher measures were brought in against torture, and the penal code was overhauled.

Reforms were introduced in the areas of women's rights and Kurdish culture, language, education and broadcasting. Women's rights activists have said the reforms do not go far enough and have accused the government of lacking full commitment to equality and of acting only under EU pressure.

After intense bargaining, EU membership talks were launched in October 2005. Accession negotiations are expected to take about 10 years. So far, the going has not been easy.

Turkey has long been at odds with its close neighbour, Greece, over the divided island of Cyprus and territorial disputes in the Aegean.

The breakthrough in its EU membership talks came just weeks after Turkey agreed to recognise Cyprus as an EU member, though it qualified this conciliatory step by declaring that it was not tantamount to full diplomatic recognition.

Several European countries continue to have serious misgivings over Turkey's EU membership, and Germany and France have called for it to have a "privileged partnership" with the EU instead of full membership.

Turkey long saw itself as the eastern bulwark of the Nato alliance, and underlined this by having close ties with Israel. But under Mr Erdogan, Turkey has taken an openly confrontational approach to Israel, counting on its new prestige in Arab countries to boost its regional standing as a power broker.

The outbreak of civil war in neighbouring Syria has seen Turkey's stance move from détente with the Assad government to open support for the rebels, although stopping short of military assistance. This has left Turkey exposed within the Nato alliance, which continues to keep the Syrian conflict at arm's length, but has further enhanced Turkey's prestige in Arab public opinion.

ATATÜRK'S REFORMS

Atatürk's Reforms were a series of political, legal, cultural, social, and economic policy changes that were designed to convert the new Republic of Turkey into a secular, modern nation-state. Central to these reforms was the belief that Turkish society would have to Westernize itself both politically and culturally in order to modernize. Political reforms involved a number of fundamental institutional changes that put an end to many traditions, and followed a carefully planned program to unravel the complex system that had developed over the centuries. The reforms were implemented under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in accordance with Kemalist ideology.

Chronology of Reforms

- 1922 Sultanate abolished (November 1).
- 1923 Treaty of Lausanne secured (July 24). Republic of Turkey with capital at Ankara proclaimed (October 29).
- 1924 Caliphate abolished (March 3). Traditional religious schools closed, Sheriat (Islamic Law) abolished. Constitution adopted (April 20).
- 1925 Dervish brotherhoods abolished. Fez outlawed by the Hat Law (November 25). Veiling of women discouraged; Western clothing for men and women encouraged. Western (Gregorian) calendar adopted instead of Islamic calendar.
- 1926 New civil, commercial, and penal codes based on European models adopted. New civil code ended Islamic polygamy and divorce by renunciation and introduced civil marriage. Millet system ended.
- 1927 First systematic census.
- 1928 New Turkish alphabet (modified Latin form) adopted. State declared secular (April 10); constitutional provision establishing Islam as official religion deleted.
- 1933 Islamic call to worship and public readings of the Kuran (Quran) required to be in Turkish rather than Arabic.
- 1934 Women given the vote and the right to hold office. Law of Surnames adopted Mustafa Kemal given the name Kemal Atatürk (Father of the Turks) by the Grand National Assembly; Ismet Pasha took surname of İnönü.
- 1935 Sunday adopted as legal weekly holiday. State role in managing economy written into the constitution.



TURKEY FACTS

Flag

Red is a traditional Islamic color. It was the color used by the Ottoman Empire, who formerly ruled Turkey, but the empire collapsed in 1918. The crescent and star are ancient symbols of Islam and are considered to be signs of good luck. The color red is a prominent color in Turkish history, and even though the crescent and star are symbols of Islam, they have been used in Asia Minor even before the advent of Islam.



Latin alphabet

The adoption of the Latin alphabet and the purging of foreign loan words was part of Atatürk's program of modernization.

Turkish was written using a Turkish form of the Perso-Arabic script for a thousand years. However, it was claimed to be poorly suited to the Turkish part of the vocabulary. Whereas Arabic is rich in consonants but poor in vowels, Turkish is exactly the opposite. On November 1, 1928, the new Turkish alphabet was introduced by the Language Commission at the initiative of Atatürk, replacing the previously used Perso-Arabic script.



Secular and Democratic

Turkey is the only secular and democratic Muslim country in the world. When the Republic of Turkey was formed in 1923, it marked the beginning of a huge change in the country. Turkey became a secular republic and adopted a big change in politics.



TURKEY FACTS



Constantinople - Istanbul

Istanbul is one of the oldest settlements in the world. The Neolithic settlement in Istanbul’s peninsula dates back to the 7th millennium BC. The first known name for Istanbul was Byzantium, which was given by Dorians who established a colony in Istanbul in 667 B.C. Later on, the name changed to Constantinople with the death of Emperor Constantine in 337 A.D. Constantinople was also the centre of the magnificent Roman Empire and, in its prime, it was classed as the wealthiest city in Europe. After 1453 Constantinople became Istanbul, and it was the centre of the Ottoman Empire which ruled many countries for over 600 years. Istanbul also happens to be the only city in the world located on two continents. Istanbul is now a very modern city, the trade and cultural center of Turkey, hosting the country’s cultural and historical heritage for thousands of years.

In Ancient World

Turkey is the birthplace of the following popular historical figures: the biblical Abraham, the poet Homer, St. Paul the Apostle, the storyteller Aesop, and the father of history, Herodotus.

Julius Caesar’s famous words, “Veni, vidi, vici” (which mean “I came, I saw, I conquered”), were uttered after he won the difficult battle against the kingdom of Pontus, which is located in north-eastern Turkey.

The Trojan War took place in Turkey. A wooden statue of the Trojan Horse sits on the site today.

St. Nicholas, the inspiration for Santa Claus, was born in Patara, Turkey. He was a bishop at the Demre, which is situated on the country’s Mediterranean Coast.

Mount Ararat (Agri Dagi) in Eastern Turkey is where Noah’s ark is widely believed to have landed after the Great Flood.



TURKEY FACTS

Eye bead

The Turkish boncuk (sometimes called a göz boncuğu ‘eye bead’) is a glass bead characterized by a blue glass field with a blue or black dot superimposed on a white or yellow center. As a historical item, the blue bead has gained importance as an item of popular culture in Modern Turkey.

The bead probably originated in the Mediterranean and is associated with the development of glass making. Written documents and extant beads date as early as the 16th century BC. Glass beads were made and widely used throughout the ancient world: from Mesopotamia to Egypt, from Phoenicia to Persia, and throughout the Roman imperial period.



Fez

The fez hat originated from the city of Fez in Ancient Morocco. The fez is also known as the tarboosh (Persian sar-boosh for “head cover”) and checheya. Fez formerly had a monopoly on the manufacture of the hat because it controlled the juice of the berry used to color them.



The red fez with blue tassel was the standard head-dress of the Turkish Army from the 1840s until the introduction of a khaki service dress and peakless sun helmet in 1910.

The modern fez is made of felt, shaped roughly like a canister or truncated cone, tapering slightly towards the top where there is a tassel fixed to the middle of the flat top.

TURKEY FACTS

Self-Sufficient

Turkey is classed as agriculturally self-sufficient. This means that it does not rely on other countries for food imports. Turkey is known throughout the world for producing a number of different items including figs, barley, tomatoes, egg plants, green peppers and lentils. Next time when you are in your local supermarket, keep an eye out for the delicious Turkish exports that line the shelves.



Islam

Islam is the religion of the majority of Turks although the state is fiercely secular. Islam emanated from what is today Saudi Arabia. Certain obligations for Muslims is praying five times a day at dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and evening. The exact time is listed in the local newspaper each day. Friday is the Muslim holy day, although this is not practised in Turkey. However, most males will attend the congregational afternoon prayer. During the holy month of Ramazan all Muslims must fast from dawn to dusk. Fasting includes no eating, drinking, cigarette smoking, or gum chewing.

Identification

After decades of nationalistic indoctrination, most citizens self-identify as Turks regardless of ethnic background. Some of the major non-Turkish ethnic groups—the Kurds in the southeast, the Arabs in the south, the Laz of the western Black Sea coast, and the Georgians in the northeast and northwest—express double identities.



UNIQUE PLACES IN TURKEY

Pamukkale



Pamukkale is a tourist attraction located in Turkey’s Inner Aegean region which has a temperate climate for most of the year. It is recognized as a World Heritage Site together with Hierapolis. The underground volcanic activity which causes the hot springs also forced carbon dioxide into a cave, which was called the Plutonium, meaning place of the god, Pluto. Pamukkale Natural Park’s terraces are made of travertine, a sedimentary rock deposited by water from the hot springs. In this area, there are 17 hot water springs in which the temperature ranges from 35 °C to 100 °C. When the water, supersaturated with calcium carbonate, reaches the surface, carbon dioxide de-gasses from it, and calcium carbonate is deposited.

Calcium carbonate is deposited by the water as a soft jelly, but this eventually hardens into travertine. Pamukkale means “cotton castle” in Turkish and, indeed, from a distance the formations may look like massive white castles.

Ephesus



Ephesus was an ancient Greek city on the coast of Ionia, three kilometers southwest of present-day Selçuk, Turkey, built in the 10th century BC by Attic and Ionian Greek colonists. During the Classical Greek era it was one of the twelve cities of the Ionian League. The city flourished after it came under the control of the Roman Republic in 129 BC. The city was famed for the Temple of Artemis (completed around 550 BC), one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. In 268 AD, the Temple was destroyed or damaged in a raid by the Goths. It was one of the 7 Churches of Asia and a lot of religious conferences took place here. Ephesus also attracted Christian settlers (Greeks and Jews), including St. Paul who lived in Ephesus for three years (in the AD 50s). There is a tradition that St. John settled here with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and also wrote his gospel here.

The Ephesus archaeological site has developed into one of the most highly frequented archaeological sites, not only due to the excellent state of preservation but also to the visitor-friendly presentation of the monuments.

TURKISH FOOD

Turkish cuisine includes many different stews of vegetables and meat (lamb and beef primarily), borek, kebab, dolma dishes, and a sourdough bread eaten with almost every meal. Borek is a pastry made of many thin layers of dough interspersed with cheese, spinach, and/or ground meat. Kebab is the common word for meat roasted in pieces or slices on a skewer or as meatballs on a grill. Dolma is the generic name for dishes made of vegetables (e.g., tomatoes and peppers) and leaves (e.g., grape, cabbage, and eggplant) that are stuffed with or wrapped around rice or bulgur pilaf, ground meat, and spices. Turks are especially fond of eggplant.

Special dishes are associated with holy days and celebrations. In Gaziantep, yuvarlama (a blend of ground meat, rice, chickpeas, onions, and spices served with yogurt) is a special dish for the Feast of Ramadan at the end of the Islamic month of fasting. In some of the southern provinces, the special meal for that feast consists of lamb kebab served with tomatoes and borek.

For the holy month of Ashure, which comes after the Feast of Ramadan, many households prepare a pudding called Ashure to share with guests, friends, and neighbors. According to tradition, Ashure must contain at least fifteen different ingredients, such as peas, beans, almonds, cereals, rice, raisins, rosewater, pomegranate seeds, orange peels, figs, and cinnamon. Throughout much of Turkey, wedding soup, a dish of lamb meat with bone, egg, lemon juice, flour, butter, and red pepper, is served at wedding celebrations.

Turkish beverages include tea drunk throughout the day, thick coffee usually had after a meal, ayran (buttermilk), boza (a fermented bulgur drink had in the winter), and rakî (an aniseed-flavored brandy usually mixed with water). Carbonated drinks have become popular with young people, and beer gardens in major cities have become hangouts for men. The major food taboo in Turkey is pork, which is forbidden to Muslims. Although the Koran also forbids alcoholic beverages, many Turks drink beer, wine, and liquors.



ALCOHOL IN TURKEY

Turkish national drink, Raki

Raki is an unsweetened, anise-flavored alcoholic drink that is popular in Turkey, as well as in the Balkan countries, as an apéritif. It is often served with seafood or meze. It is similar to several other alcoholic beverages available around the Mediterranean and the Middle East, e.g. pastis, ouzo, sambuca, arak, and aguardiente. It is considered as the national alcoholic beverage of Turkey.

Raki is made from different fruits in different regions, but grapes, figs and plums are the main ones. Due to the aniseed it contains, raki changes color and becomes milky white when water is added, and a glass of pure water to go with it gives a distinct pleasant taste.

Alcohol laws in Turkey

Restrictions on sale and consumption have been tightened in recent years under the governments of the Justice and Development Party (AKP). But even today, 83% of adult Turks are teetotal (Teetotalism is the practice or promotion of complete personal abstinence from alcoholic beverages) and at 1.5 litres per head, alcohol consumption is the lowest in Europe.

The Justice and Development Party (AKP), which has governed Turkey since 2002 has passed a range of measures aimed at limiting the consumption of alcohol. In Turkey, the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages is age-limited to persons 18 and over.

Restrictions introduced in 2013:

- limiting retail licenses to 6 am—10pm and banning student dormitories, health institutions, sports clubs, all sorts of education institutions and gas stations from selling alcohol
- creating additional restrictions on obtaining new licenses: no new licenses would be issued for locations less than 100 metres from a school or mosque. In addition, new licensees needed to obtain a business permit from the local municipality and a tourism document from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism before applying.
- banning all forms of advertising and promotion for alcoholic beverages, including promotions, sponsored activities, festivals and free giveaways. Beverage companies ran ads criticising the ban.
- the requirement to blur depictions of alcoholic beverages on television and in films, as was already done for cigarettes, and for bottles to carry health warnings similar to tobacco packaging warning messages.

The Islamist-rooted ruling AKP party says the law will protect the population, particularly young people, from the harmful effects of alcohol.

Critics say it is a new move to impose an Islamic agenda on a secular, though predominantly Muslim, country.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS



1 January: New Year's Day

New Year's Day in Turkey starts with fireworks after the traditional countdown at the end of the New Year's Eve. Celebrations usually last until dawn and many people spend the day off on January 1 relaxing and visiting friends and relatives.

23 April: National Sovereignty and Children's Day

On this day, solemn ceremonies and children's festivals take place throughout Turkey. Children take seats in the Turkish Parliament and symbolically govern the country for one day.

1 May:

Labor and Solidarity Day

In Turkey this day is an occasion for some people to demand better conditions for skilled laborers and union workers. Many others use the day to relax and see

their friends and relatives.

19 May: The Commemoration of Atatürk, Youth and Sports Day

On this holiday various ceremonies and sports events are held throughout the country. Young Turkish athletes carry the Turkish flag from a Black Sea port to the country's capital to commemorate Turkey's War of Independence (1919–1923).

Moveable date in summer or autumn:

Ramadan Feast

In Turkey, it is a time for visiting relatives and paying one's respect to older people. Many Turks give away sweets and desserts during the festival, and children may watch free Turkish shadow plays.

30 August: Victory Day

Military parades and cere-

monies at monuments to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who founded the Turkish Republic, are some common ways to celebrate Victory Day in Turkey. Turkish flags often adorn shops, public offices and people's houses on this day.

Moveable date in autumn or winter: Sacrifice Feast

The traditions of this four-day religious festival include sacrificing an animal in a special ritual, visiting relatives and helping the poor.

29 October: Republic Day

Many people in Turkey celebrate Republic Day by attending performances and participating in traditional processions with flags and musical bands. The Turkish Republic's founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk proclaimed Republic Day as Turkey's most important holiday.



PEOPLE IN TURKEY

Turks are extremely patriotic. They are proud of their ancestors and of the achievements of their modern society. The family is the most important social unit. Each person is dependent upon and loyal to the family. Rural life is still traditional, but in cities women frequently work outside the home.

Meeting and Greeting

Shake hands with everyone present - men, women and children - at a business or social meeting. Shake hands with elders first. Shake hands again when leaving.

It is common for Turkish men and women to cheek-kiss one another when meeting and parting.

Body Language

“Yes” is a slight downward nod of the head. “No” is a slight upward nod of the head while making a quick, sucking sound through your two front teeth (like “tsk”).

Turks generally have a small area of personal space and may stand closer than most foreigners are used to.

Never point the sole of your foot toward a person.

Turks, most of whom are devout Muslims, may avoid looking into your eyes in a display of humble behavior.

Do not stand with your hands on your hips when talking to others, especially older people or superiors, or put your hands in your pockets.

In Turkey, putting your thumb between your first two fingers is the equivalent to raising your middle finger in the United States.

The “O.K.” sign in Turkey means that someone is homosexual.

FAMILY IN TURKEY

Families are divided into several types according to social, economic and local conditions. The traditional extended and nuclear families are the two common types of families in Turkey. The traditional extended family generally means that three generations live together: grandfather, adult sons and sons' sons, their wives and their unmarried daughters. A married daughter becomes a member of her husband's family and lives there. There is a unity of production and consumption together with common property. This type of family is becoming less frequent today. The nuclear family, parallel to industrialization and urbanization, replaces traditional families. The nuclear family consists of a husband, wife and unmarried children and is more suitable to modern Turkish social life today.

There are some economic, traditional and emotional conditions that form the duties and responsibilities of the modern nuclear family member. As for the economic conditions, each individual is supposed to play a part in supporting the continuation of the family. The father is usually responsible for making the basic income, the mother may contribute by working, and if not, will assume the role of a full-time caretaker at home. Grandparents may also supply help with income from their pension or returns from owned property and rents. Younger children help with the housework (re-pairing, painting, cleaning), and when older contribute by usually covering at least their own expenses. Tradition places the father as the head of the family, but the mother has equal rights. The father is the representative and protector of the family, whereas the mother takes care of all the day-to-day things.

In Turkey, following the declaration of the Republic in 1923, one of the most significant elements in the social revolution planned and advocated by Ataturk was the emancipation of Turkish women, based on the principle that the new Turkey was to be a secular state. Although all the new regulations brought the status of women to a very improved level, the actual status of women within the family institution did not provide for proper equality between men and women. Still today, the husband is the head of the family. A woman does the housework, and if a woman needs to work outside the home she has to get the approval of her husband. As a Turkish proverb says: "a husband should know how to bring food and the wife to make it suffice", confirming once again a woman's place in the home. While women have made significant strides in Turkey toward acceptance and public respectability, some contradictions still exist. Inspired by Kemal Ataturk's legislations and his exhortation to women to become independent, Turkey elected its first female Prime Minister Tansu Ciller in 1993. Educated Turkish women are equally at ease whether they don

FAMILY IN TURKEY

the modern hat of a business tycoon, aspiring model, glamorous TV journalist, or dogged lawyer.

The government prohibits wearing of headscarf in government offices, schools, and universities.

However, behind closed doors, average Turkish women still seem to be dominated by their male counterparts. In traditional Turkish villages, women were only allowed to get together at places such as hamams (saunas) and the public laundry. As people migrated in large numbers to the cities, most uneducated women now find themselves virtually confined to the four walls of small city apartments.

Marriage

In the traditional family, marriage is still a family rather than a personal affair. Marriages are not conducted by the imam anymore as they were before the republic. By law they have to be civil. Approximately 40% of marriages are only civil, 50% are both civil and religious, 10% are only religious which means they are not legal. Polygamy is very rare and only in some villages with a rate of 3%.

It is legally forbidden to marry before the age of 15 for women and 17 for men. The average age for girls to marry is around 17-18. Early marriages are more frequent in rural areas. For young men in big cities, the problems of receiving an education, military service and acquiring a job are among the reasons that delay marriage.

Divorce

Divorces are not very common. Although many women are not satisfied with their marriages, they do not have the courage to divorce. Therefore they continue their lives for their children's sake or not to suffer from the social pressure it may evoke.

The other reason is economic. If a woman does not work, she does not have many alternatives when divorced. After a certain age, in a country where unemployment is a problem, divorcing without financial sustainability is a great risk.

From the legal point of view, when couples divorce, each of them gets their own belongings without taking the possessions obtained together into consideration. A new law proposal is waiting to be enacted in parliament. The change will allow the sharing of everything equally.

IMPORTANT TIPS

Dining and Entertainment

Be punctual for a dinner party. 7:00 p.m. means 7:00 p.m.

Business can be discussed at anytime during the meal, but you must get a feel from your business counterpart.

Some Turks drink alcohol, but those Turks who are strict Muslims never do.

Hosts will probably expect you to eat a great deal and may be offended if you don't.

When finished eating, leave no food on your plate, and place your knife and fork side by side on your plate.

"Dutch treat" does not exist in Turkey. If you invite someone to dine, you pay the bill.

Gifts

Always bring the hostess a gift when invited to someone's home. Do not bring a gift that is too lavish. Give: flowers (roses or carnations), candy, chocolates, wine (if host drinks). Do not give alcohol if you are not sure whether your host drinks.

Don't expect your hostess to open a gift when presented.

Gifts may be exchanged in business. Give gifts made in your own country that are not expensive, i.e. crystal, desk accessories, pens, gifts with company logo. Do not give overly personal gifts.

Especially for Women

Foreign women are very welcome and accepted in Turkey.

In general, conservative attitudes toward women exist in Turkey, but Turkish men tend to be very respectful.

It is acceptable for a foreign businesswoman to invite a Turkish businessman to dinner, and it is easy for her to pay.

Helpful Hints

Turks ask even casual acquaintances what Americans consider to be very personal questions (age, salary, etc.). However, do not ask such personal questions until a friendship has been established.



IMPORTANT TIPS

Greet people with either the Islamic greeting of *Asalamu alaykum* (peace be upon you) or *Nasilsiniz* (How are you? pronounced na-sul-su-nuz). Other useful phrases are *Gunaydin* (Good Morning, pronounced goon-ay-dun), *Iyi gunler* (Good Day, pronounced ee-yee gun-ler) or *Memnun Oldum* (pleased to meet you).

Naming Conventions

The formal mode of address is to use “bay” for men and “bayan” for woman (e.g. Mr. Cengiz Dağcı is bay Dağcı, and Mrs Gülze Aktaray is bayan Aktaray). In everyday life people prefer the use of first names in combination with ‘bey’ for men (Cengiz bey) and hanım for women (Gülze hanım).

Where professional titles exist, such as Doctor or Professor, always use them either on their own or before the first name. Curiously this is also the case with many other professions, such as lawyers ‘Avukat’ or engineers ‘Muhendis’. Within Turkish companies and organisations, senior ranking staff will be addressed accordingly. A common example is Mr. Manager, ‘Mudur Bey’.

A common phrase you will hear Turks using is ‘efendim’ (literally ‘my master’). You may hear this from a waiter, a secretary, taxi driver, doorman, shop staff and many others. It is simply a polite way of addressing people you are not familiar with.

Meeting and Greeting Etiquette

When meeting, shake hands firmly. When departing, it is not always customary to shake hands although it is practised occasionally.

Friends and relations would greet each other with either one or two kisses on the cheek. Elders are always respected by kissing their right hand, then placing the forehead onto the hand.

When entering a room, if you are not met by someone, greet the most elderly or most senior first. At social occasions, greet the person closest to you and then work your way around the room or table anti-clockwise.

DO'S AND DON'TS

Greetings

DO shake hands upon meeting someone. Shake hands with everyone present, including the children, and shake hands with the elders first (except in very rural areas).

DO exchange two kisses on the cheek with friends and relatives.

Visitor Etiquette

DO be punctual when invited to a dinner party.

DO bring the host a gift.

Table Manners

DO eat everything on your plate. Some Turkish hosts might be offended if you don't.



*Turkish people are very hospitable and invite anybody and anyone around to their house. It might just be for breakfast or a formal evening meal. Remember to say **Hos bulduk** when entering, in response to when they tell you that you are welcome. Shoes in the house are generally not allowed. Instead you will be given a pair of slippers.*

DO put your knife and fork side-by-side on your plate to indicate you are done.

DON'T use your left hand when dining. The left hand is considered unclean.

DO be aware that smoking while eating is common, and you probably shouldn't request that your dining partners stop.

DO pay for the meal if you initiated the invitation. Splitting the bill is not traditionally done in Turkey.

DO reciprocate if someone invited you out for a meal. Invite them out to a meal in return before you leave Turkey.

Gift Giving and Accepting Gifts in Turkey

DO bring a gift from your own country, such as food or crafts.

DO'S AND DON'TS

DO remember that Turkey is a Muslim country and not everyone drinks alcohol, so keep that in mind before purchasing an alcoholic beverage as a gift.

DO give flowers, especially roses or carnations.

DO give gifts, such as pastries or home decor items, such as a nice vase.

DON'T leave the children out when giving gifts. Buy them a little something, too! Candy makes a great gift for kids.

DON'T open your gift until later.

DON'T give a gift that is very expensive.

Body Gestures in Turkey

DON'T stand with your hands on your hips or in your pockets.

DO be aware that in more rural areas, where people are more conservative, men and women are expected not to touch. Even shaking hands can be taboo.

DO understand that “Yes” is a nod of the head going downward and “No” is a nod of the head going up, along with a sucking sound made between your two front teeth.

DON'T point at someone with your finger.

DO keep your feet flat on the ground when

sitting. Showing the bottoms of your feet is considered an insult in Turkey.

DON'T make the “OK” sign with your hand. It's a rude gesture in Turkey.

DON'T put your thumb between your index and middle finger. It's also a vulgar gesture.

Tipping in Turkey

DO leave a modest tip at a restaurant. Tips aren't expected, but they are appreciated. In fancy restaurants, you may leave a 10%--15% tip.

DO round the fare up instead of tipping a taxi driver. For instance, if the fare is YTL 5.7 (Turkish lira), round it up to YTL 6 (Turkish lira).

DO tip hotel porters 50 cents to a dollar a bag.



BUSINESS DO'S AND DON'TS

Business Meetings in Turkey

DO schedule meetings one to two weeks in advance.

DON'T try to schedule appointments during Ramadan or during July and August, which is when many Turks take vacation.

DON'T discuss business right off the bat. First appointments are often just to get to know each other. Engage in small talk about things such as soccer, families, and Turkish history. Avoid bringing up politics.

DO have your information printed in English and Turkish.

DO maintain eye contact during meetings. Turks make eye contact while speaking as a sign of honesty.

DO create graphs, charts, and other visual items for a presentation.

DO remain patient, as decision-making can be slow in Turkey.

DO be ready to negotiate. Turks will often suggest something extreme in the beginning to see how you'll respond.

DON'T use pressure tactics, such as imposing a deadline.

DO use both hands when exchanging a business card.

DO get business cards printed with the information in Turkish on one side.

DON'T be late. If you think you won't be on time, call to explain why.

Dress Attire in Turkey

DO dress conservatively for business occasions. A suit and tie will do. In cities like Istanbul, where the summers get really hot, it is usually acceptable to not wear a tie.

DO wear more conservative clothing outside of large cities, but shorts and short sleeves are still acceptable.

CORPORATE CULTURE

Consideration, politeness, respect and courtesy are very important to the Turks. Turks prefer to do business with those they know and respect. Therefore you should spend time establishing a personal relationship.



Corporate Culture

Turks take punctuality for business meetings very seriously and expect that you will do likewise; call with an explanation if you are delayed.

Shake hands with each person upon arriving at an office. When visiting a factory, shake hands with all the workers when you arrive and again when you leave.

Turks engage in small talk before they begin business discussions.

Decisions are made at the top.

Business Card Etiquette

- Business cards are exchanged without formal ritual.
- Use both hands to exchange cards.
- Have one side of your business card translated into Turkish. Although not a business necessity, it will impress your business

colleagues.

- Quite often Turks do not give their business card unless they are certain that they wish to establish a business relationship.

Business Dress Etiquette

- Business dress is conservative. You will be expected to wear a suit and tie. Similarly women should wear smart professional outfits.
- Outside the big cities and especially in the East of Turkey both women and men should wear more conservative clothing.
- In the summer, and especially in the cities of Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara the weather is very hot and humid. It is acceptable to just wear a shirt with trousers and in most cases to not wear a tie.

BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

Relationships & Communication

Courtesy is crucial in all business dealings. Turks do not require as much personal space as many other cultures, and will stand close to you while conversing. Do not back away, as this can be construed as unfriendly. Discussions may start slowly, with many questions that may seem irrelevant to the purpose of your visit. It is extremely rude to insist that your colleagues get to the point.

Ask about his/her family without prying. Questions about children will be welcomed. The Turks are proud of their country and will enjoy answering questions about their culture and history, although be sure to avoid political history.

Once a relationship has been established, communication is direct. It is vital that you maintain eye contact while speaking, since Turks take this as a sign of sincerity.

Business Meeting Etiquette

Appointments are necessary and should be made 1 to 2 weeks in advance, preferably by telephone. Many Turks take vacation during July or August, so it is best not to try to schedule appointments at that time. It is also not a good idea to schedule meetings during Ramazan (Ramadan). Punctuality is expected, although you should be prepared to be kept waiting. Small talk helps establish a rapport. Do not immediately begin discussing business.

Business Negotiation Etiquette

Always come to Turkey knowing two things. Your success is defined by your ability to build effective personal relationships, combined with a clearly outlined and well presented proposal.

Business is personal. Although this is changing with the influx of big multi-nationals and a more corporate culture in some of the larger companies, many businesses are still family owned and run.

Turks are primarily oral and visual communicators, so in addition to written statistics, projections and the like try to present information vocally or with maps, graphs and charts. Decision-making can be slow. It is most likely that you will meet and negotiate with less senior members of a family first. Once you are seen as trustworthy and your proposal financially viable, you will move on to meet more senior members.

A decision is ultimately made by the head of the family/company. It may not always be necessary to focus on financial benefits when negotiating. It is just as useful to point to areas such as power, influence, honour, respect and other non-monetary incentives.

Turks will want to do business with those they like, trust, feel comfortable with and with those who can provide a long term relationship.



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