

Turkey

Last Updated Sunday, 17 May 2009

TURKEY

Turkey Area

779,452 sq km (300,948 sq miles).

Turkey Population

73.3 million (UN estimate 2005).

Turkey Population Density

94.04 per sq km.

Turkey Capital

Ankara. Population: 3.5 million (2005 estimate).

Turkey Geography

Turkey borders the Black Sea and Georgia and Armenia to the northeast, Iran to the east, Iraq to the southeast, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Mediterranean to the south, the Aegean Sea to the west and Greece and Bulgaria to the northwest. Asia Minor (or Anatolia) accounts for 97 per cent of the country and forms a long, wide peninsula 1650km (1025 miles) from east to west and 650km (400 miles) from north to south. Two east-west mountain ranges, the Black Sea Mountains in the north and the Taurus in the south, enclose the central Anatolian plateau, but converge in a vast mountainous region in the far east of the country. It is here that the ancient Tigris and Euphrates rivers rise.

Turkey Government

Republic since 1923. Head of State: President Ahmet Necdet Sezer since 2000. Head of Government: Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan since 2002. Recent history: After a period of economic crisis in 2001 nearly brought Turkey's economy to collapse, the country agreed a recovery programme with the IMF in 2002 and has since made good progress, with impressive economic growth and decreased inflation. The conservative and Islamist-based Justice and Development Party (AKP) won the General Elections in 2002 and had its domestic position consolidated when it won 42 per cent of the vote in local elections in 2004. Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been Prime Minister since 2002, and although his party has Islamist roots, Mr Erdogan insists that it is committed to secularism. He sees EU entry as a top priority and introduced reforms which paved the way for the opening of membership talks in October 2005.

Accession negotiations are expected to take about 10 years. In November 2003, Turkey suffered four major terrorist attacks which targeted two synagogues, the British Consulate-General and the HSBC bank, all in Istanbul. In summer 2004, Kurdish secessionists called off a five-year ceasefire following what they called annihilation operations against their fighters by the Turkish authorities. There have since been clashes between Kurdish fighters and Turkish forces in the south-east.

Turkey Language

Turkish. is spoken. French, German and English are widely spoken in cities and tourist areas.

Turkey Religion

Muslim with a small Christian minority. Turkey is a secular state which guarantees complete freedom of worship to non-Muslims.

Turkey Electricity

220 volts AC, 50Hz.

TURKEY SOCIAL CONVENTIONS

Shaking hands is the normal form of greeting. Hospitality is very important and visitors should respect Islamic customs. Informal wear is acceptable, but beachwear should be confined to the beach or poolside. Smoking is widely acceptable but prohibited in cinemas, theatres, city buses and dolmuses (collective taxis).

[URL.biz - Turkey](#)