

TURKEY in BRIEF

KEY FACTS

Official Name	Republic of Turkey
Form of State	Parliamentary Republic
Date of Establishment	October 29, 1923
Capital City	Ankara
National Legislature	Unicameral National Assembly of 550 members directly elected for 5 years
Electoral System	Universal direct suffrage over 18
Head of State	President, elected by an absolute majority of the National Assembly for a 7-year term. Currently Ahmet Necdet Sezer, elected in May 2000.
Currency	New Turkish Lira (TRY) (6 zeros removed as of January 2005)
Language	Turkish
Area	814,578 km ²
Population	71.3 million (2003)
Population Growth	1.8% (Annual Average of 1990-2004)
Civilian Labor Force	24.3 million (2004)
Time Zone	GMT +2, GMT +3 hours in summer
Public Holidays	January 1 st , April 23 rd , May 19 th , August 30 th , October 29 th

The Republic of Turkey is at the junction of Europe and Asia. The territory of the country covers the whole of the Anatolia Peninsula (Asian Part), East Thrace (European Part) and also includes some islands on the Marmara and the Aegean Seas.

Turkey covers an area larger than most European countries and enjoys an extremely diversified terrain characterized by seven distinct regions. There are 81 administrative provinces governed by local governors appointed by the central government.



More than half of the Turkish population lives in urban areas that juxtapose modern lifestyles with traditional-style markets, mosques, chapels and synagogues. Turkey is the sole democratic and secular country of which population is mostly Muslim. This special feature is the most important factor which ensures the harmonious co-existence of various groups within the country, and which renders Turkey an element of balance between Europe and the Middle East.

The major urban centers and the greatest economic development are located in the Marmara, Aegean and Central Anatolian regions. Cities like Istanbul, Izmir, Bursa, Ankara and Kayseri are the predominant manufacturing and industrial districts. In addition, centers like Erzurum, Adana, Gaziantep and Kahramanmaras which are located in the South and the Southeast of Turkey gained a strong momentum in the way of further development.

The Black Sea region is heavily forested and the vegetation provides ideal conditions for the cultivation of tea, nuts, tobacco and the processing of timber. In addition, several large ports create a vital link for transit trade to Iran, the Russian Federation and the Caucasian Republics.

Because of high mountains and plateau scattering Turkey's eastern and south-eastern landscape, the agriculture and husbandry are the dominant means of livelihood as well as small existing industries especially in the textile and leather. With the development of GAP (South-eastern Anatolian Project), South-eastern region is expected to become a predominant textile and food processing center in the world.

The Mediterranean region along the South-West coast of Turkey thrives on tourism. With all the warmth and charm of the Mediterranean, its shores have a wealth of astounding beauty and contain some of the last unspoiled areas of Southern Europe together with an immense historical heritage. The land is well populated and intensively cultivated.

The population in Turkey is much younger compared to European countries (more than 60% of the population is below the age of 35). Turkey shall continue to constitute one of the largest populations in the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

Major Cities	Population	Annual Average Growth Rate (%)
	(as of October 2000*)	(1990-2000)
Istanbul	10,033,478	3.3
Ankara	4,007,860	2.1
Izmir	3,387,908	2.2
Konya	2,217,969	2.3
Bursa	2,106,687	2.7
Adana	1,854,270	1.7
Antalya	1,726,205	4.2
Icel	1,668,007	2.7
Sanli Urfa	1,436,956	3.6
Diyarbakir	1,364,209	2.1
Manisa	1,260,169	0.8
Hatay	1,232,910	1.0
Samsun	1,203,681	0.3
Kocaeli	1,203,335	2.6

**Last general census*

Source: State Institute of Statistics (SIS)