



Relocation Handbook 2024-2025

Welcome to MEF International School (MEF IS)! We are thrilled to embark on a year of exciting learning and growth with our students and staff. As you prepare to join our community, this relocation handbook aims to be your guide to MEF IS, Istanbul, and the surrounding areas during the 2024-2025 academic year.

Our motto, "Building Bridges between Countries and Cultures," reflects our commitment to diversity and excellence. With students from approximately 53 different countries and a highly qualified and diversified staff, MEF IS provides a warm and inclusive environment.

In this handbook, compiled by our dedicated faculty and staff, you will find valuable information to assist you in your transition to your new home and school. From our mission and vision to details about programs and curriculum, we aim to make your journey with MEF IS a smooth and enriching experience.

As you explore the following pages, remember that you are not alone. Our Leadership Team, including myself, and the entire MEF IS community are here to support you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Welcome once again to MEF IS! We look forward to sharing this exciting academic year with you.

Warm regards,

Elvan Tongal
Head of School

An Overview of our School



MEF International School-Istanbul is built on 9 acres of land in Istanbul, sharing its campus with the MEF National School. MEF Schools is a private educational institution, founded by a Turkish Science teacher, Mr. İbrahim Arıkan. The school is owned by Arıkanlı Holding, which operates 9 different companies in the sectors of education, organic agriculture, logistics, media, industry and construction. Of the four MEF Schools, two are international schools: MEF International School Istanbul and MEF International School Izmir. MEF University was added to this group of schools in September of 2014, opening with 5 different faculties including engineering, architecture and education.



The school is governed by the Executive Board. There is a General Manager who is responsible for all MEF Schools and a Head of School responsible for all MEF Schools and mainly works with the international schools, with a leadership team made up of a Principal, Deputy Principals, IB PYP and DP Coordinators. MEFIS-Istanbul is located in between the Ulus and Ortaköy neighborhoods of Istanbul, close to the centre of the European side of the Bosphorus. Its authorized Primary Years Program (PYP) in the Primary School & IB

Diploma Program (IBDP) in the Secondary school are structured to provide quality education to students from ages 3 to 18. MEF IS is a fully authorized Cambridge International Center (CIE) offering Checkpoint and IGCSE in the Secondary School.

The focus is on students constructing meaning, becoming inquirers and being enthusiastic about discovering knowledge on their own. The school provides a first-class English medium international education, complemented by French, Spanish and Turkish Host Country Studies. The Student Support Team provides support to students and teachers to help students reach their highest potential. The team comprises English Language Learning, Support, Guidance and College Counseling.

MEF IS aims to provide quality international education for “the whole child”. The focus in the curriculum is helping children to become inquirers who are enthusiastic about finding out how the world works. The mandate of the school is to promote in children love of learning, an appreciation of other languages and peoples and global understanding in order to create life-long learners and global citizens. In addition to the IB and Cambridge accreditations, MEF International School is accredited by the CIS (Council of International Schools) and the NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges). MEF IS is also a member of the European Council of International Schools (ECIS). The school is authorized and accredited by the Ministry of Education in Türkiye.



Adjusting to a New Country

As exciting as it is to move to a new country and experience a new way of life, many people at some point begin to go through common stages of culture shock. Culture shock is the feeling of being confused or anxious that you get when you move to a different place. It's important to be aware of the various stages of culture shock because it can help you work towards adjusting and finding ways to support yourself during this challenging, as well as exciting adventure.

In brief, the stages are as follows:

Stage 1: The Honeymoon (or Tourist) Stage

Stage 2: Shock

Stage 3: Adjustment

Stage 4: Acceptance or Acculturation

Stage 5: Re-entry Shock

Expat Group Resources:

www.expat-blog.com (Expat's web site for international expatriate community)

www.bruecke-istanbul.org (Die Bruecke German-speakers' group)

www.iwistanbul.org/ (International Women Association of Istanbul)



Safety and Organizing Personal Affairs Prior To Your Departure:

The following is the US State Department's website that provides a traveling checklist and safety tips in preparation for your departure and will support you after you've arrived in Istanbul:

<http://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html> You can also research travel advice from your own country by googling your country name + Türkiye travel advice.

It is suggested that foreigners register with their consulates to receive current updates and safety information. For US citizens, it is recommended to register with the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to ensure that the consulate has updated information in the event an emergency contact is required.

Prior to departing, below is a list of documents and info to consider leaving with a trusted contact:

- ★ Passport numbers and dates of issue
 - ★ Bank account numbers
 - ★ Credit card numbers
 - ★ Insurance policy numbers
 - ★ Driver's license number
 - ★ Social Security numbers
 - ★ Current prescription, including eyeglasses
 - ★ Contents and location of safe deposit boxes
 - ★ Names and addresses of business and professional contacts
- (adapted from US Dept. of State Website www.state.gov)

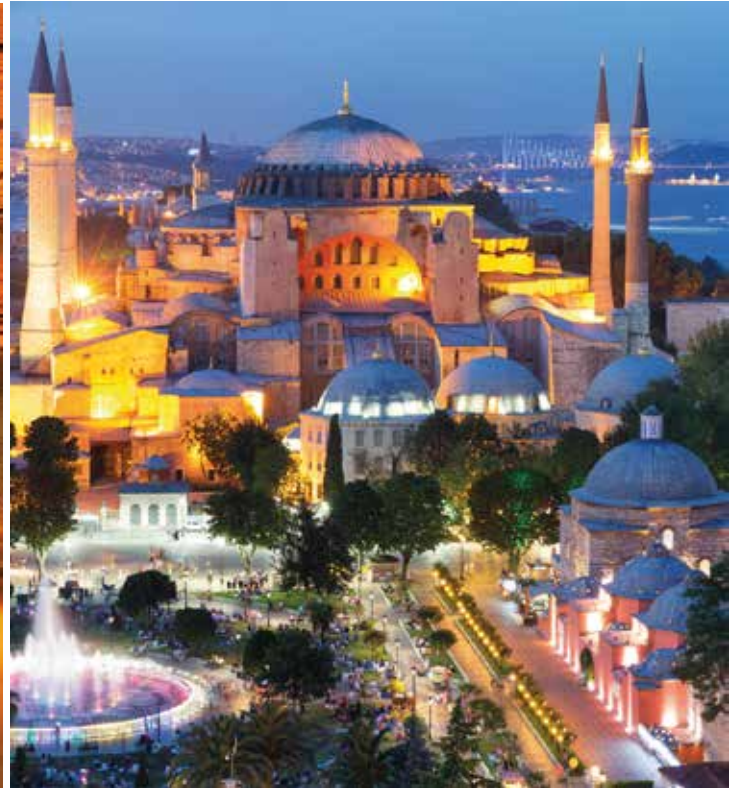
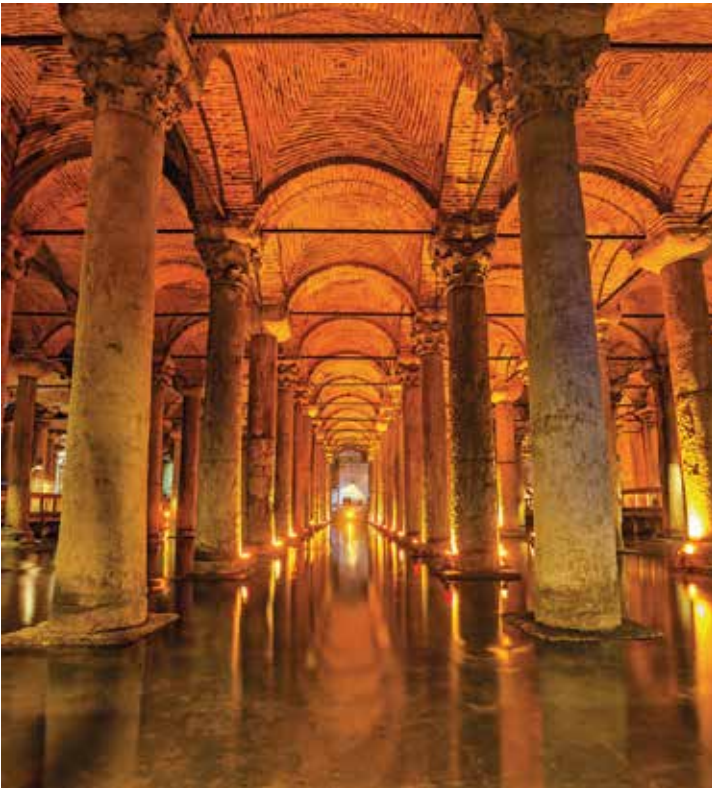
The following website also has important information and tips regarding earthquakes and steps to take:

<http://www.fethiye.bel.tr/dosya/earthquakes.pdf>

What were your first impressions of Istanbul?

"What strikes me about Turkey is its perfect balance of rich history, vibrant culture, and breathtaking natural beauty. Istanbul, with its stunning Ottoman architecture, the beauty of the Bosphorus, its lively bazaars, and delicious cuisine all contribute to its unique charm. The warmth and hospitality of the locals have made me feel at home since arriving. Beyond Istanbul, the southern coast of Turkey is a nature lover's paradise. My favorite spots are Antalya and Fethiye with their turquoise waters, sandy beaches, scenic hiking trails, and awe-inspiring landscapes. With its rich history, vibrant culture, and breathtaking natural beauty, Turkey has something to offer everyone, and I am grateful for the opportunity to continue exploring all of its hidden gems."

-MEF IS Admin



"My first impressions of Istanbul were how cosmopolitan and vibrant the city is. The diversity is hard to match and the contrasts in culture, architecture, landscapes and people are endless. One thing I can say is that I found it extremely welcoming, especially considering I didn't know a word of the language! Walking down to the Bosphorus was both exciting and soothing, as I always felt like I was in a safe place (something I very much appreciate) which I was free to discover however I wanted."

MEF IS Teacher, 2022

"My first impressions of Istanbul were that it was such a lively and bustling city! Ortakoy is a great little neighborhood to be a part of and has everything you could need. There are great little shops that sell cheese, meat, spices, clothing, home goods, school supplies, plants and more. The fact that it is so close to the Bosphorus is also such a huge bonus- being near the water brings me so much joy and peace! Getting out of Ortakoy is always an adventure, but luckily there are buses and ferries that will take you to every part of the city, if you are willing to brave the traffic! Istanbul is SO HUGE that there is an endless amount of things to see and do. Sometimes we forget, as residents, to go and see the tourist attractions, but don't put it off for too long! The Grand Bazaar, Spice Market, Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia and everything else you know about Istanbul are as amazing as they sound. "

MEF IS Teacher, 2021



"Moving to Istanbul has been an enchanting experience that I'll always remember. From my first sip of Rosé at a rooftop restaurant overlooking the Bosphorus, I felt a deep connection with this place. The kindness of locals, especially towards street cats and dogs, truly touched my heart. Despite its vibrant hustle and bustle, Istanbul captivated me in a way no other place has.

The city's culinary delights, rich history, and the genuine warmth of its people made me feel incredibly welcome, as if I had always belonged here. Istanbul offers a unique blend of modernity and tradition, allowing one to travel back in time while exploring historical neighborhoods like Fatih, Balat, Kadikoy, and the serene Prince's Islands.

Every corner of this city tells a story, and living here has given me the chance to be part of these tales. The beauty of Istanbul lies not just in its landscapes and monuments but in the everyday moments and interactions that make life here so special. I am grateful for the opportunity to call this magical city my home.."

MEF IS Admin, 2024



Common Misconceptions about Türkiye

You may have been to Türkiye before; you may have not. There are some common misconceptions that deserve explanation...

The women all wear burqas and headscarves: Türkiye is a secular Republic founded in 1923 by a modern left-of-center leader by the name of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Very few Turkish women wear burqas. While headscarves are commonly worn by some segments of society, many Turkish women do not wear them. There is no pressure for foreign women to assimilate to such practices.

It's a hot, desert climate and everyone rides a camel and speaks Arabic: All climates exist in Türkiye. The Black Sea region is cool and rainy much like the Pacific Northwest in the US, for example. While camels can be found in some touristic areas, camels are not commonly seen in Türkiye. Finally, while there are a few minority populations in southeastern Türkiye who speak Arabic, Arabic is not commonly known. Instead, the Turkish language is widely spoken throughout the country as the official language.

You can't drink alcohol, find pork or eat during Ramadan: Yes, you can drink alcohol and eat pork, and you can also eat during the Ramadan season. However, it would be unwise to eat or drink on the street during fasting hours. General rules of respect and common sense suggest that if you are to drink during Ramadan that you should do so in designated areas – restaurants and bars that serve drinks. Pork, on the other hand, can be found, but is expensive.

The food is spicy: While the kebab culture of southeastern Türkiye may include a pleasing spicy warmth, Turkish food is not typically hot. Cuisine in the Marmara and Aegean regions is much more similar to Greek food with fish, fruits, vegetables and, of course, olive oil commonly used. Common throughout Türkiye is roasted lamb, beef and lamb kebabs, kofte meatballs, grilled fish, manti ravioli and the varieties of pizza known as pide and lahmacun.

The Turkish population dislikes foreigners: The Turkish population is a very proud, nationalistic population. However, it is a far from xenophobic population; on the contrary, the Turkish people pride themselves on being tolerant and warm towards foreign populations. Most Turks are extremely interested about life outside of Türkiye and will want to learn about you and your country of origin.

Turkish hospitality is legendary, so don't be surprised if the local shopkeeper pours you a glass of tea.

Sources consulted: <http://www.gadling.com/2013/03/07/not-constantinople-9-misconceptions-about-istanbul-Türkiye/>
http://www.numbeo.com/crime/rankings_by_country.jsp



Frequently Asked Questions about Türkiye...

Can I use the local cash machines?

Cash machines (ATMs) are available throughout Türkiye, accepting major credit and bank cards and instructions are often available in English. It is advisable to inform your bank in advance that you are travelling to Türkiye to double-check on specific regulations.

Can I use my credit card?

International credit and debit cards are widely accepted in shops and restaurants throughout Türkiye. When selecting a credit card, you may want to find a bank that does not charge an extra fee for international purchases. In addition to a credit card, it is advisable also to carry cash for taxis, smaller shops and cafes, particularly in more rural areas.

How can I open a bank account?

Banking is a booming business in Türkiye with many foreign banks either setting up or setting up joint ventures with the local banks. Salaries are paid to [Yapi Kredi Bank](#). Yapi Kredi Bank provides services to foreigners.

Once your work visa application is approved, the card is received and your local address is registered you will be eligible for opening a bank account in Türkiye. You are able to do telephone and Internet banking with most services being provided in English. About 4 weeks after your arrival you will receive a Yapi Kredi Bank card which can be used at all Yapi Kredi Bank ATMs and as a debit card.

The Yapi Kredi app allows you to hold accounts in TRL, USD, GBP and Euro and easily transfer your money between these currencies. The app is 21st century with its features and is very user friendly.

Please be aware that you will not receive any salary until September 10th which is why we recommend you come with some funds to tide you over (we suggest 1000 USD). On September 11th you will be paid for the two weeks you worked in August and thereafter on the eleventh of each month you will receive your salary for the previous calendar month.

How to pay my bills?

Teachers will be responsible for all fees below:

- electricity
- water
- cable TV
- telephone
- internet
- and the monthly building heat, water and maintenance (known in Türkiye as “aidat” fee).

These fees vary with the apartment and the building complex. This includes broadband internet, cable TV, maintenance and heating, local telephone (not including any long-distance calls), electricity, and water. Maintenance fees in summer are often less as there may not be a heating fuel fee.

Please note that getting telephone service hooked up, cable service and internet service can take anything from a one week to several weeks to set up. We have had a few cases where it took longer for one reason or another. Therefore, upon arrival, you will receive information about cafes with free Wi-Fi in your neighbourhood. You will

also have access to the school's Wi-Fi. Our business office will help you with any issues you have with regards to any of the above including setting up payments through internet banking.

Once you have opened your bank account, you can place an automatic utility payment order from your salary account for utility bills (telephone, internet, heating, water, electricity, apartment expenses etc.), so your bills can be paid from your account automatically on a monthly basis.

Those who live in MEF Apartments will be charged 150 USD to cover security, maintenance, rubbish removal and shared facilities (pool, lifts, rumpus rooms, and sauna). Please refer to the [Housing Policy](#) for further information.

Will I be able to use my mobile phone in Türkiye?

The Turkish government taxes phones brought into the country. For this reason, many people choose to buy a new phone in Türkiye and avoid this tax. If you wish to use your current phone you need to register it through the e-government system along with your passport, IMEI number and Turkish ID number (work permit card). You will also need to make a payment (31.692 TL, January 2024) to the assigned bank for this purpose. This process needs to be completed within 4 months of entry into Türkiye. (Unregistered phones will be blocked and unable to receive or make calls). The major GSM operators in Türkiye are Turkcell, Vodafone and Turk Telekom. Using Vodafone enables access to Vodafone TV from which Premier League football is viewable, for the football fans among you. Turkcell has the best coverage of rural areas.

For more information please visit: <https://ikamet.com/blog/how-to-register-your-mobile-phone-in-Türkiye>

What should I expect as far as terrain and traffic in Istanbul?

Some people are surprised by the hilly terrain in and around the MEF campus. Located in a beautiful setting on the hillside of Ulus, you will soon build up strength walking up the hill. As well as the 7 hills of Istanbul, there are some beautiful walks along the Bosphorus and in different neighbourhoods.

What is the local currency?

The local currency in Türkiye is the Turkish Lira (TL) and 1 USD equals 31,30 TL (as of March 4, 2024). TL is available in the following denominations: banknotes: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 & 200 TL; coins: 5, 10, 25 & 50 kuruş and 1 TL. Cash can usually be exchanged without commission at bureau de changes ('döviz'), banks and hotels.

How should visitors dress in Türkiye?

There are no hard and fast rules but it is best to use common sense when deciding what to wear.

Can I drive in Türkiye?

A foreign driving license can only legally allow you to drive for 6 months from your arrival date in Türkiye. If you wish to drive after that time then you must get your license converted into a Turkish driving license or exit and enter the country. All of the major international car rental companies are located in Türkiye, so you are able to rent a car. Foreigners are also able to purchase automobiles known as 'blue plate cars' (see <http://blueplatecar.com/>)

What is the main supply voltage, will I need an adaptor?

The main voltage for electricity is 220V and 50Hz. Central European type wall sockets (two-pin plugs) are standard in Türkiye. Adaptors are sold in large department stores and at small shops specializing in electrical goods ('elektrikçi').

Do I need to know Turkish in order to communicate?

English is Türkiye's second widest spoken language and you will easily find English speakers in the major cities and holiday resorts. Restaurant menus and other information for foreigners are often printed in English.

What are the opening times for shops and other services?

Museums: 9am to 5pm, Tuesday to Sunday. Pharmacies: 9am to 7pm, Monday to Saturday. 24-Hour duty pharmacies are available on a rotation basis so that the names and addresses can be found on any pharmacy door. Banks operate 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. Supermarkets and shopping centers usually operate from 10am to 10pm.

Please note that the working times may vary due to the pandemic.

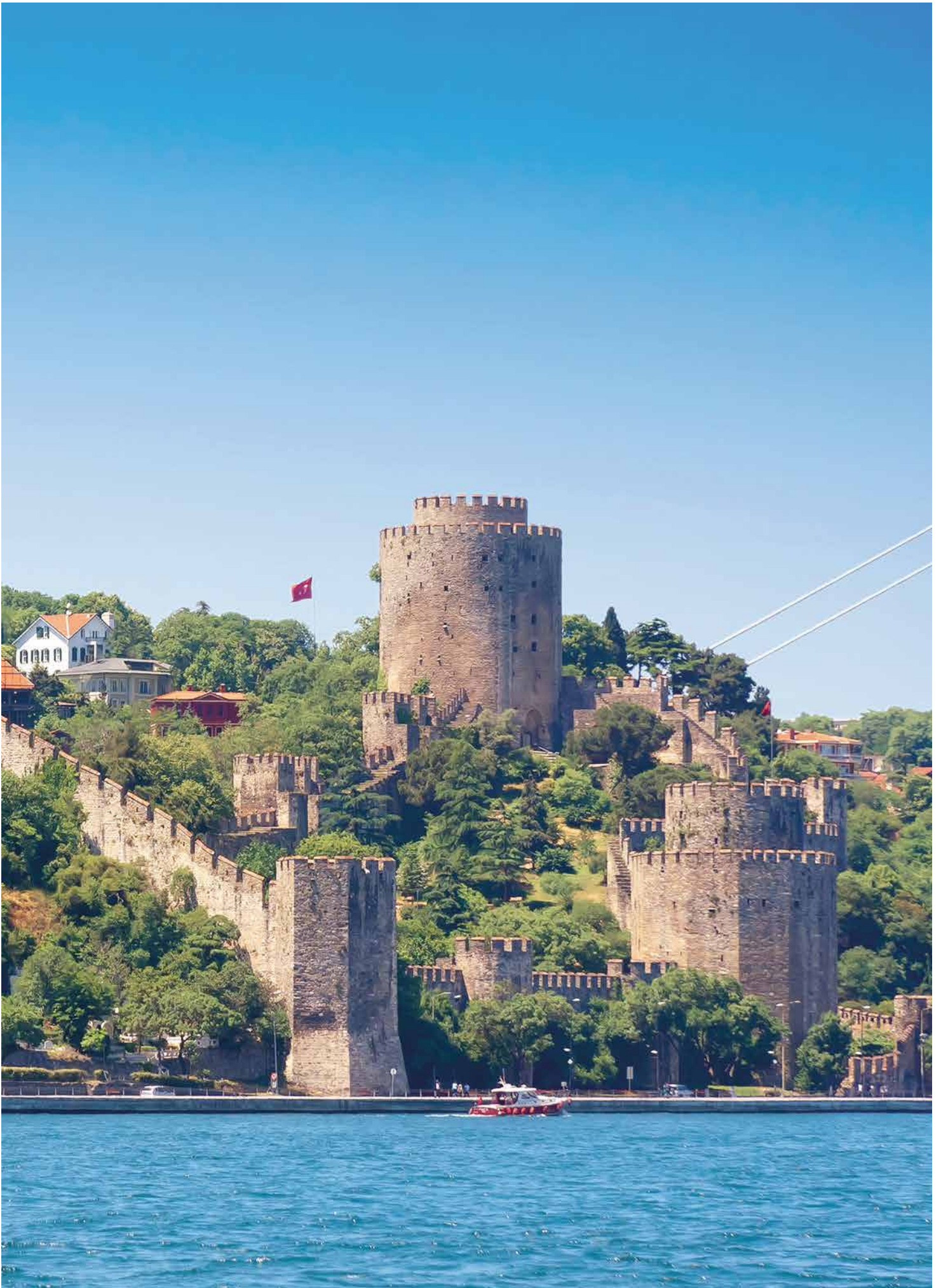
What is the time difference?

Türkiye is GMT/UST+3.

Is the tap water drinkable?

Officially, yes, the tap water is drinkable, as it is treated by the municipalities. However, everybody purchases drinking water from local water vendors who deliver to your door. See the *Settling in your home* section for more information.

Sources consulted: <https://goturkiye.com/>



What to bring...

You can find almost anything in Istanbul, so we would recommend bringing the bare minimum. However some of the following items will prove useful as you start to adapt to your new surroundings. We suggest you bring with you any medication that you take regularly for at least the first month.

Electrical Power Adaptors

Türkiye's electrical grid utilizes 220 volts, 50 Hz system, requiring round-prong European-style plugs that fit into recessed wall sockets. Upon arrival, and prior to plugging in your devices from home, it is worthwhile to double check their voltage rating. Some items are multi-volt, meaning they can operate with either 110-125 V or 220 – 240V. If this is the case you will typically see writing on the appliance or its power adapter that indicates input: 110-240V. With the use of a plug adapter, you can freely use your devices in Türkiye. Other devices are strictly 110-125V, and if plugged in without the use of a POWER ADAPTER / TRANSFORMER, you will burn out your device and create a brand new door stop. International travel power adapters are a wise purchase and can be picked up at most major electronics retailers prior to departure for Türkiye.



Other recommendations passed on by members of our faculty are;

- ★ Bring comfortable walking shoes. There are plenty of hills so this is a must.
- ★ There are plenty of places to shop, from high end malls to more affordable outdoor clothing markets so don't feel you need to bring your entire wardrobe.
- ★ Do bring any medical information, records, vision prescriptions, information about pre-existing conditions, doctor's reports, etc.
- ★ Don't bring your hair dryer or any small electrical items that need an adaptor. Wait and purchase those items here.
- ★ Do bring a few photos from home. They provide comfort during those cycles of culture shock that will come in the natural course of things.



Setting up home

When you move home, and in the case of many, move to another country, it is often not long before you start missing some of the things from home. It goes a long way to start adding a stamp on your place to turn it from an apartment into a home. Some picture frames, a few photos of your loved ones or places you have been, and a few ornaments will help you do this. There are lots of home shops available in Türkiye including Mudo, Crate & Barrel and Tepe Home to name a few. But there are a couple of main, affordable places that you can go to, to add those personal touches to your apartment.

Cazip Home

Cazip Home (Cazip means favourable in Turkish) is one of our staff's favourite homeware stores in Ortaköy by walking distance from the school. You can find everything you need to beautify your new home. You can visit on its Instagram page here: <https://www.instagram.com/caziphome/?hl=en>

Koçtaş (Kochtash)

Koçtaş is both a hardware and homeware hypermarket. There are two stores nearby, the first one is in Ortaköy on Dereboyu Street called "Koçtaş Fix" while the larger one is in the Cevahir shopping mall, located in Mecidiyeköy. The website is in Turkish, but clicking on a few random links will give you an idea of what is available. Most of the products are affordably priced. <http://www.koctas.com.tr>

IKEA

Surely there is no need to introduce the Swedish furniture / homeware power house, but it is worth mentioning a few points. There are two IKEA stores in İstanbul, one located in Bayrampaşa (European side), the other in Ümraniye (Asian side). The other option available is internet shopping with delivery right to your door. <https://www.ikea.com.tr/>

Hepsiburada.com

Hepsiburada.com ("all here" in Turkish) is the largest online shopping centre in Türkiye providing products such as supermarkets, electronics, home furniture, clothes, cosmetics, etc. Official web address: <https://www.hepsiburada.com/>

Trendyol.com

Trendyol.com ("trend way" in Turkish) is the largest online shopping centre in Türkiye providing products such as supermarkets, electronics, home furniture, clothes, cosmetics, supermarket, food delivery, etc. Official web address: <https://www.trendyol.com/>



Drinking Water

Though the official word through the municipalities is that the drinking water in most of the major cities of Türkiye (including Istanbul) are at an international standard, and suitable for consumption, most people opt to buy natural Spring water to drink.

You can buy drinking water in glass or PET bottles in most supermarkets when you are out and about or you can opt to carry water in your own water bottle from home. You can order large water bottles (19L) or have water delivered right to your door from a variety of vendors at an approximate cost of 90-100 TL (which is approximately 2,5-3 USD). You need to pay an extra approximately 100 TL for the large water bottle (empty bottle) for your first order. Remember each water company does not change the water bottles of other companies, therefore, make sure to continue with the same water company for your water deliveries that you buy their bottle of so you do not need to pay extra bottle money for each company.

Some of the more popular ones used by our faculty:

Erikli (available in glass) - <http://www.erikli.com.tr/> - 444 0 222

Pinar (available in glass) - <http://www.pinarsu.com.tr/> - 444 9900

Abant (available in glass) - <http://www.abantsu.com.tr/> - 444 0743

In addition, “**BiSu**” (“SomeWater” in Turkish) is also available as a mobile application that you can easily order your water from any brand that you want once you subscribe. Please note that some of the drinking water suppliers on this app may service during regular working hours and the weekdays.

Official website: <https://bisu.com.tr/>

Supermarkets

There is a wide array of goods available from supermarkets. The main supermarkets that our faculty shop from are: Macrocenter, Migros and Carrefour. Each of these supermarkets has the facility for online internet shopping, which is especially helpful when you are making large item purchases such as cleaning products. There is a very small surcharge associated with the internet option. You can also specify the date and time for the delivery within a window of three days. There are more and more international selections of products available in Türkiye and it is growing all the time.

Macrocenter has the widest range of international products on offer and is under the umbrella of Koç – a major company in Türkiye, which is also the owner of the Koçtaş brand.

It is helpful to know about the Discount cards in supermarkets which are available to you. The card for the Anadolu group of supermarkets is called the “Money Card” and can be used for both the Migros and the Macrocenter. You must present the card at each purchase to be able to access the discounts in the store, and you also get “money points” for each purchase you make, that you can buy free groceries once you have “saved” a larger amount. The Carrefour card operates a little differently, their discounts are available without the presentation of the card, however, they have different promotions at different times that you can access with the card.

In terms of pricing, Macrocenter is the most expensive, then comes Migros and the most affordable tends to be Carrefour. There are smaller supermarkets also available that you will see when you are out; ŞOK, BİM, A101, these supermarkets also offer similar products at a much reduced rate, so you can look out for these too.

Türkiye is famous for the local “bakkal”. The “bakkal” is your local small shop that stocks most of the necessary items that you might be looking for. The “bakkal” more often than not delivers straight to your door. The items that you purchase are usually a little more overpriced than what you would normally pay at a bigger supermarket. However, it is often useful, if you don’t feel like venturing out, you are ill, or you have visitors and you need something delivered to you.

Macrocenter

Official website: <http://www.macrocenter.com.tr/>

Macrocenter online shopping: <http://online.macrocenter.com.tr>

Migros

Official website: <http://www.migros.com.tr/>

Migros online shopping: <http://www.sanalmarket.com.tr> (available in English)

Carrefour

Official website: <http://www.carrefoursa.com.tr/>

Carrefour online shopping: <https://www.carrefoursa.com.tr>

Getir

Getir ("bring" in Turkish) serves through its mobile app. It offers an on-demand "ultrafast" delivery service for grocery items, in addition to a courier service for restaurant food deliveries. They deliver anywhere (your home, your workplace or a park where you enjoy the sunshine with friends and need something to eat or drink), in an average of 10 minutes, in any time day and night!

Official website: <https://www.getir.com/en/>

Farmer's Market

Each suburb in Istanbul has its own Farmer's Market where sellers come together to sell fresh fruit and vegetables, nuts, cheeses and delicatessen products, clothing, footwear and homeware products. Each suburb has its farmer's market on a different day of the week. The local one in Ortaköy, close to the school, runs every Wednesday. The fruit and vegetables at the farmer's market are fresher than those in supermarkets and are also better priced. You can sometimes find brand name clothing at a fraction of the cost. It is certainly worth at least one visit.



Home Entertainment and Internet Cable TV

The options for home entertainment have converged with a number of providers offering connectivity to both traditional cable packages as well as Internet connectivity. For cable TV the most widely subscribed service is DIGITURK. Digiturk offers a basic subscription package at an introductory price and allows users to pay for additional packages of channels based on their interests: music, movies, sports, children etc. A bundled service with cable TV and Internet are also available. The Digiturk website is (<http://www.digiturk.com.tr>). Given that the details are available only in Turkish, your best bet will be to call 4737373 in order to speak with one of the English speaking reps to arrange for installation and set-up of your service. Technicians will come to your residence and set up the system for you based on a prearranged date and time. After initial installation, changes to service can be facilitated through contact via telephone with one of their English speaking customer service representatives. If you use Netflix, switching your subscription to the Turkish version will be cheaper than in most other countries.

Internet

In addition to Digiturk, the three most frequent internet service providers (who also offer various cable TV programming options) used by our faculty would be TTNET (Turkish Telecom Network – ADSL service www.ttnet.com.tr Tel: 444 1 444), TURKCELL SUPERONLINE (fiber, ADSL and DSL services available depending on area of residence <http://www.superonline.net/> Tel: 0532 532 00 00) and TurkSAT (DSL service that requires a basic cable subscription in addition to the internet package <https://www.turksatkablo.com.tr> Tel: 126 or 0850 804 4444). Most if not all of the service providers noted above have English speaking operators to assist with your service installation and account upkeep needs.

Please note that, in order to be able to set an internet service in your name (which you should have) you must have your work & residence permits approved. You may not have home internet until you get your visas approved which may take a few months. During this process you can use the school's internet while you are on the campus for your urgent issues or to contact your family back in your home country.

Ordering In

There are some amazing options that are available for Turkish and international cuisine available out and about. There are some delightful taste sensations to be enjoyed.

However for the times that you decide to stay in, and are not up to cooking up a storm then let us introduce you to a faculty favorite website: **Yemek Sepeti** (translation: Food Basket); <http://www.yemeksepeti.com/en/istanbul> which is available in English. Basically, this is a portal linked to many different restaurants that are able to deliver to your door. There is a whole plethora of options available; from café style food, international and Turkish cuisine, to fast foods and pizza.

You can also order from the “**Getir**” (Bring in Turkish) which is the second most preferable online food delivery service. You need to download its mobile application and register yourself (your name, address, credit card info etc.) for the first time, so it will be easy for you to order your food, drink or supermarket needs by pressing a few steps.

Official website: <https://www.getir.com/yemek/>



Medical Information

Health Insurance:

Teachers are provided with medical insurance for medical care and treatment. Teachers may add insurance for dependents at their own discretion and expense. The health insurance is for within Türkiye. There are some provisions for travel outside Türkiye but we recommend teachers when going on holiday to take out travel insurance. In addition to the private health insurance you will be entitled to and covered by the Turkish Social Security System (SGK) since the school registers you and pays all the related fees and taxes. Thus, when you are away for 2 days due to illness you have to submit a doctor's report (called "işgöremezlik raporu" in Turkish) to your Deputy Principal. After the submission of the doctor's report, payment for absent days is made by the SGK (not MEF Schools which is reflected in the month's salary payment) and must be collected from a specific bank once it has been processed (which may take several weeks).

Please click the links below to reach the health insurance related documents.

- [MAPFRE Health Insurance Facts](#)
- [MAPFRE Health Insurance Special Terms](#)
- [MAPFRE Health Insurance Coverage Plan](#)

Mapfre Information and Support Hotline: **0850 755 0 755**

You may find some more helpful information on the website of the insurance company below.

MAPFRE official website: <https://www.mapfre.com.tr/insurance-en/individual/>

SOS Call Center:

Call **112** for ambulance, police and fire all around Türkiye.



Hospitals:

The health care services provided in Türkiye are truly world class. People fly in from all over Europe and the Middle East to get treated in Türkiye. Your health is in good hands.

When you go to a hospital you need to show your Turkish ID Number (work or residency permit card) for patient registration. However, you may need to provide your Health Insurance Number.

Private Hospitals:

All of these hospitals have English speaking doctors available for consultation. These hospitals are the top luxury class hospitals which have an agreement with the school's group health insurance company.

- ★ Acibadem Hospital Group: <https://acibademinternational.com/>
- ★ Florence Nightingale: <http://www.florence.com.tr>
- ★ Liv Hospital: <http://www.livhospital.com>

For more hospitals visit Mapfre's contracted hospital in Türkiye:

<https://form.mapfre.com.tr/iletisim/formlar/anlasmali-saglik-kuruluslari>

Please select "İstanbul" from the section "İl " and "Hastane" from the section "Kurum Adı"

Public Hospitals:

All the MEF employees can benefit from the government hospitals free of charge by providing their social security or TR ID numbers. You may be charged since these hospitals are quite crowded, please make sure you make an appointment before you visit.

The nearest public hospital to the school is as follows:

- ★ **Sait Çiftçi Government Hospital** in Beşiktaş.

MHRS (Merkezi Hastane Randevu Sistemi / Central Hospital Appointment System) is the most practical way to make an appointment from a public hospital which works in link with the e-devlet (e-government). You can also view or download your laboratory results or your health history based on your visit to government hospitals.

Please click to visit the website: <https://www.mhrs.gov.tr/>

Ministry of Health Mobile Apps:

In order to be able to benefit the Turkish Healthcare System properly, you should download the following four mobile applications on your mobile phones which you will find very useful during your employment in Türkiye.

E-devlet (e-government) is a government-run official website and mobile application provides digital government services such as your Turkish ID and visa information, employment, tax, SGK (Social Security), health, personal deeds of your real estate/property (home/land) in Türkiye, your vehicle and driving license information in Türkiye and includes all government services. Once your work visa is approved, you will be eligible to enter the system with your TR ID number and your e-devlet password which you can get from the PTT (Turkish Post & Telegram Organization) or through your online banking. If you go to the PTT and ask for an e-devlet password, they will give you one for around 2 lira. The nearest branch is by Ortakoy ferry. You need to change your password at your first login and must not share your password with third parties.

Official website: <https://giris.turkiye.gov.tr/Giris/>

E-nabiz (e-pulse) keeps your health records which is an official application provided by the Ministry of Health that you can view all of your health database such as your doctor appointments, medicines, test results etc.

You will need your TR ID number and your e-nabiz password that you need to create during your first sign-up.

Official website: <https://enabiz.gov.tr/>

MHRS (CDAS: Central Doctor Appointment System) is also a Ministry of Health run platform to make doctor appointments online across the country wherever you are in Türkiye.

You will need your TR ID number and your MHRS/CDAS password that you need to create during your first sign-up.

Official website: <https://www.mhrs.gov.tr/>

Provides English application.

Chemist / Pharmacy (Eczane in Turkish):



Pharmacies in Türkiye use a standard signboard to be easily visible (please see the picture on the left).

Medication is freely available in Istanbul with and without a prescription. The medication that you may currently use may be available over the counter. If your medication is not available a visit to the doctor may be in order to find the equivalent version available in Türkiye. If there is regular medication that you take that is expensive, you may be eligible to get this medication for free or at a much reduced rate through the national health care system (SGK), by making a visit to the local public doctor in your suburb; please note this is only the case once your official paperwork has

come through and you are registered for public health insurance.

Pharmacies work from 9am to 7pm from Mondays through to Saturdays. There are pharmacies assigned on a rotation basis for each region in Istanbul for 24-hour access and also for Sundays. You can find out which one by visiting any chemist and looking for a sign on their door to indicate which one is open or you can find an “app” called “Eczane” or “Nobetci Eczane Bul” to help you find which ones are open also.

You can also list the pharmacies (Nöbetçi Eczane) whose turn it is to be open at night or during a holiday on the web site below. Please make sure you select the right city/province (Istanbul) and District (Beşiktaş) to indicate your area.

Website:

<https://www.eczaneler.gen.tr/nobetci-istanbul-besiktas>

Dentist

Dental services are excellent here and upon asking can receive many recommendations for staff members who have had work done.

Intercity Transportation

Please note that no cash payment is available for public transportation in Istanbul (except taxi and dolmuş). Please refer to the following page on how to obtain a [public transportation card](#).

Buses:

The bus network is widely used in Istanbul and is an easy and convenient way to get around the city. The main stations are in Taksim, Beşiktaş, Eminönü and Kadıköy. To get more information, please visit IETT's (Istanbul Transportation Institution) English site at <https://nasilgiderim.iett.gov.tr/en/>. They have an online route planner. With this service, you can search the routes entering the 'from where to where' details. Please be informed that the length of bus trip depends on the destination and the traffic conditions.

Trains:

Haydarpaşa is the historical and main train station in Istanbul but it is inactive right now. All intercity train trips to and from Istanbul were cancelled due to a High-Speed Train (YHT) being built. This service runs between Ankara, Eskişehir and Konya and cuts the length of the journey in half when compared to an intercity bus trip. To get more information about rail transportation inside Türkiye, you can visit TCDD (Turkish State Railways) English website at: <https://ebilet.tcddasimacilik.gov.tr/view/eybis/tnmGenel/tcddWebContent.jsf>

Metro:

The underground transportation is still growing in Istanbul. It is much sought after due to its rapid transit and complete avoidance of traffic. There are 4 main routes. You will be mostly taking the M1A (Aksaray-Atatürk Airport) and M2 (Yenikapı-Hacıosman) lines. To get more information about routes/ways, please visit the Istanbul Metro Line Map: <https://www.metro.istanbul/en/YolcuHizmetleri/AgHaritalari>

Metrobuses:

This is another kind of rapid transit which is a city bus which has its own lane called a Metrobus, which allows you to be free of the traffic. There are 8 lines that run between Beylikduzu, Avcılar, Zincirlikuyu and Söğütlüçeşme (over the Bosphorus Bridge). To get more information, please visit the Metrobus English website at <https://nasilgiderim.iett.gov.tr/en/>

Ferries:

İstanbul Şehir Hatları (Istanbul City Lines) is the most traditional and enjoyable bulk sea transportation. It has been one of the city's historic symbols by giving a journey pleasure along with the Bosphorus seagulls. The most common routes are Beşiktaş - Üsküdar - Eminönü - Kadıköy and the Islands of Istanbul. Official website: <https://www.sehirhatlari.istanbul/en>

Sea Buses:

IDO (İstanbul Deniz Otobüsleri - İstanbul Sea Buses) is another alternative to bulk sea transportation which is faster than traditional ferries. It provides similar routes to the traditional ferries. Official website: <https://www.ido.com.tr/>

Boats:

Boats are the most practical alternative to sea transportation that passes over the Bosphorus and serves like the dolmuş system. It is run by Dentur Avrasya and provides continuous transportation. The most popular destinations are Beşiktaş and Kabataş on the European side and Üsküdar and Kadıköy on the Asian side. For more information about the routes and times, please visit their website. Official website:

<https://www.denturavrasya.com/en-us/hatlar.aspx?id=533>

Taxis:

Taxis generally in Istanbul are small yellow cars which allow the transportation of five people including the driver. All taxis need to have meters called a taksimetre which shows the rate you need to pay. In Istanbul, day and night rates are the same. The starting rate is 24.55 TL and it goes up to 12.89 TL for each kilometer. The price for any short distance is 90 TL. (The price listing date is January 8, 2024.) As a regulation, no tip needs to be given to the taxi driver. You can find a taxi by flagging one down, calling your local taxi rank, by downloading a taxi service app or by visiting the following websites: <https://bitaksi.com/en/index.html>

Dolmuş:

“Dolmuş” (filled, stuffed or full in Turkish) refers to the yellow shared taxis or blue midibuses that operate in Istanbul by the private providers. The yellow ones can hold 8 people whereas the blue midibuses can hold 16 and above. Every “Dolmuş” belongs to a specific route and they are easy and quick for small rides. They have no timetable, it leaves when it is full. If you want to stop one, just wave your hand. There are Dolmuş stops where they are supposed to stop only, like taxis.



Public Transportation Card*

Istanbulkart (Istanbul card) is used for fare payment on public transportation in Istanbul and it's valid for boarding buses, funiculars, LRT, subway, commuter trains, ferry boats, trams, WCs operated by the Metropolitan Municipality and some private corporate companies. Cash payment on these transport systems is not possible.

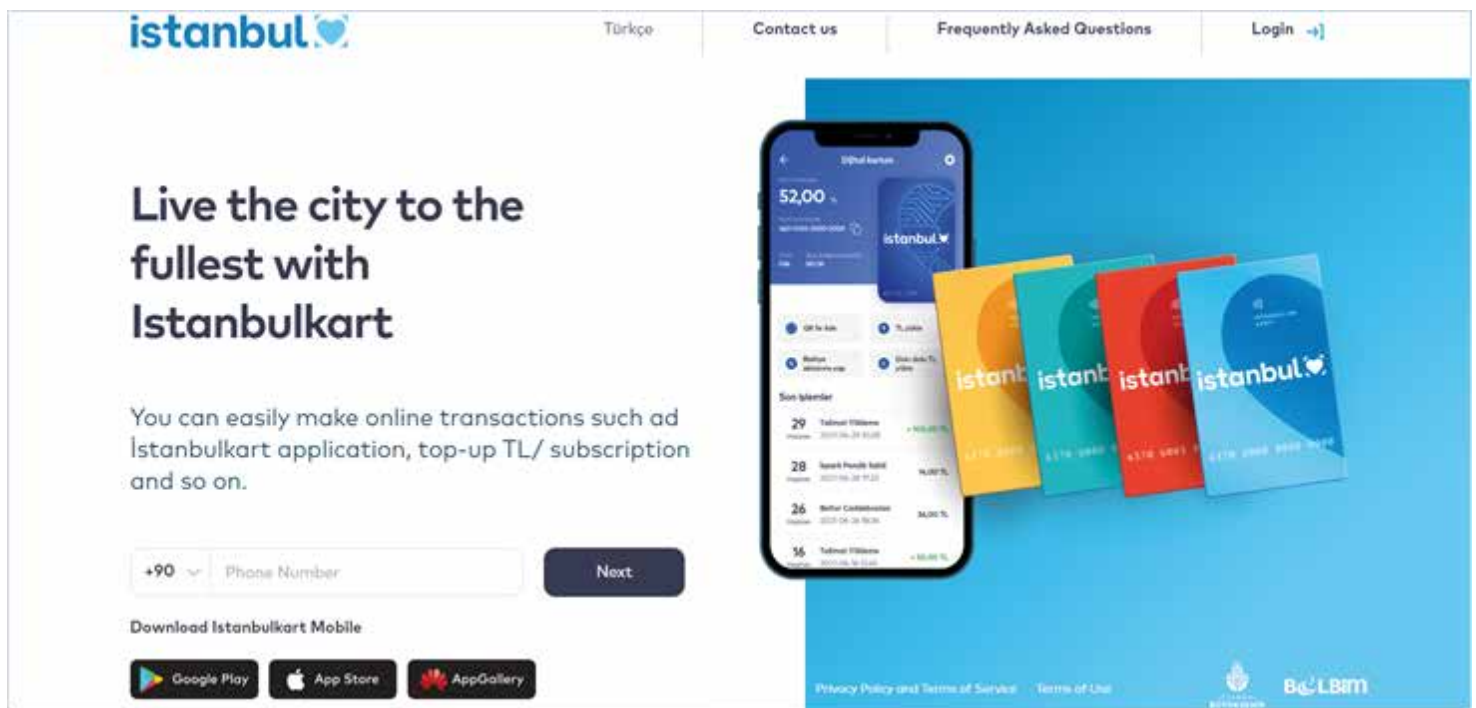
Card types, prices and application:

Card types and their corresponding prices are detailed on the following link:

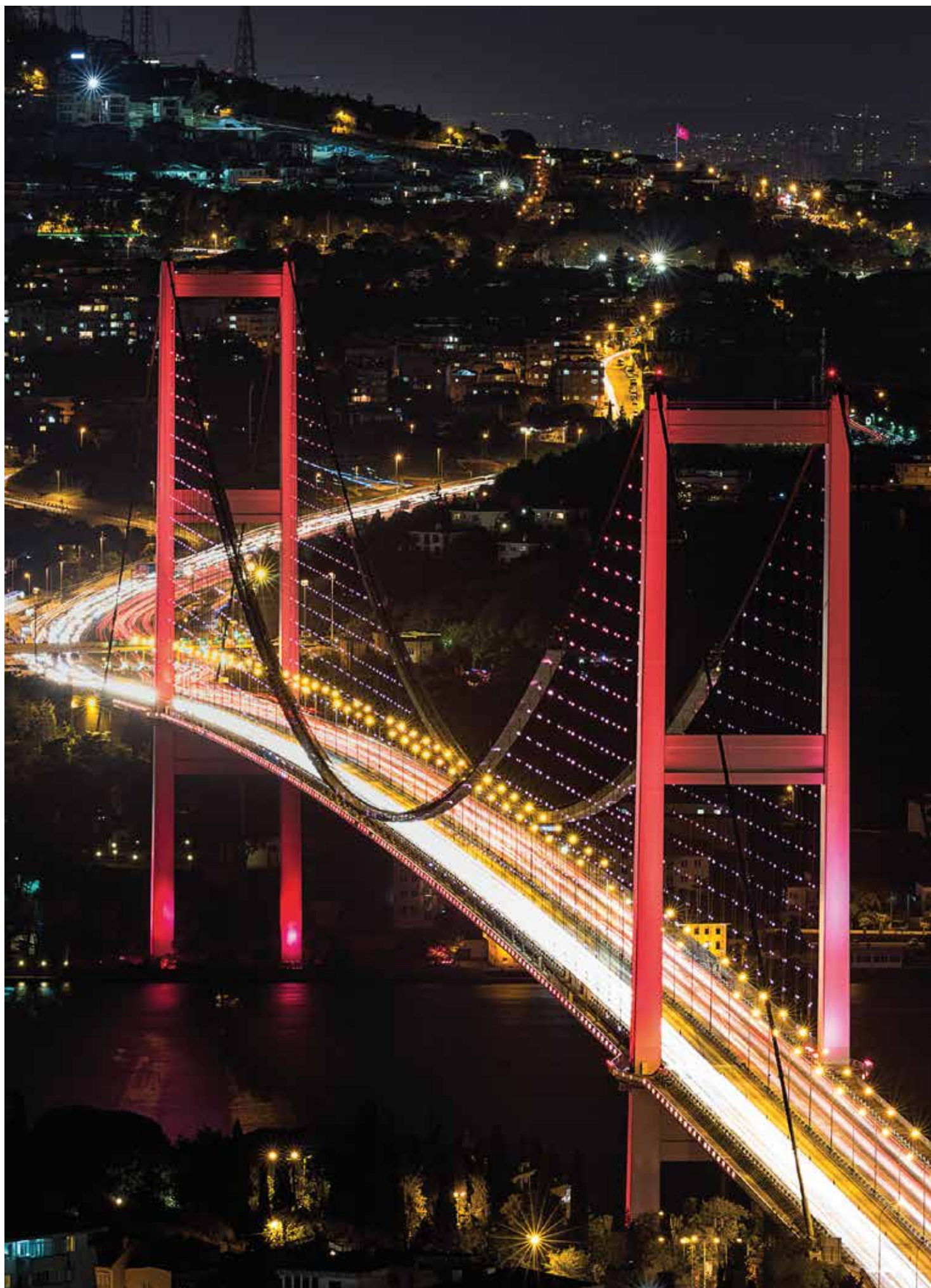
<https://www.istanbulkart.istanbul/price-limit>

To apply, please visit the following link: <https://www.istanbulkart.istanbul/>

The link will take you to the application page below.



Please note that to be eligible for an Istanbul card, you must have a Turkish mobile number. This requirement can be fulfilled after receiving your work and residence permit, making the overall process likely to take a few months.



Turkish Language

The Turkish language is widely spoken throughout Türkiye and is spoken in pockets throughout the Balkans and in the Middle East. It is the most commonly spoken of the Turkic languages.

The roots of the language can be traced to the Altay region in Central Asia. Altaic languages are part of a larger language group known as the Ural-Altaic language group. Languages in this group include Azerbaijani, Uzbek, Mongolian, Finnish, and Hungarian to name a few, and some linguists even argue that Japanese and Korean should be included in this group.

Ottoman Turkish—the variety of the Turkish language that was used as the administrative and literary language of the Ottoman Empire—spread as the Ottoman Empire expanded in the Middle Ages. Atatürk, the founding father of the Republic of Türkiye, replaced the Ottoman script with the Latin alphabet in the late 1920s and replaced many of the loan Persian and Arabic loan words that had characterized Ottoman Turkish with Turkish equivalents as an act of nation building and as an attempt (a successful one to be sure) to increase literacy.

Survival language

“A little Turkish goes a long way” is an adage nouveau that you might want to consider adopting, as a basic knowledge of Turkish will gain you much influence and respect in your daily life. While educated professionals commonly speak some English and many local shopkeepers and vendors along with children sometimes speak very basic levels of English, a little Turkish on your part will impress the host population and make your life much easier.



“Evsiz” can be translated to mean “Without home” with “Ev” meaning “home” and “siz” meaning “Without”.

Sources consulted:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkish_language

Like Romance languages, the basic word order of Turkish is subject-object-verb. Unlike most Western languages, Turkish utilizes postpositions as opposed to prepositions.

Consequently, you may want to get started. What better place to start than the alphabet....

A B C Ç D E F
G Ğ H I J K L
M N O Ö P R
S Ş T U Ü V Y

7 abcçdefğghijklmnoöprsstuüvyz

merhaba
pardon
hoşgeldin
evet
hoşçakal
nasılsın
lütfeñ
görüştünüz
teşekkür
hoşbulduk
özürdilerim
ederim iyiyim

Alphabet

A a /a/ 'a' as in father

B b /b/ 'b' as in book

C c /dʒ/ 'j' as in Joke

Ç ç /tʃ/ 'ch' as in chimpanzee

D d /d/ 'd' as in day

E e /e/, /ɛ/ 'e' as in red or 'a' as in cat

F f /f/ 'f' as in far

G g /g/, /ɟ/ 'g' as in game

Ğ ğ /ɣ/ lengthen the vowel that precedes.

H h /h/ 'h' as in hot

I i /w/ 'e' as in open

İ i /i/ 'i' as in machine

J j /ʒ/ 's' as in pleasure

K k /k/, /c/ 'k' as in kilo

L l /l/, /ɫ/ 'l' as in life

M m /m/ 'm' as in master

N n /n/ 'n' as in nice

O o /o/ 'o' as in more

Ö ö /ø/ 'u' as in turn

P p /p/ 'p' as in spin

R r /r/ the 'r' as in car

S s /s/ 's' as in smile

Ş ş /ʃ/ 'sh' as in shine

T t /t/ 't' as in stop

U u /u/ 'u' as in ultimate

Ü ü /y/ 'u' as in cube

Here are a few basic words and phrases to get you started...

Hello	Merhaba
How are you?	Nasılsın?
Welcome	Hoşgeldin
Response to welcome	Hoşbulduk
Good morning	Günaydın
Good evening	İyi akşamlar
Good night	İyi geceler
Goodbye	Hoşçakal
See you later	Görüşürüz
Thank you	Teşekkür ederim
Please	Lütfen
Sorry	Özür dilerim
Excuse me	Pardon
Yes	Evet
No	Hayır

Learning Turkish

If you are interested in really getting into developing your Turkish there are some other options available.

Learning Turkish (online)

1.Turkish Language Class

<http://www.turkishclass101.com>

2.Online Turkish

<https://turkce.yee.org.tr/en/>

3.You can also look at the Rosetta Stone series which is said to be quite successful.

Language Schools

★ Dilmer

Address: İnönü Cad. Prof. Tarık Zafer Tunaya Sok. No:16, Taksim;
Tel: +90-212-292-9696

<http://www.dilmer.com/>

★ Tömer

Address (Beşiktaş Branch): Sinanpaşa Köprü Sk. No:12 Beşiktaş
Tel: 0 212 249 16 48

<http://tomer.ankara.edu.tr/en/home-page/>

Getting Out and About

Food

Here are some favourite restaurants as provided by our faculty.

Arnavutkoy Sosyal Tesisleri, No:1, Arnavutköy/Istanbul

Doğatepe Restaurant, Nispetiye Cad. Dogatepe Parki No:4-6 | Rumeli Hisarustu on the edge of a hill with an unbelievable view.

Sosyal Tesisler - these are government-subsidized restaurants. They are in many different neighbourhoods. Stunning views, beautiful restaurants, and are cheaper than what you would normally pay for a restaurant of this calibre. Anyone can go! They do not serve alcohol.

Mangerie, Bebek. Cevdet Pasa Cad. No:69 Bebek/Istanbul. High-class with excellent views across Bosphorus. Serves a variety of non-Turkish and Turkish cuisine.

Pide Ban, Sariyer Deresi Sk. 19/A, 34450 Sariyer/Istanbul. Turkish Pizza and traditional black seafood. Delicious.

Noodle House: Cihannüma, Akdoğan Sk. No:35, 34353 Beşiktaş/Istanbul. When you are tired of Turkish food, you should like this simple, small, fairly new place. They also deliver.

Mavi Melek: Asmalı Mescit Mh. No: 23/A. A quaint restaurant in Taksim. The food is great with a variety of Turkish food on the menu.

Kebapçı Mehmet Usta Ortaköy is suggested for a better kebab experience which is just 1.270 meters away from the school. They provide home delivery.

Ginza Ginza: One of our staff's favorite restaurants which is only 460 meters away from the school. Ginza Ginza is the first and only restaurant in Türkiye with an authentic Vietnamese and Southeast Asian menu. They provide home delivery. Please check their website for more information: <http://ginzaginza.com/>

Turkish Breakfast is everyone's favourite. Each province of the country has its own unique breakfast varieties. There are lots of alternative venues where you can flourish your weekends with a long breakfast by socializing with your family and friends. "Serpme Kahvaltı"s (Scattered Breakfast in Turkish) are generally huge due to their variety. Be mindful when you are ordering; generally, one breakfast will perfectly be enough for two people.

Eski Bahçe Sokak: The charming pedestrianized Old Garden Street ([Eski Bahçe Sk.](#)) is at the bottom of Ortakoy and is lined with cafes, restaurants and bakeries. This is a wonderful place to while away a weekend morning or lunchtime enjoying the legendary Turkish kahvalti (breakfast).



Parks

Besiktas Park - they have beautiful cafes located inside the parks and it is very inexpensive.

Yildiz Park - great views from Malta Kosk. Nice for breakfast on the weekends.

Kültür Parkı, turn right on Orkide Sokak, it's on Adnan Saygun, in Ulus.

Sanatçılar Parkı, Etiler Tepecik Yolu, Etiler

Ulus Parkı, Ulus, at the top of our big hill, great views, there's a nice café/restaurant.

Emirgan Park Enjoy a quiet afternoon in one of Istanbul's biggest parks hosting the Istanbul Tulip Festival in Spring.



Entertainment and Culture

Historical Sites

With Museum Pass Türkiye, you can visit more than three hundred museums and archaeological sites that belong to the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism for fifteen days and enjoy your trip through time. The price of **Museum Pass Türkiye** which is valid for fifteen days starting from your first museum and archaeological site entrance is 4000 TL (as of Feb 2024). You can buy it from the sales points or online. Please check the links below.

<https://muze.gov.tr/MuseumPass>

Here is a list of top rated cultural spots in the city:

- 1. Suleymaniye Mosque** Mimar Sinan Cd, Suleymaniye Mh, Istanbul, Türkiye (can see this Mosque just up from Galata Bridge).
- 2. Kariye Museum** (The Chora Church) Kariye Camii Sokak, No:26 Edirnekapi, Istanbul 34087, Türkiye (a bit hard to get to with a trip up the Golden Horn, but worth it).
- 3. Sultanahmet District Sultanahmet**, Istanbul, Türkiye (Sultanahmet - Old City) – You can go here to see the district as well as a number of sites below including the Blue Mosque, the Hagia Sophia Museum, and the Basilica Cistern
- 4. Rustem Pasha Mosque** Hasircilar Carsisi | Eminonu, Istanbul, Türkiye (Sirkeci)
- 5. Hagia Sophia Mosque** (Ayasofya) Sultanahmet | Eminonu District, Istanbul, Türkiye (Sultanahmet - Old City)



- 6. Basilica Cistern** Imran Oktem Cad. No:4 D:5 Sultanahmet, Fatih | Near St. Sophia, Istanbul, Türkiye (Sirkeci)

7.Blue Mosque (Sultan Ahmet Camii) Sultanahmet, Istanbul 222, Türkiye (Sirkeci)

8.Topkapi Palace Gulhane Park, near Sultanahmet Square, Istanbul (in Sultanahmet area as well)

9.Rumeli Fortress Tarabya Yenikoy Cad., Istanbul, Türkiye (quick trip up the Bosphorus on bus 22)

10.Galata Tower – Easily seen just before you cross the Galata Bridge. Old tower built in 1348 with wonderful views of the city.

11.Dolmabahçe Palace – Easy access from Ortakoy before you get to Besiktas. Beautiful palace that was the location for the government under Ataturk.

12.Turkish Bath (hamam) –Some of the best are set up within an old Mosque or historic building.

13.Grand Bazaar – One of the oldest Bazaars in the world where you can literally find anything you would ever want or need. Make sure you have your bargaining hat on before you walk in and be prepared to get lost.



Shopping Centers

There are many shopping centers available in the local area surrounding the school. Many American and UK brand stores exist in Türkiye, albeit a little pricier. Watching sale times at the end of each season is a good time to catch a bargain. Some of the brands that are available in Türkiye include; Banana Republic, Bed and Bath, Benetton, C&A, Debenhams, GAP, H&M, Mothercare, Lacoste, MAC, Marks and Spencer, Nike, Pull & Bear, Quiksilver, Sephora, The Body Shop, Timberland, and Zara.



Akmerkez

Akmerkez is one of the first shopping centers. It has modern architecture and is in one of the most fashionable and central locations in Istanbul, Etiler, which is located right near the school's location (Ulus), a 5 minute taxi ride away. There is fashion, entertainment, recreation and dining all under the one roof.

<http://www.akmerkez.com.tr/en>

Zorlu Center

The Zorlu Center opened up in 2014, and is located just across from the school, in fact you can see its rising towers from the school campus. The Zorlu Center is a hub of activity housing a shopping mall, amazing food courts, a hotel, offices, residential property and a performing arts centre with world famous shows. The center is located minutes away from the school campus.

<http://zorlucenter.com.tr/en>



Kanyon

Kanyon is an outdoor shopping center that has the best international and local brands together in one place. It has fancy restaurants and cafes and a pretty amazing cinema complex. It is a great outdoor shopping experience that is located in Levent (a 15 minute drive from the school's campus). <http://www.kanyon.com.tr/en/?MobileFix=0/+/home>



Istinye Park

Istinye Park, located in Istinye (15-20 minute drive from the school's campus) opened in September 2007 and has roughly 300 stores. There is an indoor and outdoor space and is an impressive piece of architecture as far as shopping centers go. There is a bazaar area, as well as your run of the mill shops, a huge food court area, along with smaller food court areas, a state of the art cinema/theater and some high end shopping brands in the outdoor area. <https://istinyepark.com.tr/>



Cevahir

Cevahir, located in Mecidiyeköy, (a 15 minute drive from the school's campus) is one of Europe's largest shopping centers including a cinema, food court, an entertainment park and cafes. It also has one of two Debenhams stores and is different in terms of it having a large hardware and homeware store (Koçtaş) and a large furniture store (Tepehome). <http://www.istanbulcevahir.com/en-EN/home/29.aspx>

Museums, Galleries, Performing Arts Halls and Movies

Museums



- ★ Istanbul Archeological Museum
<http://www.istanbularkeoloji.gov.tr>
- ★ Pera Museum
<http://peramuseum.org>
- ★ Sakip Sabanci Museum
<http://sakipsabancimuzesi.org/en>
- ★ ELGIZ Museum of Contemporary Art
<https://elgizmuseum.org/tr/>
- ★ Istanbul Modern
<http://www.istanbulmodern.org/en>
- ★ Museum of Innocence
<https://www.masumiyetmuzesi.org/>

Movies

There are movie theaters at Akmerkez, Zorlu Center, Metro City, Ozdilek, Kanyon and other malls.

Art Galleries & Libraries



★ **SALT (Art Gallery and Library)**

<http://saltonline.org/en/home>

★ **Arter**

<https://www.arter.org.tr/home>

★ **Galeri Nev**

<https://www.galerinevistanbul.com/>

Performing Arts Halls

- ★ Zorlu Performing Arts Center (PSM): It is the best place in Türkiye to watch the Broadway shows and it is only 650 meters away from the school.

<https://www.zorlupsm.com/en>



You may also check out the following event venues which serve both stage and club for musicals, concerts and parties with their nice cafes to enjoy and socialize before the event.

- ★ Sanat Performance, Beyoğlu
- ★ If Performance Hall, Beşiktaş
- ★ Uniq Hall, Maslak
- ★ Tim Show Center, Maslak

For more attractions in Istanbul, you can visit to <https://istanbeautiful.com/>

You can find and buy tickets for concerts, theaters, exhibitions, seminars, arts, sports, musicals and so on across the country via "Biletix (ticket-x)". www.biletix.com/anasayfa/TURKIYE/en
Mobile application is also available.

Getting to and from the airport

Airports

There are two airports in Istanbul, one on the European side ([İstanbul Havalimanı](#)) 40 km away from the school and the other on the Asian side ([Sabiha Gökçen Havalimanı/SGI](#)) 50 km away from the school. SGI Airport often has good deals with Pegasus, but keep in mind it's about 10 km more for travel to SGI than it is to the Istanbul Airport. Depending on traffic, it can take anywhere from 30 minutes to 2 hours to travel to these airports, so you will need to time your journey according to the traffic conditions.

Taxi - Early in the morning, this is the most direct route. A typical taxi to the airport can usually be a rate of 728,95 TL (approx) to İstanbul Airport, and about 905,05 TL+bridge fee (approx) to Sabiha Gökçen / SGI. Taxis will always use a meter.

But during heavy traffic hours it's best to take the (M11) Gayrettepe – İstanbul Airport Metro line which is 22,83 TL from Gayrettepe to İstanbul airport or [Havaist](#) luxury bus transportation which is 170,00 TL from 4.Levent or Beşiktaş Meydan.

(The aforementioned prices are updated in February 2024.)



Traveling within Türkiye and Abroad

According to our faculty and staff, here are some of the hottest picks for places to travel to in Türkiye. Below is a list of resources to support you with travel planning in and around Türkiye as well as abroad.

You wish to visit the website of the [Ministry of Tourism & Culture](#) for more information about discovering more places to visit in Türkiye.

Travel apps to support you in Türkiye and while travelling to other destinations:

- ★ City Guides by TripAdvisor and [Wikitravel](#): provides a list of recommended accommodations, restaurants, sights, etc. and even customized itineraries for travelling.
- ★ City Map: easy to download maps for any destination
- ★ Ever Places App

Booking accommodations when travelling within Türkiye and abroad:

Booking.com is not available in Türkiye. Instead you can try:

- ★ [ETStur](#): for booking accommodations, package tours, voyage.
- ★ [Setur](#): for booking accommodations, package tours, voyage
- ★ [Jollytur](#): for booking accommodations, package tours, voyage
- ★ [Prontotour](#): for booking accommodations, package tours, voyage
- ★ [Hotels.com](#): for booking accommodations and flights.

Booking Airfare

If you book well in advance you can get some amazing deals on airfare. Our faculty tends to favour Turkish airlines, but there are several other local airlines.

- ★ Turkish Airlines: <http://www.turkishairlines.com/>
- ★ Pegasus: www.flypgs.com/en

Intercity Buses

Since the prices have come down recently in airfares, intercity buses are not favoured as much as they used to be. However, the following bus companies also offer tours connected to their travel services.

- ★ Kamil Koc: www.kamilkoc.com.tr
- ★ Varan Turizm: <https://www.varan.com.tr/>
- ★ Ulusoy: www.ulusoy.com.tr

Most Attracted Tourist Regions

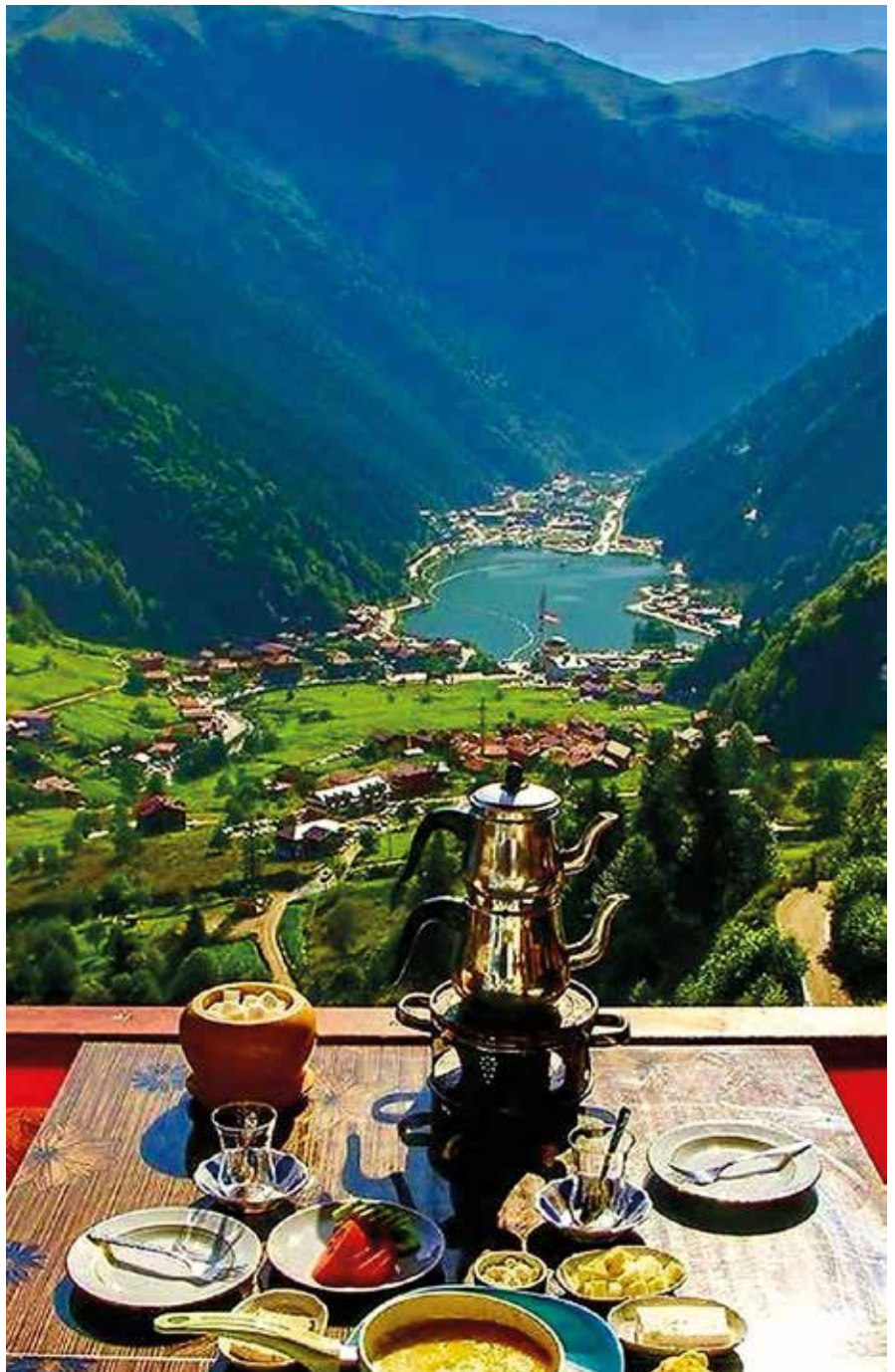
Cappadocia is in the central region of Türkiye. If you like to hike, explore underground cities, and slip back into the 5th century, this is a place for you.

Ephesus is in the Izmir province just outside of Selcuk. It was built in the 10th century BC and is well known for its biblical history and Roman ruins.

Trabzon is a city on the Black Sea coast of northeastern Türkiye.

Gallipoli The peninsula runs in a southwesterly direction into the Aegean Sea. It's known for the failed offensive during World War I.

Antalya: There are very natural beauties that you can explore in the Antalya region where the green and the blue come together. If you enjoy diving into the cold, deep and crystal clear sea, Kaş is the place where you can enjoy these features. It provides you with its crystal clear and cold beaches where you can jump from wrecks.



Pamukkale is famous for its intricate series of calcite shelves and elaborate Roman spa city.



Beaches

Çeşme: A port town along the Aegean Coast. Not too far from here is Alacati, a quaint artsy town worth exploring for a day or two. The waters in Çeşme are definitely worth swimming in as there's a thermal spring feeding into it.

Bodrum is in the southwestern Aegean Region of Türkiye, along the southern coast. There are plenty of beaches to choose from, historical sights to see, and an active nightlife for those who choose that route.



Ölüdeniz - Official translation is Blue Lagoon. This is a small village and beach resort about 45 minutes outside of Fethiye - It has some of the most beautiful shades of turquoise and aquamarine colors that you will ever see.

Fethiye: [İztuzu Beach](#) is a great place to see caretta caretas which is a preserved area to protect the caretta caretas.

Weekend Getaways

There are many nice places in or close to Istanbul that you can relax and enjoy during the weekends or short holidays. Here are some of the things you can discover. You can also ask your local colleagues to their favorite destinations to discover more.



Ağva

Ağva is in Şile district of Istanbul and one-hour drive away from the city. Ağva is one of the most preferable relaxation spots in Istanbul offering a variety of accommodation alternatives from camping to river-side bungalows or luxury hotels.



Adalar (The Princes' Islands)

The Princes' Islands consist of nine islands in the Marmara Sea. The four of them are larger (from largest to smallest; Büyükada, Heybeliada, Kınalıada, Burgazada) and have civil settlements which have the most tourist attractions. No motor vehicle is available on the islands.

The transportation is provided by bicycle and electric vehicle. You can reach the islands by [ferries](#) from Beşiktaş ferry port.

Kilyos and Şile

[Kilyos](#) and [Şile](#) are the most famous with their nice beaches in Istanbul. Many Istanbulites prefer to escape from the heat of the city during the summer and spend their weekends in the cool waters of the Black Sea.

Polanezköy and Belgrad Forest

[Polanezköy](#) is on the Asian side and [Belgrad Forest](#) is on the European side of the city. These are the most preferable destinations for walking, breakfast and barbeque. Belgrad forest has the longest walking-track when it's compared to Polanezköy.

Abant

Abant is in Bolu province of Türkiye and 3.5 hours drive away from Istanbul. It attracts many with its famous [Lake of Abant](#) and its natural beauties.



Ski Resorts

All seasons are beautiful in Türkiye, especially the winter season. Ski season in Türkiye is generally between December and March. The favorite spots of the winter holidays are always ski centers. With the cooling of the weather, those who want to have a winter holiday flock to the ski resorts. Whether you are going on a family ski holiday with gentle blue slopes and ski schools, or are on the lookout for challenging black runs, great facilities, or world class terrain surfaces, Türkiye has it all.

Ski Resorts for Chasing Snow

Uludag: Uludag Ski Resort is the oldest and most popular alpine village in Türkiye, situated 36 km away from Bursa province. The ski area lies between 1800-2500 m and the best season is from December to April.

Kartalkaya: Kartalkaya Ski Resort is 40 km away from Bolu in the Black Sea region. The ski area is at an altitude of 1850-2200 m. The best season for skiing is from late December and late March.

Erciyes: Located 25 km away from Kayseri province and 80 km away from Cappadocia, Erciyes Ski Resort is one of Türkiye's oldest ski resorts. The ski resort is at Mount Erciyes, approximately 3915 m the highest summit of Anatolia.

Palandoken: Palandoken Ski Resort in Erzurum is one of Türkiye's largest ski areas and considered by many the best, with good hotels, good conditions, good facilities, and Colorado-type powder, covered with snow during winter.



CONSULATES

It is a good idea if you register yourself with your Embassy or Consulate to get the latest information about your country, citizenship, safety and other information. You can find some of the main contacts below. If you cannot find your embassy listed, please let us know, we would be happy to assist you.

AUSTRALIAN - EMBASSY

Address: Uğur Mumcu Caddesi, MNG Binası, No:88, Kat:7, 06700 G.O.P. / ANKARA
Phone: (312) 459 95 00
Email: consular.ankara@dfat.gov.au

AUSTRALIAN - ISTANBUL CONSULATE GENERAL

Address: Harbiye, Asker Ocağı Cd. Süzer Plaza No:15, 34357 Şişli/Beşiktaş/İstanbul
Phone: 0212 393 33 00
Email: istanbul@austrade.gov.au

CANADA - EMBASSY

Address: Aziziye, Cinnah Street no: 58, 06690 Çankaya / ANKARA
Phone: (312) 409 27 00
Email: ankra@international.gc.ca

CANADA - ISTANBUL CONSULATE GENERAL

Address: Büyükdere Caddesi No: 209, Tekfen Tower, 4.Levent, İSTANBUL
Phone: (212) 385 97 00

FRENCH REPUBLIC - EMBASSY

Address: Paris Cad., No:70 , Kavaklıdere / ANKARA
Phone: (312) 455 45 45
Web: <https://tr.ambafrance.org/-Francois->

FRENCH REPUBLIC - ISTANBUL CONSULATE GENERAL

Address: İstiklal Caddesi No :4 34435 Beyoğlu /İSTANBUL
Phone: +90 (212) 334 87 30
Web: <https://istanbul.consulfrance.org/-Francois->

IRELAND - EMBASSY

Address: Uğur Mumcu Cad.,No: 88, MNG Binası, G.O.P. / ANKARA
Phone: (0312) 459 10 00

IRELAND - ISTANBUL HONORARY CONSULATE

Address: İkitelli Osb Mahallesi, Eskoop Sanayi Sitesi A3 Blok, No: 172, 34490 Başakşehir/İstanbul
Phone:(212) 482 1862

REPUBLIC OF INDIA - EMBASSY

Address: Cinnah Cad., No: 77, 06680, Çankaya / ANKARA
Phone: (312) 438 21 95-98
Web: <https://www.indembassyankara.gov.in/>

REPUBLIC OF INDIA - ISTANBUL CONSULATE GENERAL

Address: Harbiye, Cumhuriyet Cd. Dortler Apt. No:42 D:11-12, 34367 Şişli/ İSTANBUL
Phone: (212) 296 21 31
Web: <https://www.hindistankonsoloslugu.org/istanbul-baskon-soloslugu/>

SPAIN - ISTANBUL CONSULATE GENERAL

Address: Karanfil Aralığı Sok. ,No: 16 , 1.Levent, 34330, Beşiktaş / İSTANBUL
Phone: (0212) 270 74 10- 270 74 10
Web: <http://ankaravisa.es/>

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA - EMBASSY

Address: 100. Yıl, Filistin Cd. No:27 No:27, 06700 Çankaya/Ankara
Phone: (312) 405 68 61
Emergency: +90 (537) 912 58 07
Email: general.ankara@dirco.gov.za

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA - ISTANBUL HONORARY CONSULATE

Address: İstinye, Civan Perçemi Sk. No:38, 34460 Sarıyer/İstanbul
Phone: (0212) 484 04 64
Email: remzigur@gurmen.com.tr

UK - EMBASSY

Address: Şehit Ersan Cad.,No: 46/A, Çankaya / ANKARA
Phone: (312) 455 33 44
Call 24/7 for emergency assistance
+90 312 455 33 44 from Turkey
+44 20 7008 5000 from the UK
E-Mail: britemb@fco.gov.uk; britembcon@fco.gov.uk;
Web: <https://www.gov.uk/world/Türkiye>

UK - ISTANBUL CONSULATE GENERAL

Address: Meşrutiyet Caddesi No 42 Tepebaşı Beyoğlu 34435 İstanbul
Phone: (212) 334 64 00
24/7 for emergency consular assistance:
+90 212 334 64 00 from Turkey
+44 (0)20 7008 5000 from the UK
Web: <https://www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-consulate-general-istanbul>

UNITED STATES - EMBASSY

Address: 1480 Sokak No.1 Cukurambar Mahallesi 06530 Çankaya, ANKARA
Phone: (90-312) 294-0000
Web: <https://tr.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/>

UNITED STATES - ISTANBUL CONSULATE GENERAL

Address: Poligon Mah. Sarıyer Cad. No:75, İstinye / İSTANBUL
Phone: (90) 212-335 90 00
Web: <https://tr.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/istanbul/>