

TÜRKİYE
NATION BRANDING
FORUM

NATION BRANDING EXPERIENCES FROM TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

*Meet the true
colors of
Türkiye*

December 16 - 17, 2022 - İstanbul



NATION BRANDING EXPERIENCES FROM TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD



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Table of Contents

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Table of Contents

FOREWORD

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	9
<i>President of the Republic of Türkiye</i>	

FORUM OPENING SPEECHES

Prof . Fahrettin Altun	12
<i>Presidency's Head of Communications of the Republic of Türkiye</i>	
Nur Özkan Erbay	20
<i>The Coordinator of Türkiye Brand Office, Directorate of Communications</i>	

FIRST SESSION 24

Global Trends, Changes, and Transformations in Nation Branding	26
---	----

Overview of Nation Branding Strategies, Country Perceptions and Indexes	30
--	----

Nation Branding Methodologies	44
--------------------------------------	----

Performance Criteria in Nation Brand Index Calculations: Türkiye in Indexes	52
--	----

SECOND SESSION 58

The Role of Media in Nation Branding: Anadolu Agency Brand	60
---	----

THIRD SESSION	68
Nation Branding and Gastrodiplomacy	70
FOURTH SESSION	90
Place Branding in a Changing World: The Story of Cities	92
Strategies for Creating New Place Brands: Cornwall	96
The Spirit of the City: The Case of İstanbul in Urban Branding	102
FIFTH SESSION	112
Commercial Diplomacy Breakthroughs for the Türkiye Brand: DEİK Experience	114
SIXTH SESSION	124
Branding in the History of Türkiye: From Mark to Brand	126
SEVENTH SESSION	140
Nation Branding in the World: Experience Sharing	142
Reflections of Brand Investment on Country Indexes: The Case of Brand Peru	146
Türkiye's Nation Branding from the Perspective of Tourism	158
Qatar Communication Strategies in Nation Branding: The Case of FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022	166
Italy's Nation Branding Campaign: BeIT	174
EIGHTH SESSION	178
Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding Strategy	180
Public Diplomacy Activities on the Axis of Contribution to Türkiye's Nation Branding Strategies	184
Nation Branding in the Context of Brand Communication Management	192
Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding Activities on the Axis of Foreign Policy Achievements	202

Table of Contents

NINTH SESSION	210
Nation Branding in Broadcast Production and Cultural Exports	212
Turkish Printing and Publishing in the Context of Contributions to the Türkiye Nation Brand	216
Models for Supporting Cultural Exports: Turkish TV Series Export Assistance	224
TENTH SESSION	242
The Branding Strategy of the Most Valuable Turkish Brand, Turkish Airlines: Just Imagine	244
ELEVENTH SESSION	250
Transferring Nation Branding to the Global Scale: International Fairs	252
Concept of Security Based on Reputation in the Context of Nation Branding and Public Diplomacy	256
Türkiye's EXPO Experiences and the Role of EXPOs in City Branding	264
Contributions of International Events to Nation Branding	270
TWELFTH SESSION	280
The Türkiye Brand in Cooperation and Development Projects: The TİKA Experience	282
THIRTEENTH SESSION	292
Türkiye's Culinary Power: Gastrodiplomacy	294
FOURTEENTH SESSION	330
Cultural Heritage in Nation Branding: Türkiye Experience	332



FOREWORD

On the 100th anniversary of its founding, the Republic of Türkiye is making resolute strides to achieve the goal of a great and strong Türkiye. Our actions over the past 21 years have always been guided by our two millennia of state tradition, along with our civilisation and cultural accumulation built on the pillars of justice, trust, and tolerance.

We have established an infrastructure fit for our Republic's centenary by taking giant steps in almost every field, from economy to health, justice to education, foreign policy to counter-terrorism, defence industry to energy, transportation to agriculture, sports to the arts, technology and innovation to communication. In doing so, we have competed with ourselves, striving to constantly raise the bar of success.

We are delighted that the "Türkiye" brand has expanded its influence to over 780 thousand square kilometres, establishing itself as a guarantor of peace, security, and trust in our region. We take great pride in the global export success of the "Made in Türkiye" products.

Through our efforts in the Century of Türkiye, we intend to build upon our current achievements by pursuing new ones. We persist in our endeavours to achieve the goal of a century of production, science, peace, digitalism, values, communication, stability, development, and sustainability.

At this juncture, the Türkiye Brand is an integral part of our vision for a Powerful Türkiye. Together with our beloved nation, we will build the Century of Türkiye and revive the Türkiye brand. As a nation that has conquered countless challenges, we wholeheartedly believe that our future will be much brighter and more prosperous than it is today.

I congratulate everyone, from exporters to public officials, non-governmental organisations to citizens, diplomats to businessmen, who have been working diligently to elevate the Türkiye Brand to its well-deserved position in the global system.



PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE
RECEP TAYYİP ERDOĞAN



**FORUM OPENING
SPEECHES**



**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Opening
Speeches**



Prof. Fahrettin Altun
PRESIDENCY'S HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE



Distinguished participants, esteemed guests, ladies and gentlemen from Türkiye and all over the world. While greeting you all with respect and affection, I would like to welcome you to the Türkiye Nation Branding Forum, which has been organised by the Presidency's Directorate of Communications of the Republic of Türkiye.

Today, we are filled with joy, pride, and excitement as we organise the Türkiye Nation Branding Forum, which is the first of its kind in Türkiye. We express our gratitude to you for participating in this pride and excitement. We are organising this forum with the concept of "Meet the True Colors of Türkiye." I hope that our forum will be a blessing to our country, region, and the world. We hope to create an international interaction platform in the field of nation branding through this forum, which will be attended by both national and international experts in their respective fields. As we bring together stakeholders from the public sector, academia, civil society, and the private sector on this platform, we aim to create a synergy that will strengthen the "Türkiye" brand. I hope that the Forum will contribute to the activities carried out by the Presidency's Directorate of Communications in accordance with our primary goal of strengthening the "Türkiye" brand. This platform, which brings together internationally esteemed experts, includes approximately 42 panellists. At the same time, many valuable names representing the "Türkiye" brand are among us. I would like to welcome our guests who have travelled to

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Istanbul, Türkiye's brand city and the cradle of civilisations, to contribute to our forum with their experience, knowledge, and participation, and I would like to express my appreciation in advance.



Dear participants, as you are aware, the need for countries to promote themselves has existed since antiquity. This need has grown in importance, particularly in the information age, and after the 1960s, the field of public diplomacy emerged as a formal field to address it. During this period, the importance of implementing policies aimed directly at the people of countries and states became clear, and as a result, public diplomacy activities increased, and soft power became an important strategic area for countries. The concept of nation branding has been incorporated into the field of soft power, which has been built up by numerous factors over time. Nation branding can be defined as “activities undertaken by states to produce a particular image.” This concept falls under the umbrella of the communication discipline and encompasses a wide range of fields, including marketing and international relations. Today, states are struggling to effectively conduct nation branding efforts in order to establish a presence in the global ecosystem, attract more investors and visitors, gain a foothold in the fiercely competitive international system, improve their reputation, and become more visible. These are unques-

tionably activities that necessitate significant investment and planning, but when done properly, they produce excellent results. Today, as digitalisation has become an undeniable reality, social media platforms have also emerged as crucial brand channels. Contrary to common perception, we have found that these platforms are not always free, independent, and impartial. In the most recent Twitter scandal, we have once again witnessed this fact clearly and unequivocally. The records reveal that the former Twitter administration arbitrarily stretched its moderation limitations in applications such as content deletion, blocking, and account termination and converted its content policies into a weapon against users and actors with opposing views.

The current Twitter administration shares these documents with the entire international community. This picture clearly shows that we face a severe threat to individuals, societies and countries. This scandal provides clues as to how the perception of a country brand can be altered or even manipulated via social media platforms. This is why, while strengthening the country brand, safeguarding it from such systematic perception operations is a vitally important issue. In the age of “post-truth,” in which truth is pronounced dead, our most important guiding principle, of course, should be to keep on the straight and narrow in our nation branding efforts.

Distinguished participants and distinguished guests, on today’s international political stage, the brand value of countries has taken centre stage in terms of their economic and political relations, and we know that a country’s brand value is the sum of its identity and reputation values. In this sense, it is obvious that a brand is a fundamental form of communication, and it is the sum of the factors that distinguishes one value from another. Branding is much more complex than promotion and advertising. The evolution of global competition due to advancements in communication technology has necessitated the use of more complicated and personalised communication tactics in branding operations. As the term implies, nation branding is a communication endeavour undertaken by nations collectively. The only brand ambassadors who can boost a country’s brand value are its own citizens. Volunteer citizen diplomats with goodwill are the most valuable brand faces in the world for a country.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

In the public diplomacy activities we carry out as the Republic of Türkiye Directorate of Communications, we also consider our volunteer citizen diplomats as public diplomacy actors. In intercultural interaction, we strive to successfully present our country's potential to the outside world.

Distinguished participants, the world is going through serious challenges, and it is a fact that we are facing severe repercussions of the war that has been going on between Russia and Ukraine since February 2022. The environment of uncertainty and instability, which is increasing day by day, is a common concern for everyone. Today, we are going through a difficult process in which the need for a new order is voiced much louder. Türkiye, which has successfully navigated these global challenges, also contributes to the resolution of regional crises and global conflicts. We reiterate this clearly and unequivocally: In this era of global uncertainty, Türkiye not only stands out as an island of stability but also contributes to world peace and well-being as a stabilising power. As Türkiye, we took pride in having served the worldwide hope with our mediation efforts in the Russia-Ukraine war and grain deals for the solution of the food crisis. Türkiye, with its principled foreign policy, occupies a position as a central country for global peace and stability. The Türkiye models we have built in many fields, from diplomacy to humanitarian aid, from health to the environment, have set an example for the world today. We are in an effort to add Türkiye's Communication Model to this chain. As you are aware, Türkiye made significant progress and achievements in many fields, particularly in the last 20 years.

Türkiye is a regional power and a global player, making significant strides in all areas, from investment to trade, health to education, renewable energy to technology and innovation, and humanitarian diplomacy to peace mediation efforts. As the Presidency's Directorate of Communications, we carry out efforts to transform Türkiye's power into a reputable and reliable brand and to make it sustainable. At this point, I would like to emphasise unequivocally that our President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is the largest and most powerful brand of Türkiye today. We are working in this field with the inspiration and confidence that come from following in our President's footsteps as a leading brand personality. We work with the motto of protecting and preserving the truth in today's world, where

the truth is being lost at an alarming rate. With Türkiye's peaceful and sustainable policies on a global scale, we are working with all our might to contribute to constructing a more liveable future through communication. We coordinate the activities required to strengthen the Türkiye brand and increase its international recognition in light of our civilisational values rooted in a millennia-long, deep history. In this regard, we act with the awareness that our primary responsibility is to promote our culture and values through qualified and valuable works worthy of our nation. We aim to further strengthen the nation's brand value in global competition by sharing success stories of the state and the nation from the past and present. We are fighting against defamation efforts around the world that will harm the Türkiye brand and Türkiye's image in the international arena. We are engaged in a multifaceted effort to protect and enhance our country's reputation.

At the heart of 'Türkiye's Communication Model' is the goal of strengthening our nation brand. We evaluate and nurture the Türkiye brand through all phases of communication in this model, which operates with the understanding of a 360-degree communication. In doing so, we prioritise preserving our national brand identity and all of its values. Obviously, the main goal of our work is to institutionalise the initiatives for the 'Strong Türkiye' brand, which is an integral part of the 2023, 2053 and 2071 visions under the leadership of our President. As the Presidency's Directorate of Communications, we have broadened the scope of our activities to empower the "Türkiye" brand by establishing the Türkiye Brand Office in May of last year. We aim to develop a holistic strategy in this area through the efforts of our Türkiye Brand Office. The step that we have taken, led by our President, to adopt the name Türkiye internationally is the cornerstone of this strategy. To raise awareness about this matter, we will continue our communication campaigns at various levels while also strengthening our national and international efforts. On this occasion, we once again invite our international guests to refer to our country as "Türkiye", beginning with their remarks at this forum. In addition, our Turkish language learning courses for international press members, which we run in collaboration with the Yunus Emre Institute, continue to be a success. We are overjoyed to see this success. Our goal is

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

to give international press members working in Türkiye the opportunity to experience the country in its authentic cultural light and present it to the world with greater accuracy through these activities.

We are mobilising all the brand dynamics of our nation. Our President's leadership brand identity also serves as a guide in this area. Today, Türkiye is becoming a brand under the leadership of our President, with its proactive stance in the face of global crises, diplomatic, political, humanitarian, military, and even economic solutions generated on the axis of values; it is enhancing its power and capability in the international arena, as well as strengthening its opportunities. Thanks to tourism diplomacy, Türkiye is now one of the top 10 countries in the world in terms of arrivals. Türkiye received the top spot in the "Best Airport 2022" survey with Istanbul Airport. Türkiye currently ranks first in the world for humanitarian aid and second for development assistance when compared to Gross Domestic Product (GDP). When it comes to international education, Türkiye is among the top 5 countries in the world. Türkiye ranks highly on the list of the countries with the greatest political influence. Distinguished guests and distinguished participants, as you know, Türkiye has the status of a natural brand with its geographical location, historical background and cultural richness. Türkiye is an exceptional country with its imperial legacy, religious and cultural diversity, and a social experience in which diversities have coexisted peacefully for centuries. In these aspects, our country represents a harmony of colours. As a trade and brand hub in the earliest ages of history, Istanbul is a unique brand city in the world. Our President's investments in Istanbul since his term as Mayor of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality have further highlighted, strengthened and entrenched the brand identity of this historic city. As Türkiye, we carry out nation-branding activities in coordination and cooperation with all stakeholders.

We have identified our values, deep-rooted cultural heritage and economic dynamism as our nation-brand identity, and we strive to make this identity visible globally. Today, Türkiye has acknowledged its power and demonstrated the quality of its brand by labelling numerous products as "Made in Türkiye." This power resonates around the world today. Today, Türkiye has conveyed the image of a "stable and determined" nation

brand through the policies it has undertaken for peace and humanity. Today, Türkiye is an “orchestra conductor” whose expertise and experience are sought in nearly every field and who serves as the address for conflict resolution. Today, Türkiye is a “hero” for the initiatives it has taken to resolve global crises. Türkiye stands by the oppressed. Türkiye stands against the oppressors. Türkiye is the upholder of values that serve humanity. Türkiye has been able to accomplish all this under the leadership of our President. That is why we say, “Türkiye’s most powerful brand is Recep Tayyip Erdoğan”. While implementing our ideals, we build our nation-brand identity based on our civilisational values. Distinguished guests and distinguished participants: today, nation branding is crucial for countries to participate in international competition and achieve their future objectives; on the other hand, the investments made and to be made in this field are equally important for a fairer and more sustainable future. I believe that our Forum will yield significant results from this perspective. This is because nation branding is an incredibly valuable issue for Türkiye. However, it is not only a matter of serving Türkiye that Türkiye’s brand value is conveyed in a more powerful way. As our President states, “Türkiye is bigger than Türkiye.”

Therefore, strengthening the Türkiye brand means strengthening the investments that Türkiye has made in peace, international prosperity and development. In this regard, the enhancement of Türkiye’s prestige means strengthening investments in international peace. With this approach and this perspective, we continue to invest in this field with the Coordination of Türkiye Brand Office. I would like to take this opportunity to wish that our forum be instrumental in helping the entire world discover the true colours of Türkiye. I wish the Türkiye Nation Branding Forum to be successful. I would like to sincerely express my gratitude to all my colleagues, particularly the personnel of our Türkiye Brand Office, who contributed to the implementation and preparation of this valuable organisation. Once again, I welcome all our guests to our beautiful Istanbul. I would like to extend my gratitude to all participants for their contributions in advance. May you remain safe and healthy.

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Opening
Speeches**



Nur Özkan Erbay

THE COORDINATOR OF TÜRKİYE BRAND OFFICE,
DIRECTORATE OF COMMUNICATIONS



Esteemed Head of Communications, distinguished professors, dear guests who honour us with their presence today from many countries of the world from Latin America to Europe, from the Middle East to North America, our institutions and brand ambassadors representing the brand “Türkiye” in business, trade, development, diplomacy, media and cultural fields all over the world, and dear representatives of our press... Welcome to the first Türkiye Nation Branding Forum, which makes us all proud and happy today.

Our country, which has been the birthplace of many civilizations for centuries, is not only a beacon of a bright future but also a brand of civilization that is mentioned in every history book. The cradle of faith and wisdom as well as civilizations, Türkiye strives to transform this legacy into a value for the common future of humanity and our world, drawing inspiration from its past, and experience it has gained and the legacy it continues to protect. In pursuit of these goals and ideals, Türkiye is indeed a brand of humanity that meticulously protects the legacy of the past. Thousands of kilometres away from these lands, 150 years ago, during the great famine in Ireland, which resulted in the deaths of 1,000,000 people, the Ottoman Empire sent five sailing ships full of food, medicine and seeds to this country.

Today, Türkiye, the heir of this legacy, is the country that ensured the world's food security and prevented global starvation during the Ukraine-Russia War. These territories, which welcomed Jews fleeing the Inquisition in Spain 500 years ago, is a brand of faith where three Abrahamic religions have coexisted peacefully for centuries, it is also a safe harbor and a brand

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

of humanity for millions of refugees fleeing conflicts, inhumane treatment and wars in the region.

Distinguished participants, nation branding activities, which have been on our agenda for last two decades, are now an important field of study in the public diplomacy and communication of countries with the world. As you know, branding is a sophisticated form of communication that requires years of dedication and seeks to leave a mark in people's hearts and minds. For this purpose, the nation branding activities of countries, just like products, include a far more strategic process than the usual promotional activities and forms of communication. However, when undertaking this task, it is essential to develop a language and a narrative that portrays your real story, national character, memory, and the heritage of civilization you will pass on to future generations, rather than a fiction or an imaginary one. In this process, the nation branding efforts of countries are built on both their tangible and intangible capacities as well as their material and spiritual wealth. Additionally, the future visions and innovative strong ideas they present to the world are also of great importance in these efforts. As a country, the prestige, recognition, and attractiveness of your brand power grow in alignment with your brand power and capacity in almost all areas such as political, economic, social, and cultural. Next year, as our country marks its 100th anniversary, it will continue to strengthen its brand identity not only through its trade, city, and tourism brands but also with all policies implemented on the global stage for the benefit of humanity, which are an integral part of the nation brand.

Distinguished participants, distinguished guests,

As the Head of the Türkiye Brand Office operating under the Directorate of Communications, we lead the activities to strengthen the 'Türkiye' brand, which is an integral part of our 'Strong Türkiye' vision, and the institutionalization of these activities. As the Brand Office of the Presidency's Directorate of Communications, which is the new communication brand of Türkiye, we set out to tell the untold stories of our country in a better way. Instead of short-term promotional and marketing campaigns, we are working to create a long-term brand identity by drawing strength and inspiration from all the capabilities of our country. We provide a free atmosphere for exchange of ideas on Türkiye's nation branding efforts and bring together various stakeholders, such as the private sector, public sector,

academia, media, and citizens. Our goal here is to spearhead the initiatives and efforts that showcase Türkiye's potential on a global scale. From our residents living inside our borders and our diaspora overseas to our commercial institutions, cities, gastronomy, scientists, artists, chefs, businesspeople, students, diplomats, and sports, we consider everyone who has contributed to Türkiye's achievements to be our brand ambassadors thanks to innovative, dynamic, progressive, unique communication and branding strategies.

Distinguished guests, as you are aware, there is much talk worldwide about the achievements of several products bearing the 'Türkiye' brand. Behind the success of these brands is the power of Türkiye as a whole with its 85 million citizens and our President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, a brand in leadership in the world nowadays. The foundations of our brand identity represent all aspects of our nation and reflect Türkiye's perspective on the world. As I conclude my remarks, I would like to share with you some solid data on the nation brand of Türkiye.

Türkiye provided medical equipment assistance to 160 countries during the pandemic and became the ninth country in the world to produce its own COVID-19 vaccine. Türkiye is a health brand. According to the 'Global Humanitarian Assistance Report', Türkiye was the most charitable country in the world in 2020 and 2021. Türkiye is a humanitarian aid brand. These outstanding numbers and strong foundations underlie the rising reputation and appeal of the Türkiye brand nowadays. Our country, which draws attention with its unique geography, has hosted over 40,000,000 tourists in the first nine months of this year. Türkiye is a great tourism brand for sure. Today, Türkiye is the country that is exporting the highest number of TV series in the world after the United States of America. Now, Türkiye is a brand of great cultural influence.

Today, we are hosting valuable branding experts and academicians from all over the world, valuable stakeholders, and representatives of the 'Türkiye' brand from every sector. During our two-day forum, we hope to offer you the finest experiences that come to your mind when you think of Türkiye. "Meet the true colours of Türkiye, meet Türkiye welcoming peace, hope and the new century." Once again, I would like to thank you for your participation and greet you with respect.



**FIRST
SESSION**

Global Trends, Changes, and Transformations in Nation Branding



Yusuf Erim

Editor at Large, TRT World | Moderator



Jose Filipe Torres

CEO, Bloom Consulting



Gustavo Koniszczew

Managing Director of
FutureBrand Hispanic
America



Muhterem İlgüner

Director of Brand Finance
Türkiye

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Global Trends, Changes,
and Transformations in
Nation Branding**



Yusuf Erim

Editor at Large, TRT World | Moderator



01

So as our panelists are coming to the stage, I'll give a brief introduction. We have Jose Filipe Torres, the CEO of Bloom Consulting, the gentleman sitting to the left of me. Sitting in the middle is Gustavo Koniszczcer, the Latin America Director of FutureBrand. And on the very end is the Türkiye Director of Brand Finance, Muhterem İlgüner.

Thank you very much. Now, before I open the floor to our guests who have presentations on nation branding, a topic that concerns everyone either directly or indirectly.

Every single citizen, civilian, or official of a country is part of that brand. Everyone is a citizen diplomat. Everyone communicates with someone projecting that brand. And hopefully, inside your presentations today, and afterwards, if we have time for some questions, we're gonna get a much deeper understanding of how countries brand themselves and what tools they use. So, without further ado, I want to give the floor to Mr. Torres to open with his presentation. Thank you very much.





Overview of Nation Branding
Strategies, Country
Perceptions and Indexes

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Overview of Nation
Branding Strategies,
Country Perceptions and
Indexes**



Yusuf Erim
Editor at Large, TRT World |
Moderator

P A R T I C I P A N T S



Jose Filipe Torres
CEO, Bloom
Consulting



02

Jose Filipe Torres

Thank you. So, it's a very good question, and I think it's really important to understand what is a nation brand. That's the million-dollar question. "What is a nation brand?" And there is really no big consensus about what is a nation brand. There are many definitions. It's the image, it's the perception, it's so on and so forth.

So we try to use a slide that explains what a nation brand is. So a nation brand is this. It's where you say the name of the country, the name of the city even. Because it's also for city branding. It's the emotions, it's the feelings it generates. So when I hear the name Türkiye, or when I hear the name of any other country, what is that emotion? What is that perception that is generating? This perception is extremely important for 5 groups of stakeholders.

We talk about exports. So people that buy the product from that country. We talk about foreign direct investment, we talk about tourism, we talk about talent, and we also talk about prominence, which is the general reputation of the country in the eyes of global citizens. So a nation brand is very important because the perception and what these audiences have, the perception they have about these countries or cities influence the willingness to visit, to invest, to work, and so forth.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

And it's really important for countries to understand so they can manage this. A very important component as well is the difference between nation branding and nation marketing. So we talk about nation brand, what is a nation brand, but nation branding is actually the act of managing and building and sometimes shifting perceptions about that nation or about that city.

But it's very different from nation marketing. It's a completely different thing. They're two separate things. And maybe here in this panel, you know the difference, but when you go out there, the difference is slim to none. There's a big confusion between nation branding and nation marketing. They are two completely different things.

First and foremost, nation branding is something that comes first. Comes first, in terms of sequence of events. And nation marketing is something that comes after.

When we talk about nation branding, nation branding is about perception, and when we talk about nation marketing, it's about demand, generating demand. One is to build perceptions, it's to work on these perceptions, and the other one is about to build demand.

Perception is really built through actions, activities, and policies. And, demand is generated by offers, by promotion. When we go into perception it is really about managing emotion and reputation. And when we talk about demand, it's about leading generation and transaction.

Now, when we talk about all this, and if you are a policy maker, if you are the president of the country you say: "Why do I care about emotion and reputation?" I care about the next one, which is about the transactional part, economic impact. Because, you know, it's public money, so I want to see the return. So I just should go to the right one.

"Why should I care about the left one (perception)?" Because better perception leads to better demands. Without a good perception, without a positive perception, you are not able to generate demands. So, I'm going to talk predominantly, about perception. The question is: "How can you quantify perception?" If you cannot measure perception, why is it important? Because I can say it's very good for generating demand, but

how important is that? And that's the million-dollar question, right? So, understanding the value of perception. How much does perception influence the transactional, economic, and social impact of the country?

Today you have approximately 900 thousand queries around the world about nation branding and city branding themes. So every year you have around the world people searching for a million times, almost a million times a year, topics related to city branding. Including city marketing nation branding, nation marketing all those topics around there.

You will see that the break approximately is 65% on nation branding, and the other part is about nation marketing. What's important to see here is that only 2% of all those million searches, so 15,000 searches, are generated by the sector about measurements. So there are 15,000 queries about how to measure nation brands.

When people search for this topic, whenever they look for this information, they land in predominantly two places. Consultancies, like ours, or academic papers. The two big depository, of course, there are many other platforms, but these are the leaders that host most of the academic papers, which is Google Scholar and ResearchGate.

There are 360 million, research papers, not about nation branding, but in general hosted here. Out of those, you have 12,000 papers about nation and city branding. You have 0.1 approximately, only 100 papers about measurements. It's very, very few.

So how to measure nation brands and what is the method to measure nation brands currently? Today, you will see that there are many indexes that measure nation brands in many shapes or forms.

And all these indexes you see here, all these rankings you see here, are very, very important. Because they raise questions, and they're really important. All of them are very important. Some with some methodology, others with another. But they're important because they launch questions.

People start asking: "Why am I in that position? What's happening there?" It brings the uncomfortable conversation about where we are. So they are very, very important because they raise questions. And then you will

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

see questions like: “How do I change perception?” “Why do I have that type of perception?” “What does this brand provide to the country?” and so on and so forth. So these are the questions that are very important and keep the sector alive and keep this conversation alive. But the problem is that it does not provide answers. Right. So, “Can I change the perception? How can I work?” And because you cannot generate answers, we cannot have answers. And questions like these are legitimate.

This is very important: “Why should I invest in nation branding and in perception if I have roads to build or schools to build?” And these generate other types of questions. And marketing gurus start talking. It only works if you do it this way, my way, right? So with this in mind, we have decided to develop a study that is not commissioned by any country. And that we’re going to give it for free for the sector. We are still in the process of developing this study. It’s a study that has been carried on for the last year, year and a half.

And the objective of this study is exactly this: Understanding how much positive perceptions about a place impact economic and social performance. And the second objective is how much and what are the things that countries are doing that really influence perception that can shift perception.

We are only in objective number one, we don’t have yet answers, but I’m going to share some things with you about the first objective of our study.

What I’m going to show you is three things. Number one: What is perception? It raises this question. You hear this a lot. It’s about the perception of other countries, but what are the elements that build perception? What are the things that influence perception? What is more important? Is there, you know, is it people like you were saying it very well about the ambassadors and so on?

Is it the promotion? Is it what, what are the things that influence perception? So we did a study about the elements that constitute perception. And I’m going to share with you some numbers about the impact of perception on willingness: willingness to invest, willingness to visit, on the willingness to buy products from.

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Countries Regions and Cities

This same correlation observed when analyzing separately the willingness to visit, do business or work in the country

Correlation between general perception (1-Very bad, 3-Moderate, 5-Very Good) of a country and willingness to visiting, investing or working in the country



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And last but not least, I'm going to give you just a glimpse, because it's not concluded yet, about how those types of perceptions or the elements that constitute the overall perception, pardon the technical juncture here, but, how much those elements that constitute perception, which ones are influencing more the overall perception of a country or not.

So, this study was developed in conjunction with City Nation Place and also two academic institutions. We're still working on this. Bloom Consulting is the main partner and the one that is financing this, but we're gonna give it for free for everyone so that every country, and every city can use.

And included in this study, it's extremely important, that we involve the countries, the regions, and the cities. So in the next slide, you will see that we have 48 countries, regions, and cities. Involved in the study providing data because there's no data out there. So it's very important that the countries are involved.

You see Türkiye is there as well. And many cities around the world. So we're going to talk first about what constitutes perception. The elements you see here are the most important elements that contribute to the perception of countries, regions, and cities.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

These are what we call the 13 clouds. These are the clouds that, as a country, one has to measure to understand how you are performing, from a perception point of view, in all of these 13 clouds. Who says this? It's not us, but it's the countries, regions, and cities involved in the study. So, after using a multi-criteria decision analysis process, we have reached a consensus around the world, a global consensus about the things that constitute perception about the country, a region, and a city.

This is very important because you, of course, we're all here. We love this topic. We love this conversation. And probably this is not so surprising for you, but the minute you go outside and you say, well, I have to work on my perception about foreign affairs or at the educational level, the press, the journalists start asking questions about why this, why not the other, etc.

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Countries, Regions and Cities

13 Clouds



So it's very important that we have a base to work on that each country in any part of the world (is involved). All of these affect differently the perception of countries, regions, and cities. So, all that said, let's have a look a little bit about a couple of countries, specifically Türkiye, and how much the perception is affecting or influencing the willingness to.

What you see here is an axis of the horizontal line is the perception of countries. So you see here from 1.5 to 4.5, these are lovemark perceptions. So on the 1.5 is very, very negative, the 4.5 is very, very, very positive, right? Very few have 4.5 and none have 5.

So the scale actually is from 0 to 5. Now, what you see here on the vertical axis is the willingness to invest in a country, the willingness to visit the country, the willingness to buy products, to live, to relocate to the country. How much perception is affecting the willingness of global citizens to go to a specific country or not, right?

This is the countries and for now, we have the countries, but we're also working on the cities. And what you have here is the perception of these countries. What is fascinating about this slide and for the ones that are not fascinated about data as much as we are, but, but what is really interesting at this slide is this line you see here, this dotted line here, this is the automatic calculation showing that there is a correlation between perception and willingness.

The R, you see on the top right, again for the non-mathematical people here, so the closest you get to 1, and you see it's 0.86, is very, very close to 1. So it shows that it's bulletproof. It shows that there is a correlation between whatever we want to demonstrate. This is commonly accepted in other industries and other measurements, right?

Not so much for perception, and this is the first time in such a way it's done. There are other ways that are being done, but not like this. So you see that there is a trend and that all the dots are very close to this line. And this shows that there is this mathematical correlation between perception influencing the willingness to, right?

But if you go the, on the increase of the perception, and then this is very interesting. You see here, increase the perception of a decimal. So 0.1,

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

right? So imagine you move from. So if you move from 2.5 to 2.6, a decimal, you automatically increase by 3.3% the willingness to visit, to work, etc. in the country. In other words, you move 0.5, so from 2 to 2.5, you increment 15% value and at one point, it's 30%. It's a lot. And if you see this, for instance, from a continental approach, this is different. And here we're seeing Türkiye. You see where Türkiye is on the study.

So Türkiye currently has a 3.2 perception, which is a moderately positive perception internationally. And it generates a willingness. It has a 60% willingness of people to invest and work. This is a good mark. When I say relatively positive, 3.2 is a good mark. And you see other brands, very strong brands, for instance, the UAE, or you have other brands there that are also at par, right?

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Countries Regions and Cities

Impact of perception on willingness (tangible)



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So this is, this is how much the Türkiye brand is performing for the economy. You have a 3.2 perception and it's increasing or it's providing a 62% willingness to invest, work, and so on. And you can see that this number is different by continent. So you can see that the brand, for instance, affects a lot or much more, in Europe than if you go into Asia, the Middle East.

It's, you see there the correlation on the right, so it's a 2% change, and on here it's a 4% change. And it affects differently on the objectives you have about the country. So for instance, for visitation, it's 3.1%. So one decimal improves. If, Türkiye improves the perception of a decimal tourists' willingness to visit the country will increase 3.2%.

We have a 3.1% on investing. And work and live is nearly a 4%. A decimal improvement. A decimal. This is like Formula One. When you have the first car and the last car and there's only one or two seconds difference, that's the kind of race we're talking about here.

So all those elements I mentioned about the perception about the country, all those clouds, all the elements that constitute perception, how much they impact the overall perception.

This is just an example of a country, but you see, this is a specific country, country 1, and you see that country 1 has this perception distributed across those clouds, right? So it is a way to monitor the elements that constitute perception validated by 48 countries, regions, and cities. Look at what happens when you decrease the perception of that same, country or region or city, or if you increase.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

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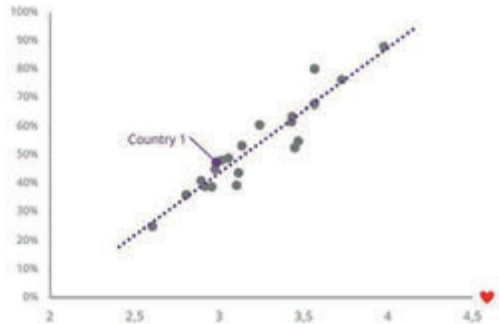
Countries Regions and Cities

Clouds influence general perception of a country

Clouds perceptions

1- Very negative, 3-Moderate, 5-Very positive

— Country 1



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In this case, it's increased. So you see that the cloud. The mark you see on the left, on the spider, has increased automatically and the perception of the country as a whole has changed. So, what we are doing next right now is to work on what are the elements, what are the most important ones for countries to work on based on where they are, based on their history, and so on.

So this is not equal for every country right? So this is why we say that now, and this is a trend and as something we've seen and also the panelists, I'm going to talk for sure about this. The measurement is really an important component to make this even more professional, to make even the nation brand sector more professional.

Because believe me, everyone here is very much aligned. Understand the importance of this. You cross that door. There are other priorities. There are roads to build for people who have difficulties reaching the end of the month or have whatever, and that's really their priority. This become a nice thing to have.

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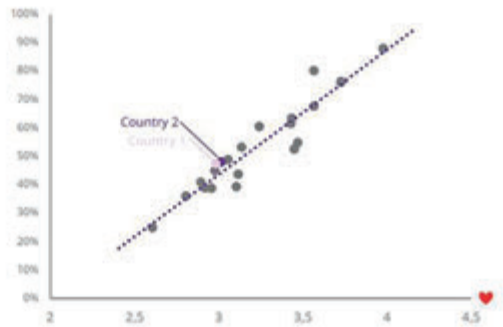
Countries Regions and Cities

Clouds influence general perception of a country

Clouds perceptions

1- Very negative, 3-Moderate, 5-Very positive

— Country 1 — Country 2



And then you may say, “No, but we’re going to invest a lot.” And you can say, “Okay, how much are you going to invest?” 1 million, but yes, 10 million, 10 million, I don’t know 100 million, definitely not. Why not? Because if it brings value and gives a return to the country, those 100 million will generate much more and that’s the objective of the study.

So, this is a trend and with this data, with this information, this mindset, it’s what we say: “Türkiye, it’s time to shine.” Thank you very much.

Yusuf Erim

Thank you for that presentation. I greatly enjoyed it. How up-to-date is the data in the presentation?

Jose Filipe Torres

The data is this year’s. So we expect to have the study concluded in the first quarter of this year. At least the first objective is just, to close it. But the data you’re seeing here is from two months ago. So it’s relatively new.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Yusuf Erim

So 3.2, that's a good score. You're saying it's a good score.

Jose Filipe Torres

It's a good starting point. I would say, okay, but that means there's still a lot to improve as well. So hopefully, we will see Türkiye shine even more in the upcoming period.

Now our next speaker Mr. Gustavo Koniszczcer. He has a presentation as well. Thank you.

Yusuf Erim

However, there is still plenty of progress to be made, as we understand. We hope that Türkiye will shine even stronger in the next period. I will now proceed to our next panellist, Gustavo Koniszczcer.



Nation Branding
Methodologies

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Nation Branding
Methodologies**



Yusuf Erim
Editor at Large, TRT World |
Moderator

P A R T I C I P A N T S



Gustavo Koniszcz
Managing Director of FutureBrand
Hispanic America



03

Gustavo Koniszczzer

Good morning, everyone. I would like to ask if somebody knows, besides the fact that it was my nephew's birthday, what happened on November 15th just one month ago.

No worries. Nobody necessarily knows exactly. But what happened was that actually the population, the world population, became 8 billion people. So, what does it mean or what's the relationship between that data and ourselves? And actually it's because those 8 billion in the world today will somehow be informed by brands and when we talk about brands we normally think of these kinds of brands: The commercial brands the multinational brands. But you know what I learned in Peru many years ago that brands are not an invention of the 20th or 21st century. I was visiting so-called Waka.

Waka is a monument. It's a communal monument. And I've seen some bricks down the road. And I've asked the guide, what were those marks on the bricks? And she said, actually, every family who was building the communal religious monument had to produce an amount of bricks every year as an offering, as a gift to the community.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD



And the way they identified was through those little marks that are on top of the bricks. So it was, as far as I understand, the first branding exercise I've seen and it's indigenous. I mean, it's part of the Peruvian reality. And that's actually a way to build the story because each of those families has a story.

So at the end of the day, brands mean stories. Stories that will of course be living in our minds, in our 8 billion minds from now on. And when we translate that to countries, to nations, we start talking about nation stories, country stories, city stories, and place stories. At the end of the day, the name of the game is "Place Brand" or "Place Branding".

When we translate once more that into countries, and nations, I think that there are some 200 nations right now. The exact number according to the UN I think it's 193, until last week. And each country has its own story. Each country has its own right to communicate that story and shout out what's good in it and what are the reasons to visit that country, to work with the country, to trade with that country.

We, at FutureBrand, we've worked recently, meaning in the last two decades, with different country brands and also with place brands and brands of origin, and we learned that at the end of the day when we talk about place branding, the purpose of each place brand, again, nation, country, place, city, etc., is to position in the minds of potential audiences.

So what is important is to understand who those audiences are. Tourists, traders, visitors, immigrants, investors, and so on. But always having something in mind, a clear methodology, a clear way to approach the problem. I mean, it's not just I communicate, I say my name and that's it. Every one of these factors are interconnected.

When we talk about, as I mentioned before, a country, region, city, or place, we somehow refer to things that are connected and will feed each other. If we want to talk about Hollywood for example, it will be connected to the city, to the place, to the region, to the state, and to the country. And imagine that in the case of Türkiye. Türkiye, İstanbul, or whatever is related to what the country has to communicate.

The FutureBrand Country Index is one of the studies that of course, take care of this discipline particularly, and we've been doing that for many years, and in any case, we always think of brands as two-fold compositions. On one hand purpose on the other experience. That's like a guiding line for each of the brands we created. It's not just for countries places or cities. It's for everything. There's always an intangible part and a tangible one. A strategic, and a creative or designing part. When we translate that into, country, place, and city branding, again, we have similar methodologies. I mean defining which are the attributes, and dimensions. But can be summarized into made-in value system, and business potential. That's for the purpose part and for the experience part, tourism, heritage, culture, and quality of life. And back to the countries, the flags. Each one has its own radar chart, and its own way of building the brand's perception in everybody's mind. But at some point when we analyze that, the last issue has these results. This is the top ten. And what we've learned is that, first of all, countries who properly invest in their brand reap the benefits. So, it's easy and obvious like that. But it's a way to understand that country branding, properly done, pays.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Secondly, for a country to be viewed successful as a country brand, it's seen as confident, influential, politically stable, safe, honest, good for business, independent, trustworthy, respected, etc. So all the good things that one knows that are important, of course must be included and it's like one has to behave in a way that others will recognize. And will take into consideration when there's a decision to invest a decision to visit a decision to trade with to communicate with, to go to, to live to study, and so on.

That's fine. That's excellent. But we all know what happened two or three years ago. I would say two and a half years ago and empty spaces. No tourism at all. An important hit in every industry in the world. So, we had to start behaving in a different way. Not yet gone. I mean, still, in some places we still have to be careful.

So that's why we started to review the way we understand country brands and place brands. We started to think of these or name these as crucial stories for critical times because we are still in a critical timing and the conclusions and some of the learnings from the study are that on one hand in the post-COVID-19 world country brands matter more than ever because we cannot control events but we do or we can control our country's resilience. Understanding resilience and when nations that have invested in their country brands are in some cases stronger in the eyes of the world than 2019. If you want the learnings for the future after this tremendous impact that this pandemic has had. On the one hand (there is) life pursuit. We've redefined, we are redefining somehow the quality of life term, because now we say that we are no longer waiting so long to make some decisions.

Sustainability. I mean, to be environmentally friendly. This is a must from now on. Should have been always a must, but in any case now more than ever we have to take care of this when we are communicating and when we are presenting ourselves to the world.

DEI: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, another super must in some specific markets, it's important for some specific definitions. You have to be careful. You have to communicate very openly. You have to be respectful, of

course. No more tolerance for some specific, conditions and activities and the economic dominance versus country appeal once more.

The famous GDP measurement way of understanding countries is no longer the only option to understand what a country provides us. Or what a country's proposition or purpose is. And then what we start looking at is these kinds of elements value system, business potential, quality of life, heritage, culture, tourism.

It's a mix. It's a constantly evolving, range of different attributes that one has to consider in order to go to an end. I will leave you with math formula, which, while you try to see what I mean by this, W times five plus C times five. Well, actually it's a way to try to understand how to work properly in the country branding arena.

Purpose and experience. Remember I mentioned these two big two things that we are always taking into consideration when we work in whichever the brand could be. Well, we'll change the P and the E for planning and execution. And once more, this is like going to work for the specific demand.

And when we talk about planning, we are talking about the five W's. And we are talking, when we are talking about execution, we are talking about the five C's. This is like the takeout of the class today. In planning what the five W's are where. "Where" means what do you want to promote? It could be a country, it could be a city, a region, a venue, a place, a region between two countries, or a specific sector of a city, a city, a group of people, or a community. So there are a lot of things related to the place that's going to be represented by this place branding activity or exercise. The second W is the "why".

The "why" means why I want to communicate this, why I want to communicate my place. Is it just for tourism? Is it a tourism campaign or it's for business or it's because I want to invite people to come to live. As I have just read this morning, New Zealand is trying to create 75 thousand new positions. So in that case the campaign or the country branding exercise or the idea should be oriented to new people coming to study or to live. Or to cliché, to change a cliché. The third W is, is "what." What is it about?

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Is, is it about to talk about what, what's the main purpose? Or if you want, the driver of the communication.

Yusuf Erim

Our last speaker is Mr. Muhterem İlgüner, Türkiye Director of Brand Finance.



Performance Criteria
in Nation Brand Index
Calculations: Türkiye in
Indexes

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

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Yusuf Erim
Editor at Large, TRT World |
Moderator

P A R T I C I P A N T S



Muhterem İlgüner
Director of Brand Finance
Türkiye



04

Muhterem İlgüner

Brand Finance is the world's leading brand valuation company with a 25-year-long history. This year, 100 sectoral reports are planned to be published, which includes country reports. The values of over 5 thousand brands are being calculated to compile these reports. Brand Finance has been evaluating country brands for 12 years and publishing reports under the name "Nation Brands". They applied the rights fee approach used for commercial names to nation brands, with minor changes. For the last four years, they have been measuring countries' soft power and publishing it as an index under the title "Soft Power Index." In their nation brand equity calculation, they are using the soft power score as the brand power. And this means measuring the perception, or the soft underbelly, of brand power, which I will explain a little later.

In this methodology, another important indicator for calculating a nation's brand value is the Brand Strength Index. This index consists of three main parts. One of them asks a nation, "What do you have? What

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

assets do you have?” The second is, “What kind of perception has all this created in the eyes of the people of the world?” The third section asks:

“How did the country evaluate this perception, how was it managed, and how did it perform?” It all begins with the calculation of the gross national product (GDP).

The GDP calculations are published annually by international organizations for every country. This methodology determines the extent to which a nation brand contributes to the production and sales output of the entire nation after a year of hard work. This methodology, known as the “brand impact ratio,” acknowledges three primary economic sectors. The first is the raw materials; the second is the products made from these raw materials; and finally, the third is the sale of these products. The weighted average of all of these is combined with the brand power to determine and say, “This is the nation brand value right now.” This was a very brief summary. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the nation’s assets in comparison to those of other nations? This is what it aims to calculate. These calculations consider business and trade, governance, international relations, culture and heritage, media and communication, education and science, people and values, and a sustainable future. Perception: What is the global community’s opinion of a nation brand? Over 100 thousand people were surveyed online and asked forty different questions. For example, what are the opinions of 109 out of 110 countries regarding Türkiye? They express their opinions on these forty questions. These are then converted into a score. There are three main topics and eight sub-topics. One of them is, “Do you feel this nation close to you? Do you know about it? Do you recognize it? Are you acquainted with it?” Second, “Do you think this nation is credible?” Third, “Does this nation have an impact on world events? Does it have an impact on the environment, development, economy, humanity, and so forth? Aside from the three main topics, there are eight sub-topics: How is this nation doing in terms of business and trade? Is it easy to do business with them? How is their governance? Are they transparent? How do they perform in international relations? Are they utilitarian? How about culture and heritage? Apart from heritage, what are their own cultural activities? How is

the media? How is communication? Journalists, academics from various branches, capital market analysts, and NGO representatives from these 109 countries are asked questions on these topics. Then the performance aspect is taken into consideration. In other words, the extent to which this perception influences the nation brand power through its management. What are the sources for this? Naturally, the sources which are accessible. As you can see, in terms of investment, these sources are the United Nations, UNESCO, the World Economic Forum, the World Bank, the OECD, the Olympic Committee, and so forth. The most important research is the Global Soft Power Index. Over 100 thousand people in 100 markets are surveyed about brands from 121 countries, and various questions are asked about 40 different topics. This determines the global perception of the country. The fourth meeting will be held this year on March 2nd, and notable keynote speakers will attend. I would like to take this occasion to extend an invitation to those who wish to attend. You can attend both physically and online. The keynote speaker of the first meeting was Ban Ki-moon, the former Secretary General of the United Nations followed by Hillary Clinton, and we are waiting to see who it will be this year. Returning to sub-topics like business and trade, how easy is it to conduct business in this nation? Is the economy strong and stable? Are there product and service brands that the world loves? What is its potential for future growth? These are the things being investigated. Are there internationally respected leaders in governance? Does the nation have stable politics and good leadership? Are the ethical standards high? Is the corruption low? Is it a safe and reliable nation? Does it adhere to human rights and the law? The nation's impact on diplomatic relations and international relations is investigated. This includes how helpful it is to countries in times of need and its general relations with other countries. In terms of culture and heritage, how effective is it in the arts and performances? Are there foods that are popular among the global community? For those interested in gastronomy, I would like to note that Türkiye has a very high score and world perception here. Is it a place worth seeing? This is also a high score for Türkiye. Does it have a rich cultural heritage? Türkiye is almost in the top five. Is it a pioneer in sports or an attractive lifestyle? These are the things being explored. Under media and communication:

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Is it easy to communicate in this nation? Does the media follow world events closely? Is the media effective? Is the media credible? This is what it looks for. The questions asked in science and education are: Does the nation lead in science? Are there people leading in science? Is there a strong education system? Does it lead in the technology and innovation fields? Is it investing in space exploration? Is this nation generous with people and values? Is it a fun nation? Is it a happy one? Is it friendly? Is it dependable? Is it tolerant and non-discriminatory, meaning does it exclude anyone? Recently, questions regarding a sustainable future have been added. Is the nation committed to safeguarding the environment? Is it taking actions? Are investments being made for sustainable cities and transportation? Does the nation invest in green energy and technology? Does it contribute to the fight against climate change?

Here, you can see the research on Türkiye. Türkiye's brand value in the last 12 years is the blue line you see above. It is based on its percentage of the national gross domestic product. However, I would like to draw your attention to the flat, unchanging line of brand power at the bottom. As you can see, Türkiye's brand power has been hovering around 60 points out of 100 for the last 12 years. Last year, it was 67.2. Although there was some movement last year, it remained on the same course for 12 years. Why is this important for Türkiye's brand power? GDP cannot be under a nation's control. A war may occur this year, and in another, a pandemic may occur. A nation will always face external challenges. However, the country has complete control over its brand power. Türkiye is 28th in terms of brand power with a score of 67.2. Canada has the highest score of 81.8. I would like to state this: Even if the GDP of Türkiye remains constant, when the brand value of Türkiye moves from the 60s to the 70s, there will be a change in the brand value. Does Türkiye possess any advantages that would facilitate this outcome? It possesses numerous advantages. We have geographical indication products, including 34 registered cheeses and nearly 1,700 geographical indications. We support 250 brands through TURQUALITY. We have 100 cities with populations over 100 thousand and a coastline of 8,333 kilometres. Overall, I find the Türkiye Brand Office to be very appealing. When we can handle it in an

integrated and harmonious manner, the brand power score can rise from the 60s to the 70s and possibly even the 80s in the future. As a Turkish person, I want to hope for and expect this to happen.

Yusuf Erim

Thank you so much for listening.



**SECOND
SESSION**

The Role of Media in Nation Branding: Anadolu Agency Brand



Serdar Karagöz

Anadolu Agency President &
Chief Executive Officer

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**The Role of Media
in Nation Branding:
Anadolu Agency Brand**

PARTICIPANTS



Serdar Karagöz
Anadolu Agency President &
Chief Executive Officer



01

Simon Anholt, a consultant to international corporations, introduced the concept of nation branding to the public approximately thirty years ago. Anholt was inspired by the fact that in the era of globalisation, nations, like corporations, are in competition and seek to distinguish themselves from other nations. Anholt contended that each nation should establish a brand similar to international corporations, which would dictate its international image.

It is crucial to be able to maintain pace with the rapid developments of this era, manage its speed, and even be a pioneer in the current world, where globalisation continues to have an increasing impact. One of the most critical actors at this juncture is the media, which is referred to as the fourth estate in developed democracies. The media is increasingly becoming one of the most effective tools for a nation to establish its intended brand image.

As media professionals, specifically those who produce the information, we influence the public's perception through our work. We express our opinions based on our perceptions of what we consider to be good or bad and what we enjoy or dislike. The significance of the truth is dwindling, especially in this era. In this so-called post-truth era, perceptions

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

have become far more important than facts. So, what influences our opinions? We can answer this question in a multitude of ways. However, among all these answers, the media is the most inclusive actor that impacts society as a whole. This is reflected in society, as we form these opinions based on our own perspectives and the meanings we attribute to them as content producers in both conventional media and new media. Numerous instances of accomplishments in nation branding and trends can be identified when examining history. Germany and Japan, two nations that were on the verge of extinction following the Second World War, emerged from their tragic circumstances with a successful nation branding strategy. Today, we know Germany and Japan for their robust and influential brands rather than their tragic histories. These two states, which engaged in a rebranding strategy, stood out for their development and industry rather than for being defeated in the Second World War. By building a brand, they succeeded in shaping the image of their nation in the way they wanted. A strong nation or state is not even necessary for a successful nation branding strategy.

In recent history, nation branding has not only been used by developed countries but also by “non-existent” nations that are still in the process of building their own identities. In 1968, for example, Italian engineer Giorgia Rosa founded the Republic of Rose Island on a 400-square-metre platform. He claimed he was going to establish a country on a platform and promote it to the rest of the world. He sent a proposal to the United Nations and campaigned. He even received the recognition of the European Council. Unfortunately, the Italian Navy eventually invaded the island and annihilated it. Although the Republic of Rose Island did not survive to this day, it demonstrated the importance and attention-gathering power of the nation branding strategy.

Today, media organisations play an important role in creating the nation brand image that we desire. The media serves as a showcase for the nation brand. Türkiye Brand’s ability to be expressed better and stronger in the international arena becomes a lot more functional with strong and branded media. This is where Anadolu Agency comes into play in the nation branding strategy.

Under the leadership of Ghazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1920, Anadolu Agency was founded by Halide Edip and Yunus Nadi during years of the national struggle. Its founding vision was to be the voice for the Anatolian people's righteous struggle all over the world. Over the course of 103 years, Anadolu Agency has both witnessed and participated in critical turning points in our country. Anadolu Agency broadcasts and creates content in thirteen languages and has offices and broadcasting centres in 39 countries.

Together with our freelance journalists, we operate in 144 countries. While carrying out our operations, we act in accordance with our mission of "making the righteous voice of Anatolia heard all over the world" in our founding philosophy. The mutual collaboration of fate between our country and the agency provides us with this motivation: strengthening the Anadolu Agency brand also strengthens the Türkiye Brand.

So what are we doing to bolster the Anadolu Agency brand? Allow me to express this more clearly with an example. For instance, there was an incident in Dakar, the capital of Senegal. Senegalese police will arrive on the scene, depending on the nature of the incident, followed by an ambulance. After them, Anadolu Agency arrives at the scene. Sometimes, this order changes, and Anadolu Agency becomes the first to reach the scene. Anadolu Agency reports, photographs, and creates news content about events in Dakar, Africa, or anywhere else in the world, and distributes it to the global media. The Anadolu Agency does not merely receive reporting from other global media organisations and present it to the Turkish public; rather, it reports directly from the scene to the entire world with its reporters and camerapeople. But why is creating content from almost anywhere in the world and reporting it to the rest of the world important for our nation's branding? The UK's Reuters, France's AFP, in other words, the world's leading news agencies do not have such large investments in Senegal. As Anadolu Agency, when an incident occurs in Latin America, for example, in Columbia, our Bogota office arrives at the scene. Because we are assertive as an international news agency. Because Türkiye is an assertive country, and Türkiye has become the voice and force of distant regions besides its borders. Therefore, Anadolu Agency has to be active in Bogota, Colombia, and make investments. These investments have

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

a direct relationship with the Türkiye Brand. Türkiye had declared the current century “the Century of Africa”.

Accordingly, we, as Anadolu Agency, contribute to the “Türkiye” brand by setting up offices in those regions along with our reporting activities. Our job is not limited to covering incidents in different parts of the world. We also contribute to the public diplomacy activities of our country by broadcasting in 13 languages as a news agency. Being one of the leading news agencies in the international news league, we represent our country in the international arena.

As Anadolu Agency, we contribute to the Türkiye Brand by setting up offices in many locations worldwide along with our reporting activities. The diplomacy conducted by Türkiye during the Ukraine-Russia War helped Anadolu Agency stand out among other international news agencies and become the world’s most influential news agency. Anadolu Agency has become the agency that communicates the picture of the war in its most genuine and plain form, both from the sides of Ukraine and Russia, while some of the international news agencies failed to report or create content on the Russian side. In Ukraine, Anadolu Agency correspondents have achieved great success in terms of journalism. The photo of Olena Kurilo taken by our correspondent Wolfgang Schwan was used by the world media as the iconic photo of the war. Journalism can be a job that can sometimes change the course of events beyond conveying mere information and has a vast burden of responsibility. Our correspondent Ali Koçak who reported on the atrocities committed during the Bosnian War in 1995, even though he was taken prisoner by the Chetniks, performed a crucial mission not only as a journalist but also from a humanitarian perspective. In 2013, our reporters crossed the Bangladesh-Myanmar border in stealth with a rowboat and arrived at the Arakan (Rakhine) region, showing the tragedy of Muslims in Arakan to the world with complete genuinity.

As Anadolu Agency, a news agency with its headquarters founded in Ankara in 1920 prior to the proclamation of the Republic as well as the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye, this is how we contribute to the international perception of Türkiye. Simon Anholt states that the process of branding has three stages. He categorises them as strategy, execution,



ayrımçılık /hattı


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AYRIMCILIK



Üstün zekalı çocukları öğretmenleri "problem çocuk" olarak görüyor, akranları dışlıyor

"Üstün zekalı çocuklar fark edilmediği takdirde ilgisiz bırakılma veya sürekli sınıftan çıkarılma gibi ayrımcılığa maruz kalabiliyor. Fark edildiklerinde ise öğretmenler çocuklara çok fazla ödev verebiliyor."

Diğer Haberler



Numan Kurtulmuş, "KL SUMMIT" Kuala Lumpur Forumu 6. Yıllık Konferansı'nda konuştu



İsraili milletvekili: "Bir İsraili anne ağlayacağına 1000 Filistinli anne ağlasın"



İslam İşbirliği Teşkilatı ve Pakistan, bölgesel ve uluslararası meseleleri görüştü

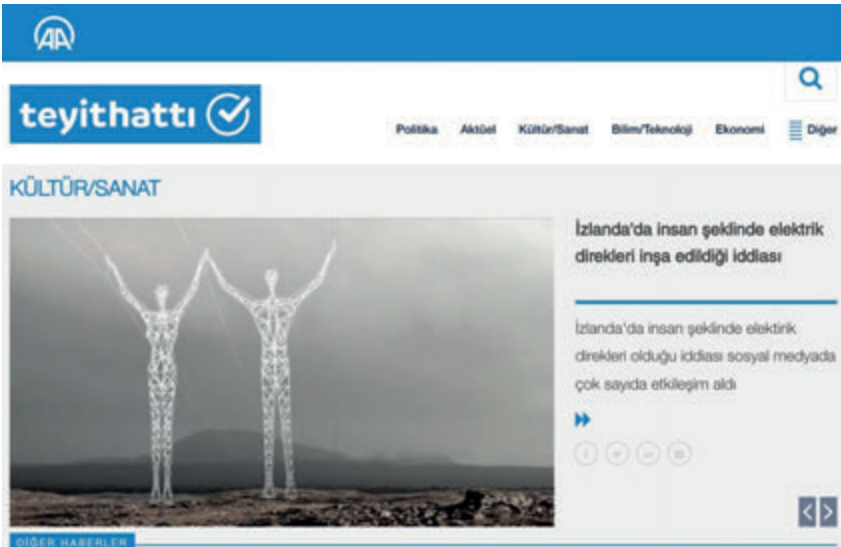
and symbolic actions. As Anadolu Agency, we have built our basic strategy on the axis of internationalisation. Within this context, we have launched our new building in Istanbul as the centre of our international news.

We have set making Anadolu Agency a more competitive brand in the international arena as our main goal. Last year, working as a "news factory," we increased our annual content production to 2.1 million. Thus, we have become one of the world's most content-producing news agencies. From videos to podcasts, photographs to news, we are creating content of many types and serving it to the whole world. Employees of Anadolu Agency produce about 5,000 pieces of content a day from all over the world.

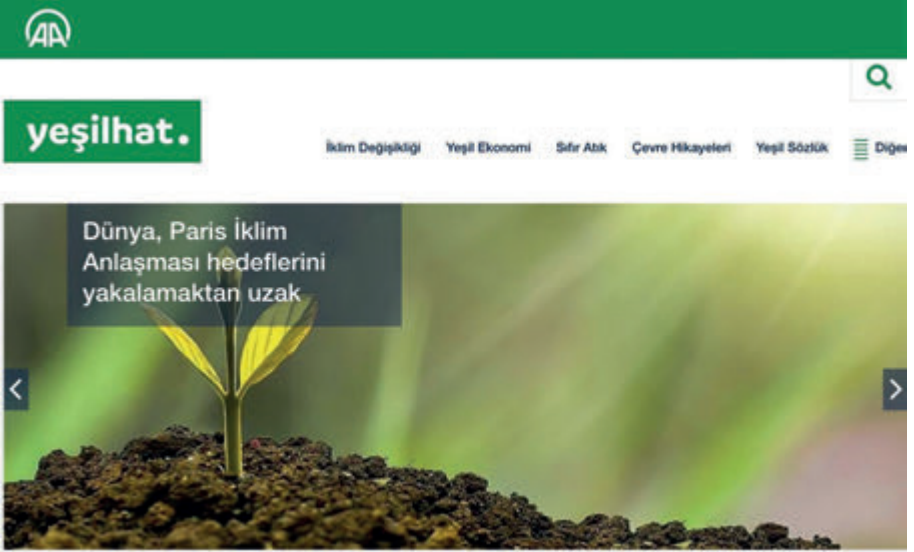
NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

As Anadolu Agency, we see it as our mission to be a source of reference and a pioneer in the field of journalism, and we shape our branding activities in this direction. We do not limit our activities to the field of journalism; we also work to elevate our brand value in various fields. The İstanbul Photo Awards, which we have been hosting since 2015, is one of them, and today it has become one of the world's strongest brands in international news photography. The jury of the İstanbul Photo Awards consists of Pulitzer Prize winners. 1,971 photographers from 116 different nationalities participated in our contest with 21,148 photographs. Last year's winning photographs were exhibited at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

As Anadolu Agency, we recently launched three new projects to effectively implement our internationalisation strategy. By taking universal human rights as a reference, we launched the Discrimination Line to monitor and report on cases of discrimination around the world and to inform the public about discrimination. With the Discrimination Line, we present to the international arena that Türkiye is in an active position to fight against discrimination in the world. With the mission of "accurate and reliable journalism whose reference is truth," we launched the Fact



The screenshot shows the Anadolu Agency website interface. At the top left is the AA logo. Below it is the 'teyithattı' logo with a checkmark. To the right are navigation tabs for 'Politika', 'Aktüel', 'Kültür/Sanat', 'Bilim/Teknoloji', 'Ekonomi', and 'Diğer'. A search icon is also present. The main content area features a large image of two human-shaped electricity pylons in a landscape. The headline reads 'İzlanda'da insan şeklinde elektrik direkleri inşa edildiği iddiası'. Below the headline is a short text snippet: 'İzlanda'da insan şeklinde elektrik direkleri olduğu iddiası sosyal medyada çok sayıda etkileşim aldı'. There are navigation arrows and a 'DİĞER HABERLER' button at the bottom left of the article preview.



Check Line to combat information pollution and react against disinformation and manipulation.

We established the Green Line to contribute to the fight against climate change and environmental pollution by raising awareness for a more habitable world. Within the context of Green Line, we established the Environment Forum platform, bringing together the world's leading opinion leaders, politicians, and journalists in the field of climate and environment. By discussing the media's responsibilities with the international participants, we have developed solutions against global warming. With this forum organised in Türkiye under the roof of Anadolu Agency, we aimed to contribute to Türkiye Brand from an international media perspective. We have shown the entire world that our country is not indifferent to global issues and that it also develops solutions. In an age where actions speak louder than words, our goal is to strengthen the Anadolu Agency brand with our projects and international initiatives, while increasing the strength of Türkiye Brand in the international arena and contributing to efforts in this direction. We will continue our work in this direction in the upcoming period with our new projects and strong vision.



**THIRD
SESSION**

NATION BRANDING AND GASTRODIPLOMACY



İpek Tekdemir

Policy and Strategic Communication Advisor in
the European Parliament | Moderator



Assoc. Prof. Özge Samancı

Özyeğin University
Faculty Member



Dr. Gönül Paksoy

Gastronomy Expert



Ali Ronay

Chef

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

Nation Branding And Gastrodiplomacy



İpek Tekdemir
Policy and Strategic Communication
Advisor in the European Parliament |
Moderator

PARTICIPANTS



**Assoc. Prof. Özge
Samancı**
Özyeğin University
Faculty Member



Dr. Gönül Paksoy
Gastronomy Expert



Ali Ronay
Chef



01

İpek Tekdemir

Valuable listeners and distinguished panellists, I would like to welcome you all. Thank you for your kind attention and participation. Today, under the headline “Nation Branding and Gastrodiplomacy,” we will discuss food, cuisine, and gastrodiplomacy, one of the most important tools of public diplomacy in the twenty-first century. Three distinguished field-expert panellists will be with us. I would like to thank them for their participation. Allow me to briefly introduce them to you. Head of the Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts at Özyeğin University, Assoc. Prof. Özge Samancı, Gastronomy expert Dr. Gönül Paksoy, and internationally acclaimed Chef Ali Ronay, welcome to you all.

I would like to express once again that I am very excited about this critical forum and event for our country. Gastrodiplomacy is one of the foremost topics that touch my heart. Perhaps it is also the most vibrant and exciting topic after the many tense and stressful days we have had lately. So I am very happy to be here. I would like to extend my thanks to valuable personnel, especially coordinator Nur Özkan Erbay, at the Türkiye Brand Office under the Directorate of Communications, who organised this event. Ms. Nur, allow me to say thank you and ask for a big round of applause for you.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Our topic is “Gastrodiplomacy and the Importance of Food in Twenty-First-Century Public Diplomacy”. Many countries are investing in gastrodiplomacy initiatives to enhance their reputation, recognition, and even tourism revenues. Today, we will explore the significance of gastrodiplomacy in the context of intercultural communication and the enhancement of international cooperation. I can say that we are currently experiencing the benefits of gastrodiplomacy in international relations. I vividly observe this, especially in the projects I personally undertake in the European Union (EU), as well as in the “fusion cuisine” and cuisine promotion events we organise with non-EU countries.

Dear Ms. Samancı, I believe you would agree that culinary practices contribute to the enhancement of our soft power and the reinforcement of our position in diplomatic circles. Currently, nations that acknowledge the determining and regulating influence of cuisine establish it as a state policy that is extensively enforced. For instance, Thailand, Spain, and Italy prioritise the promotion and marketing of their cuisines, particularly during the branding process. During our earlier conversation, Ms. Samancı mentioned Korea. South Korea has been actively promoting its cuisine and has been working on this topic for a long time, making it one of the prominent countries in gastrodiplomacy. This begs the question: What are we doing as Türkiye? Upon reflection, Türkiye already has a very rich history, cuisine, and narrative that originates from the Ottoman Empire. Our discussion today will focus on Türkiye’s utilisation of these opportunities. If I recall correctly, the headline of numerous international news articles was the working dinner that was served during the G20 in 2015. Why do we not apply such examples more extensively and use them in foreign countries? That is what I would like to discuss today.

It is said that moderators should not talk too much. Without further ado, we will begin our panel with Associate Professor Özge Samancı. Before we hear her, I would like to thank you one last time for your participation and hope that our discussion will be fruitful.

Ms. Samancı is a well-known figure in Turkish gastrodiplomacy. Her achievements in education extend to France.

I would like to start by asking you about the terminology of gastrodiplomacy. Thank you.

Assoc. Prof. Özge Samancı

Thank you very much, Ms. İpek. And many thanks to the organisers for this beautiful and timely event. Our panel's topic is priceless and inspirational for future endeavours. First of all, a clear distinction has to be made between the two terms, gastrodiploacy and culinary diplomacy. Actually, I also have a short presentation to accompany my speech. Culinary diplomacy has actually been practiced for centuries, and it is mostly comprised of the official banquets that were hosted by governments and official institutions for foreign dignitaries. Dating back to the Ottoman Empire, we have maintained a strong tradition in this field. There is a change in the language there. Unlike culinary diplomacy, which has been used since the Ottoman Empire, gastrodiploacy has a wider focus. Still in culinary diplomacy, particularly, the feasts hosted for ambassadors at the Ottoman palace were meticulously planned to the finest detail. The ambassadors would be greeted in a grand and opulent imperial setting as soon as they stepped through the palace's second courtyard, where Janissaries were served soup and ceremonial wages (ulûfe) were handed. Before the formal feast, they would receive presents and attend the divan meeting. Numerous itineraries make mention of these. The traditional

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

dishes here represent Ottoman cuisine. This tradition continued until the nineteenth century, when the culinary language changed. During banquets, Turkish cuisine gave way to French cuisine. This is an interesting transition, and you can see this in the examples of late palace menus. Naturally, the desire to send a message to the other side through a dish or to promote cuisine in culinary diplomacy is a phenomenon rooted in the contemporary world. As a result, menus in the nineteenth century featured French cuisine as well. There was no such anticipation after the reorganisation (Tanzimat) period, but the opposite is now required and is being done. It is important to emphasise that menus featuring Turkish cuisine should be developed and are being developed. Then the question is, how does gastrodiploacy differ from culinary diplomacy? Gastrodiploacy involves people from diverse cultures who can communicate with each other through dishes, drinks, or various cuisines, so it is more than just a banquet in a diplomatic setting. This also includes gastrotourism. That's why I believe it is imperative to distinguish between these concepts. Gastrodiploacy is a comprehensive concept that can be pursued through individual efforts and initiatives in both the private and public sectors. As you have indicated, some countries, particularly those in Asia, have been engaged in this field for an extended period of time. Within the framework of a plan and strategy, Thailand, Vietnam, China, Japan, India, and Taiwan have all successfully promoted their own national cuisine brands abroad through campaigns or projects. France and even the United States have started to follow in their footsteps. The "Global Thai" campaign that was launched in 2002 can be given as a prime example of gastrodiploacy in Thailand. Kimchi diplomacy can be an example from South Korea. Of course, they only launched such campaigns for dishes that were prominent in their countries. In fact, while I was reading about these projects, I couldn't help but think to myself, "Why not baklava diplomacy?" India has samosa diplomacy. Malaysia and Peru launched their respective campaigns. Our chef would concur that Peruvian cuisine was alien to us until a few years ago; however, there is now a concept of Peruvian cuisine in Türkiye. It was even incorporated into our curriculum. This is the outcome of a successful campaign. The United States has been practising culinary diplomacy for the last 10 or 15 years. When I was working at the university, an American chef came for a visit.

They said they wanted to promote their cuisine and so on, and then we had an event. France is, of course, a pioneering country in this field. Everyone must have heard of the Goût de France. This event is held once a year all over the world, where French food is prepared and distributed to the public by local restaurants, which contact the consulates and embassies in their cities to participate. It takes place in our country as well. Let me talk about Turkish cuisine now. The book “Turkish Cuisine with Timeless Recipes” that you are holding right now was published about two years ago. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Presidency provided support for the organisation of a Turkish Cuisine Week in conjunction with the book’s publication. And a website for Turkish Cuisine Week was created as well. Ms. Gönül, Arif Bilgin, Günay Kut, Mehmet Öz, and I served as consultants for this book, collaborating with chefs from across the country, and Chef Ali Ronay prepared all the dishes. In my opinion, this book will likely serve as a significant milestone in the development of the framework of the gastrodiploamacy movement in Türkiye, if not its inception.

İpek Tekdemir

Thank you very much. I appreciate your valuable contributions. It is really crucial to convey these concepts to others in an understandable way. As you mentioned, such efforts have been ongoing in Asia for quite some time now. Türkiye’s active involvement in these disciplines started in the 2000s. However, I believe that with your valuable contributions, we can take our efforts in this area further on international platforms and, in particular, gain prominence in the European Union. I will get back to you with my questions in a moment.

And our second esteemed guest is Dr. Gönül Paksoy. Ms. Gönül, thank you so much for attending. While we will discuss the history of cuisine, our chef will discuss the stages of food preparation. Of course, one should not disregard the importance of design and presentation when it comes to food. I know about your work regarding this subject, and I also know that you are working on sustainability. We would like to hear your valuable opinion on aesthetics, presentation, and sustainability. Thank you.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Dr. Gönül Paksoy



When you think about it, cooking is an art, and presentation is also an art. Consequently, using it as a soft power element is also an art. I believe that we should use gastrodplomacy as a soft power element because, when you are hosting a guest at your home and preparing a dinner for them, think about the ways you can influence them. The same example can also be applied to international relations. This is what we aim to accomplish with the book. I would like to add as a footnote that we assembled an exceptional team under the leadership of Ali Ronay and were able to prepare this book in a short time despite the pandemic curfews and even the dangers of working in a confined space together during the pandemic. Let us just say it was a truly exceptional month. We started our work early in the morning and worked nonstop until the evening. Simply presenting a dish nicely or putting it in a nice plate is not enough. Also, writing a book is one thing, and photography is another. My contribution to the project was to bring all these together and present those beautiful dishes more effectively. It was something artistic for me, as I look at food as a form of art. I approach table setting in the same way. I believe it is something that must be paid attention to as well. The feedback we have received about the book shows that we were right. The book was

published by the Presidency, Türkiye's highest office. That is why this book had to be special. We worked very carefully, and I believe we did our best. For this reason, the book turned out well, as did its presentation, and I think it has achieved its goal.

İpek Tekdemir

May I have a question for you. We know that table setting and presentation were taught as subjects in the past. But this is not a legacy that has managed to reach the present. Do you believe that initiatives should be launched to incorporate this into the educational curriculum in the present world? Should this culture and history be recognised so that each individual and household can uphold its values? Can I please have your views regarding this subject?

Dr. Gönül Paksoy

Of course, it should be done. The thing is, even after this book was published, when I took a foreign friend out to a Turkish restaurant, as I wanted them to taste authentic Turkish food, I was quite disappointed since what I saw was stale food. Turkish cuisine is not comprised of dishes that are made once and reheated every time they need to be served. The food served there cannot be considered authentic Turkish cuisine. The food must be either prepared in smaller batches or each time a dish is requested, or in both ways. The restaurant has to pick and choose which one needs to be done. They need to know which is best. We are the ones who are destroying our own values.

Assoc. Prof. Özge Samancı

Indeed, a thorough understanding of Turkish food is essential and serves as a valuable addition to the foundation of our gastrodiploacy. I am an academic with a 20-year background in researching Ottoman food history and Turkish culinary culture. I am a faculty member in the cuisine and culinary arts department, not in the history department. In other words, we are educating the chefs of the future. Of course, this subject is included in the curriculum, but the challenge we face in Türkiye is that we are unaware of our own rich gastronomic heritage, both past and present, as well as the locality in general.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

First of all, we must become fully aware of our own gastronomic richness so that we can transform and promote it. Solid steps are being taken. However, I do not believe it is enough yet, which is why there are misapplications or misrepresentations.

İpek Tekdemir

Yes, you are right. I would not want to derail the topic, but the reality remains that Greek cuisine is more well-known and recognisable abroad than Turkish cuisine, which could be attributed to a lack of branding and packaging for the same flavours we consume. Maybe such organisations and panels can shed some light for the future. Thank you very much.

Chef Ronay, I believe you are usually an active person, especially inside the kitchen. We made you sit a lot, so you might be thinking to yourself, “Where is my kitchen? Where are my orders?” I would like to thank you for your participation. In addition to your worldwide achievements, you have also made significant contributions to our book on Turkish cuisine. You have been actively engaged in the development, presentation, and execution of the recipes from the outset. Dear chef, I will now give you the floor, asking you to tell us a little bit about the kitchen, please.

Ali Ronay



With pleasure. I was initially drawn to this industry because Turkish cuisine has not been sufficiently promoted internationally. Despite our magnificent heritage, we have never had the opportunity to fully express ourselves. The Directorate of Communications and this organisation have served a noble purpose, which is one of the reasons we are present here today. From now on, I hope that we will have the chance to introduce the cuisine of our country in a much more organised and purposeful way. This book was one of the most significant cornerstones and milestones that we aspired to achieve for years. I am optimistic that it will serve as a classic work that will be beneficial to future generations. At present, it is our masterwork, but it will be revised and supplemented in the future. Because it is crucial to ensure that the work does not conclude with its completion but continues to be improved. Although gastronomy or gastrodiplomacy seems benign in the background, I believe that it is a super secret tool in the sense that people have always gathered around the table and exchanged culturally. And the cuisine and table have had a very beautiful, unifying effect on people for centuries. And we intend to carry on with this wonderful heritage. That is why I am exceedingly pleased with myself, as I have always seen myself as an ambassador of this country. This was also the case when I first travelled to study abroad, as they would ask me, "What food do you cook in your country? What is your most famous recipe?" We were involved in an exchange that commenced at a young age, and I have been engaged in this for 25 years and still counting. And we will make sure it continues in the same way. We must also pass the torch on to future generations, as continuing this with only us would not suffice. Therefore, as Ms. Gönül has said, this profession is an art. In Anatolia, this work is passed on from master to apprentice. We are giving a hand to young people, and young people should continue to do the same. That is what we teach in schools. We endeavour to contribute to our universities and educational institutions abroad. I have gone beyond the kitchen side of things briefly and was able to engage in such pleasant work. The book is one that I might be able to call one of my masterworks, at least from my own perspective. Because I was involved in the book with a distinguished team to serve the highest authority of Türkiye and to introduce Turkish cuisine to the world. Of course, participating in this endeavour as a chef was one of the most

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

valuable moments of my career. Cooking is actually the easiest and most enjoyable part because there is no better feeling than being in a kitchen and cooking. I believe that 30% of the work is devoted to food, while the remaining 70% is to explanation. There is a significant amount of work that goes into the explanation of the food, including whether it will be aesthetic, local, in season, sustainable, or zero waste. Lastly, I would like to point out that there are thousands of food trends in the world, and all of them are temporary. When referring to Anatolian food or Turkish cuisine, I believe that Turkish cuisine is the ultimate form of Anatolian cuisine, as it encompasses a wider range of culinary traditions. The capacity and content of our own exquisite culture and cuisine are sufficient to address all of these. I am pleased to be here today, and I would like to thank everyone for their work.

İpek Tekdemir

Thank you, chef. Ms. Samancı, I would like to ask you another question that I am curious about. Should we appoint gastro-ambassadors to increase the visibility of Turkish cuisine in foreign countries? From my understanding, Turkish cuisine is perceived in Europe as consisting only of doner and kebab. Is it possible that we could address this matter further by conducting joint projects with our missions abroad, designating our chefs as “gastro-ambassadors,” and organising promotional events. What are your views regarding this subject?

Assoc. Prof. Özge Samancı

I agree. In fact, we were discussing this a little while ago. Other countries, particularly those from abroad to Türkiye, are engaging in this practice. Last week, a chef arrived as the cultural attaché of the Hungarian Embassy. Each country comes and engages in conversation, expressing their desire to conduct a demonstration and share information about their cuisine. Korea, Italy, and France do the same demonstrations constantly. In the context of Turkish cuisine, I am of the opinion that a strategy of planned actions and objectives could be established by visiting schools and museums in each country by appointing gastronomy ambassadors who have received specific training in Türkiye or our chefs who are capa-

ble of completing this task. Perhaps it would be more meaningful if we acted within this framework. It is not that nothing is being done, but it is as if they are fragmented; the state is doing separate things, and NGOs are taking separate initiatives. It would be useful to unite the efforts. In the direction of branding, this book conveys three key messages: Turkish cuisine is healthy, sustainable, and cultural. This is a way of branding, so to speak, and it is important in presenting Turkish cuisine. I digress from your question, but I agree with that idea. Gastronomy ambassadors could be an appealing concept, as all of us, including Chef Ali, Ms. Gönül, and myself, have personally experienced studying abroad, with my own experience being in France. I wrote a PhD thesis on 19th-century Ottoman culinary history. I observed that the historians within my intellectual circle were both curious about and respectful of Ottoman history. We held banquets, which were enjoyed and wondered about. Therefore, if we try to teach it, they are not completely reluctant to learn, but it requires a little more work.

İpek Tekdemir

You have completed your PhD there, so could you briefly explain which methods they correctly used regarding this subject? Thank you.

Assoc. Prof. Özge Samancı

First, from the 17th century onwards, French cuisine codifies and compiles all of its knowledge into a book format. Two books published during the codification process in the 17th century are quite important. The books are called: *Le Cuisinier françois*, *Le Pâtissier françois*. At a time when the nationalism movement was not present, they defended and formulated their own national cuisine concept. Furthermore, France is where the first restaurants appear. At the beginning of the 19th century in Paris, thirty restaurants were opened, and by the end of the century, this number had reached three thousand. And the people who worked here were cooks who had worked in the homes of aristocrats. And these cooks sometimes work in other courts, such as Austria-Hungary or Russia, becoming brand ambassadors for French cuisine. After the restaurants, there is a crucial figure who designed the 5-star hotel kitchens: Escoffier. I have read his

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

biography. He actually conducts gastrodiplo­macy there with his team. He chooses to bring French chefs and waiters to serve French menus. In the US and all around the world, people talk about the French menus. And the 19th century is quite interesting, concerning the Ottoman palace as well, which has a very strong gastronomic identity.

After 1850, Ottoman-style and European-style dishes were served along with French and Ottoman Turkish menus to foreign ambassadors or diplomats. France is the country that continues from this point onward and defines the cornerstones of the world of gastronomy, and Chef Ali knows very well that almost all the techniques in international culinary education today come from that cuisine.

İpek Tekdemir

Chef, did you think of such events while formulating the recipes in your book? Which recipes on the menu were difficult? Can you briefly tell us about the most challenging menu?

Ali Ronay

Of course, this book is the fruit of a very comprehensive teamwork; I was merely the one who put it into practice. It is the collaborative work of a committee of historians, academics, chefs, marketing teams, and dietitians. Therefore, I think we had the opportunity to show simplicity in practice regarding how to carry traditional recipes into the future together with Ms. Gönül. As far as the recipes are concerned, I can say that we enjoyed all of them. The recipes were good and fun to prepare. Seasonality is, of course, very important. Seasonality is the driving force behind Turkish cuisine. It surely needs to be sustainable too.

İpek Tekdemir

Yes, indeed, chef. Now I would like to move on to the issue of sustainability because I could not completely grasp sustainability in gastrodiplo­macy. Could you please give us an explanation about zero-waste gastronomy diplomacy or sustainable gastronomy?

Dr. Gönül Paksoy

There is no such thing as zero waste; I mean, it is not quite possible to achieve zero waste. Therefore, we can talk about a cuisine with reduced waste, which is present in our traditional cuisine. Consumption without waste, this is part of our culture. However, being a consumer society, consuming everything in packages and throwing away the leftovers, not knowing what to do with it; these practices continue to this day. But as you can see now, the world is experiencing different things, and so are we. There are problems arising, so we need to understand the value of consumption without waste. We need to do this. Cultural sustainability should not be lost. Turkish cuisine has persisted to this day, but it must be preserved against degeneration. You cannot name a dish you prepared, for instance, stuffed eggplant, if you have changed it too much. If you do that, it would be a setback for the cuisine—Turkish cuisine in this case—because that is actually a dish you prepare inspired by the original. This brings to the question of why kebabs, doners, and some others are present everywhere. Following this book, the Presidency or the Directorate of Communications, as I recall, announced the Turkish cuisine week. It is designated as the week beginning on May 21st, including May 27th. In addition, events where Turkish food is presented, such as food festivals, with the potential to reach large crowds, can be held in the most popular areas in various cities in various countries. Events we hold today are usually held via embassies or official institutions, which are means of communication. Their invitations, for example. On the other hand, people eat kebab as well as doner, and you see kebab shops everywhere, but there is no place for Turkish soup, for instance. You can open soup shops. Why are there no pudding shops? Türkiye has pudding shops. It is a very important thing. There is also pilaf, which is a pilaf with chicken.

Ali Ronay

Commonly, soup, pilaf with chicken and rice pudding can be the menu of a corner shop. Corner shops you can open anywhere in the world.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Dr. Gönül Paksoy

These are all important things that can advance and uplift the current state. Of course, this has a commercial aspect, meaning that opening such shops and promoting them may help sell the products in our country. It is also part of the branding process because we will be able to export products, which in turn will bring foreign currency. That is to say, these are all connected, and this week's commencement with this book will hopefully be a starting point. May it not be forgotten, and may it last. For example, there are Christmas celebrations taking place here, but we have our own eids. And there are special dishes for these eids.

İpek Tekdemir

Perhaps these dishes should be promoted even more.

Dr. Gönül Paksoy

Our foreign embassies can offer meals arranged for eids. They can also make eid invitations.

İpek Tekdemir

Ms. Nur, my distinguished coordinator, and I are having a very fruitful exchange of ideas, which I am sure will be beneficial for future work. Thank you for providing such tremendous help. We may continue with your words, Chef Ali.

Ali Ronay

All over the world, naturally, Turkish cuisine is known for kebabs, and that's normal. Just as Anthony Bourdain says, kebab—or meat on a stick—is one of the simplest, easiest, and, I think, one of the oldest dishes in the world since someone cooked it and someone ate it. It is also very easy to make; you put it on the fire, and it comes out ready in a practical way. Turkish cuisine is a very comprehensive, very elaborate cuisine and it is difficult to cook.

Dr. Gönül Paksoy

Other ingredients can be preferred every once in a while.

Ali Ronay

Certainly, we have reached every corner of the world very easily. And we can actually evolve this in the right way. As the professor said, we need to contribute to the ingredients because I had the opportunity to work abroad for many years, I returned to my country, and I had the chance to host chefs from abroad for many years. In the international hotels where I worked, chefs had their own must-have trademarks and ingredients in their bags. When Indian chefs come, they bring their spices, saying that Indian food cannot be made without these spices. Italian chefs bring their own olive oil, tomatoes, and flour and say those are essential. But wherever we Turkish chefs go in the world, we cook with whatever ingredients are given. Tomato paste or flour doesn't matter at all; we are used to living with the products that we find. That's why we need to be more selective. As we said, this book is a preliminary work, and we should add to it. For example, what kind of pantry should you have? What special ingredients do you need for which dish? By doing so, I think we can provide better awareness and ensure it is more grounded.

İpek Tekdemir

You're right. Maybe our chefs can now stipulate preferences, such as using Turkish paste and Turkish rice, in their international work. But, chef, do you think we can make the risotto with bulgur?

Ali Ronay

A variation can be made.

Assoc. Prof. Özge Samancı

I have a small criticism on that issue, Ms. Gönül may also agree. Of course, risotto can be prepared with bulgur; it is not usually prepared in such a way, but it is meaningful for you to do it there since you are doing it for a certain purpose. But preparing risotto with bulgur in Türkiye? I would say, "Why?". Instead, you should serve keşkek with meat. In other words, it is

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

necessary to act in a way that simultaneously elevates both Turkish techniques and Turkish products. Let me talk about it over a certain product. Ms. Gönül made a very good point that we forgot to mention. Of course, the two biggest benefits of gastrodiploMACy are increasing our country's brand value and contributing to our economy. It enables an increase in both gastrotourism and the sale of our agricultural products abroad for Türkiye's economy. In this context, as Chef Ali said, it is important that the dishes that belong to our cuisine are made with our products. Maybe we can create a basket of products from Türkiye that represent Türkiye. Italy has done that. Italy is a very rich country with many regional cuisines, but in our minds, it is closely connected with certain ingredients. For us, it may be bulgur, pomegranate syrup or tahini (sesame seed paste). Let the experts decide and create a basket. The chefs may contribute to it. I have an idea as such.

Dr. Gönül Paksoy

Bulgur pilaf is not any less delicious than risotto; I think pilaf shops should be opened.

İpek Tekdemir

Actually, what I want to emphasise is that different strategies can be pursued abroad.

Dr. Gönül Paksoy

But bulgur is known as a healthy food worldwide; it is one of the healthiest forms of wheat.

Assoc. Prof. Özge Samancı

I mentioned this because we have discussions in the gastronomy sector and community; we have been talking about these for years. As a professor, I would like us to stop referring to western techniques with the aim of explaining Turkish products abroad. For the students, we have prepared the book to include techniques such as pilaf, borek (pastry), and kebab because these are our techniques.

İpek Tekdemir

Thank you very much. We will come to you for training and eventually return after completing our training in the kitchen. You gave a very good example.

Professor, I would like to say one last thing. If you remember, especially in 2018, there was a meeting between former Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel of Germany and our Foreign Minister, Mr. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, and there were tensions at that time. Do you remember when Sigmar Gabriel served tea? The message given by serving tea with a teapot is exactly what we are talking about today. Would you like to express your thoughts on this? I know we have limited time, but it has been a very pleasant conversation. I don't want it to end at all. Ms. Nur, with your permission, we would like to continue a little more. Please, professor.

Assoc. Prof. Özge Samancı

Of course, we have to talk about how cuisine, the language of cuisine, is a good communication tool; how it brings people and relations closer as a soft power instrument; and that it is a beautiful culturally enriching field with many outputs. This is the only thing I would like to underline again. In gastrodiplomacy, aside from diplomatic banquets, activities and plans involving the wider public can be more effective.

İpek Tekdemir

Thank you very much. Professor, is there anything you would like to add?

Dr. Gönül Paksoy

For example, over there, we sell it as Italian ice cream, whereas we are talking about a dessert of Turkish origin, and we have very good ice cream. It is true that Maraş is exporting a lot of ice cream abroad, but there can be ice cream shops abroad too. Places selling Turkish ice cream. We also give foreign names to the ice cream we make. It is a very bad thing. At least, for me, it is very bad. You are refraining from being yourself. You are underestimating yourself, it is something like that. Why? I would like to eat that ice cream. Maybe Istanbul ice cream, or other names like that. We

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

have very good desserts, let us say baklava holds its own. But in recent years, we have started to trifle with baklava. This is wrong. Everywhere I see it, I say, “Don’t sell it as baklava, take the baklava out of its name.” That is a milk-based dessert, a cold-served dessert, a dumpling. Baklava is indeed something that has gone down in history, as Özge knows better.

Assoc. Prof. Özge Samancı

Firstly, as Ms. Gönül just said, we have to get to know and really love our own cuisine. Maybe we are not aware of this, but I see it in young people: the foreign cuisines and chefs that are presented to them are more appealing to them. They realise the techniques and value of Turkish cuisine too late. We embrace Italian ice cream, but we don’t know what Turkish ice cream or regular ice cream is. We really need to understand that Turkish cuisine as a brand is a precious brand. Secondly, after we understand this, when introducing these products, it is necessary to use their original language. Our restaurants use foreign languages, and I cannot understand this. I really do not understand. Why is it that in Türkiye, a shop is opened with an English or French name? I have not seen such a thing in France. Another point is that innovation is not bad. I also like innovation, and I have chef friends who make very good innovative interpretations of Turkish cuisine. But we need to know its limits. If we give a classic name to a dish, then we expect it not to be too fragmented. It should follow a certain way and be traditional. Of course, young people lean towards the new. I know this from my students. I only tell them this: just as you need to play good classical music to be a good jazz pianist, you also need to learn Turkish cuisine very well along with international techniques and then combine them. In short, this is what I really believe in and what I am trying to do in my own way with my own efforts to raise awareness. Recognising, knowing, and keeping our own cuisine alive in the right way.

Ali Ronay

Of course, my desire is to develop this initiative in our own country through a well-structured and systematic approach, starting with schools. Then food festivals, organisations, etc. to make it a little more structured and take it to the global level. Thank you.

Ipek Tekdemir

Thank you very much for your valuable contributions. Before we close the panel, I would like to share with you a slogan that has recently become widespread in Germany. "In fact, we are fermented with the same yeast, we are made of the same dough." It could be a simit, the Italian focaccia or the German bretzel. Let us not forget that we must always move forward by preserving our own values and passing on this special mission to future generations.

I congratulate you once again for preparing such a beautiful book. If I may, I would like to ask for your autographs. I wanted them so much, and today, I had the opportunity. We are also expecting to see you in Brussels, and I hope we will promote it in the European Union with the support of First Lady Emine Erdoğan.

In closing, I would like to thank you, our esteemed audience. Have a good day.



**FOURTH
SESSION**

Place Branding in a Changing World: The Story of Cities



Assoc. Prof. Şuay Nilhan Açıkalın
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University | Moderator



Assoc. Prof. Burcu Zeybek
İstanbul University



Malcom Bell
CEO of Visit Cornwall

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Place Branding in a
Changing World: The
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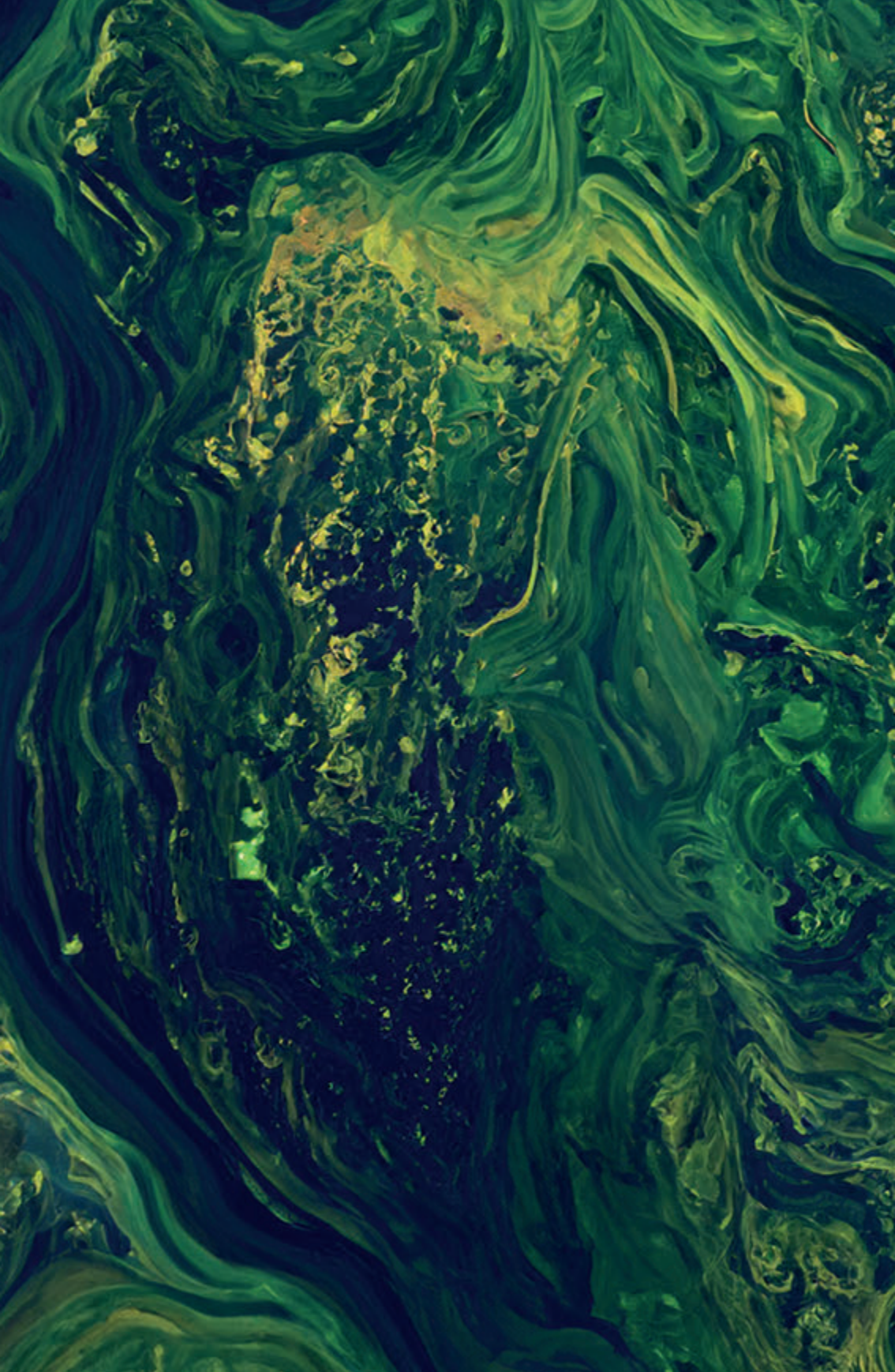


01

Welcome to our panel. First of all, I would like to thank the Directorate of Communications and Türkiye Brand Office that brought us together today. When I first got the invitation for this panel, I was so excited, as an academician who works on city branding, both in theory and practice. But when I saw the speakers, it was more exciting.

Cities and the locals have become more important as we experience globalization. In our panel, you will hear some success stories from local to global. That's why we have very distinguished speakers today, Malcolm Bell and also my colleague, Associate Professor, Dr. Burcu Zeybek will be with us.

I don't want to get too much time from your speaking. We will have two rounds in this panel. In the first round, each speaker will have 20 minutes, and in the second round, we will have a few questions for them. First of all, the floor is for the Malcolm. Malcolm people know you as the boss of the Cornwall tourism. The floor is yours. We would like to hear your experience.





Strategies for Creating New
Place Brands: Cornwall

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Strategies for Creating
New Place Brands:
Cornwall**

PARTICIPANTS



Malcom Bell
CEO of Visit Cornwall



02

I'm delighted to be here, delighted to be in your wonderful country, in your wonderful city. So first of all, about Cornwall. Cornwall is a very precious place because I was born there, so I'm a bit biased. But it's this strange little place at the end of the country. It was once an ancient, ancient county of its own right within the UK, too many years ago, 500 years ago, but it's got its very strong identity. We're quite a small region, only half a million people. When I asked on the way in, how many people were in Istanbul, I think it was about, well, not 100 but certainly many times bigger than Cornwall. And the offices are based in the only city in Cornwall and the second smallest city in the UK, with a huge population of 19 thousand. But it's a very distributed county. You'll see there, from the statistics that we have about 10 times as many visitors as our population. It does generate a lot of money. It supports one in three households, directly and indirectly, and is sort of part of the core product. But I think more importantly, for this event, it's actually part of how you brand a region and how the branding works across it. So I want to concentrate. Let me tell you a bit about myself, especially for the younger people in the audience. I grew up in Cornwall. I moved to the City of Manchester probably more famous for its football clubs than me.

My first degree was in nuclear physics and computing. Very strange route to get to tourism. And then moved into vocational training. Did an economics degree, particularly in marketing, and then moved into marketing and tourism. So I'm a sort of strange fellow because it's, it's a sort of cross in my head between creative and data. I like to see that what we're doing actually does work, rather than just be creative. So that sort of science background still gets me going on where the numbers are.

Also a bit of the history of Cornwall, and I want to do some more reflections. Cornish tourism has been around for about 150 years, and it's gone through

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

some interesting cycles in that time. From the 1930s to the 1960s it was quite a strong brand in tourism. It was a premier destination for rich Londoners and rich people generally. Lots of historic houses and homes, and the brand was very much seen as something for the upper classes.

It then went through an interesting change, as people had more money and more tourism, and by the 1960s it was a mass tourism destination, so that's where lots of people came, quite overwhelming the population, but actually also lost the premier and the premium product.

So it sort of really was a real classic of Butler's law, if anybody's studying it, of how destinations can get quite up there and then start to slide and Cornwall basically slid down to by 1990. I know many of you weren't born then, but most of you were. We were actually a brand that slipped right to the bottom as a tourism brand and it actually just got swallowed up within the wider region. And from 1990 we've pulled ourselves up over 20 years to not just being part of the West Country, or not just being part of the county next to us, which is Devon and Cornwall, but for Cornwall to be a premier brand, winning the British Travel Awards, top destination for 10 out of the 11 years up to COVID, we took our eye off it for one year.

And the interesting thing about how that was achieved was a focus on really going back to where we were in the 1940s. Which was not trying to compete with other destinations, not trying to compete with Spain or anywhere else. We have beautiful beaches. But I think what we turned our back on was some of the more interesting places, like the creek and the river there, the culture, the heritage, more importantly, quality. So in 1995, that's a long time ago. I did the first strategy, and that major one was to look at going back to our roots, going back to what the core product was, and looking at being, starting to look at things like experiential tourism, and also about quality, not quantity, how you can go up the quality stakes and attract back some of those people. That was really the 1995 to 2005 journey.

After that, we actually picked up quite a bit on sustainability, and also, particularly by then it was interesting on the brand and moved into food and drink. So all of a sudden, it was interesting how in addition to the probably about 20 million pounds spent on marketing tourism. That's not the tourist board. That's the whole sector. There was probably another 20 million pounds by now with the food and drink sector. So if any of you come to Great Britain and the airports and certainly the train stations, you will see Cornish branding, albeit on selling pastries, one of our regional food and drink offers. One

of the drivers for that change was the role of TV and film. TV and films are incredibly important. In fact, in the last two years, we've had too much. Because it actually gets to people. I'm a great believer in the very simple marketing thing of AIDA: awareness, interest, desire, and action.

Marketing is far more complicated than that, I know, but the first thing is, how do you get awareness up? Because you can be aware of something but not interested in it. So TV is a very good way of driving from awareness to interest to that desire and action.

Tourism in Cornwall Key Points

- Population of Cornwall 535,000 people
- Ancient Celtic Country
- Cornwall attracts circa **4.5 million staying visitors**
- Staying visitors accounted for an approximate **23+ million visitor nights**
- Staying visitors spent **£1.5 billion pounds plus day visitors**
- The average length of stay in Cornwall is **6+ nights**
- **11% to 14% GVA and circa 20% GDP**
- Staying tourism supports approximately **53,000 jobs** (45,000 jobs FTE) 1 in 5 jobs in the county and supports 1 in 3 households



But you do need to make sure that is right and try to steer as best as possible, probably where we are now. Because I'll address some of the questions in a minute as well. Is that we're probably in danger of going towards too much over tourism and inappropriate tourism.

I got quite controversial in newspapers recently by saying some of our visitors shouldn't actually be coming. So I will explain that more because I was using it in the Cornish context, is that when in Cornwall, there's a word for tourists when they're not liked, which is the word "Emmet" which is just a Cornish, ancient Cornish word for insect.

And the point I was making is, the thing about a tourist destination is and in marketing, my big message is, don't ignore the host community when you're doing marketing strategies and plans, and therefore the brand. You have to make sure that you've taken the local community or communities with you. So I was trying to explain to people, which is a great venue to explain this

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

theory or this action. If you go to a theater to watch a show and there's 5% or 2% of people in the auditorium that are making sounds and being disruptive because they don't like the show, as marketing people, we've got to ask ourselves, "Were we responsible for them turning up to the wrong show?" It's not that they're wrong. It's just they come to the wrong show. So I think as destination marketing people, you've got to be honest and say, "Did we actually pretend it was too sunny, too hot?" There were things, the things that the people want that we don't want, and get that balance right. So it's all about that aspect of it, and that's what we suffered during COVID a lot, and it's gone on since, I mean, since COVID, local communities are less tolerant to the inappropriate visitors.

There's a question of particularly in England, which is quite distorted, because Great Britain is a strange country, because people call England, but we've got Wales. We've got Scotland, a place like Yorkshire.

I think it's a kaleidoscope when, sort of asked, "Which comes first nation or city? Or in this case, a region, small region?" That I think they've both got to come together. The nation has got to be almost something that can pull together the variety of what you got, and the more complex your location, that's more of a challenge. But you can't have a city destination that clashes with the nation or the nation clashes with the city. It just confuses the customer.

The other one is, I think as you know, what's the function of tourism branding and a city? It's probably like in Cornwall, it's 20% of our economy, but 19% now is food and drink exports, and we've got a burgeoning clothing market, which is probably another 4%. But it's all based around the Cornish lifestyle, and that's where the brand has sort of not leaked out, but the brand has expanded to include other aspects. So I think although we talk about tourism, my experience over the last 10-15 years is when other parts of the economy want to work on the Cornish brand and use it. I mean, I don't know if you go to London, there's often a lot of Cornish lobsters sold. I don't know how many truly from Cornwall, because I'm not sure there are that many lobsters. But people will use it on beer, on drink, on food. So it is that aspect of how you know you're getting somewhere. Hopefully reasonably successful, your branding is then adopted, and the name is adopted, and those associations are adopted. And when part of the way we've done that over the last few years on very small budgets is with travel journalists, but more importantly, lifestyle and food and culture journalists, because then you get Cornwall in each part of the media, and the distribution of the name starts to creep out.



The Spirit of the City: The
Case of İstanbul in Urban
Branding

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**The Spirit of the City: The
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PARTICIPANTS



**Assoc. Prof.
Burcu Zeybek**
İstanbul University



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CEO of Visit Cornwall



03

Assoc. Prof. Burcu Zeybek

I would like to thank the Presidency's Directorate of Communications and the Türkiye Brand Office for organizing the event. I have been working on nation branding for 12 years. These studies sometimes focus on nation branding and country brand personalities, sometimes on semiotic studies of country logos and symbols, and sometimes on museology as the most important cultural element of branding. Many cities in Türkiye have museums that showcase their historical heritage. I have been conducting various research and projects on the effects of museums on city branding. I would like to begin by defining what a brand city is and how the components that make up a city's identity are formed. A city brand is a concept with a symbol, logo, identity, and culture, similar to commercial brands. Physical and visual graphical identities, just like products, services, and commercial brands, with a soul-like silhouette on top of its human-made physical elements, make a city a brand. Each city has a different soul. There are studies on city branding from many disciplines. I will address the topic from the perspective of brand city communication. There are also certain processes for managing brand city communication. A strategy for a brand city must be developed to identify the existing identity and its components.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

We have to start with this and transform the city's identity into a perceivable image. What components make up a city's identity, then? When considering Türkiye, for example, geographical features. We have a generally mild climate. When we say "İstanbul," the Bosphorus comes to our minds as a silhouette and as a graphical and physical identity. Monumental buildings are among the components of a city's identity. For example, the mosques of İstanbul, the Eiffel Tower of Paris, city squares, streets, and sociocultural features such as the Rio Carnival and the Viennese Waltz. Features such as these are what gives a city its soul and identity. The next component is positioning. Cities should be positioned in visitors' minds in the same way that a commercial brand or product would. When the strategic communication process of a city brand is managed, this process becomes more sustainable and permanent. It is possible to interpret the concept of brand city within the context of integrated brand communication. Firstly, a city has a physical visual identity. This can be called a silhouette. In other words, when we think of İstanbul, we think of the Galata Tower, the Maiden's Tower, and the Bosphorus Bridges. A city also has a graphical visual identity. In a brand city communication process, the importance of the following concepts can be mentioned:



Physical visual identity is the silhouettes or images of a city that first come to mind when we think of that city. You can see the physical and graphical visual identity images of İstanbul, Ankara, and Uludağ on the screen. In the next slide, we see Hong Kong's physical and graphical visual identity. Here is the physical and graphical visual identity of New York. These are images of physical and graphical visual identity components. So, what is public relations for a brand city? For example, this image is what Amsterdam calls a "City Card". Based on how much time you are planning to spend in Amsterdam, you buy a card valid for 24, 48, or 96 hours. With this card, you can purchase discounted tickets to, for example, museums, bicycle, and canal tours. And you can benefit from services such as public transportation and canal trips at a discount. When you buy this card and download its application, you receive various notifications.

Maybe some of you have been to Amsterdam and used it. Again, you can see the examples of advantages offered by the City Card on the screen. In terms of point-of-sale activities, this covers, for example, display stands, interactive kiosks, store cards, and fairs. It should be noted that one of the crucial objectives of the city branding process is to increase economic development and investments. Other channels of communication include promotional products or in-game images of a city. Brand city advertising can use the same media and tools as commercial products.

RESEARCH

I will now present to you a research project that samples foreign tourists visiting İstanbul. What motivated these tourists to come to İstanbul?

I asked them about what they heard or were curious about that led them to İstanbul.

As you can see on the screen, around 1.4 million tourists visited İstanbul in June. In 2020 and 2021, the number of visitors was low due to the pandemic that affected the whole world. Switching back to June 2022, most of the foreign tourists visiting İstanbul were from Germany, then followed by Russia, Iran, the US, and the UK, respectively. Of course, 1.4 million is a serious number when it comes to research. Therefore, we used the random sampling method and surveyed 384 tourists.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

You can see their demographic characteristics on the screen. There is almost a 50-50 split between men and women. In terms of their level of education, associate's and bachelor's degree graduates are in the majority. Occupationally, we observed that government workers, managers, and self-employed individuals stand out. Given the age distribution of tourists, we found that a young mass of people between the ages of 26 and 35 made up the majority.

An analysis of the driving forces behind tourists' desire to travel to İstanbul reveals their curiosity, interest, and desire to learn about local culture. We note that the main draw for these tourists who travel to Türkiye is gastronomy. Indeed, gastro-diplomacy holds significant value for our nation. I believe that gastronomy is at the top of the components to be prioritized in terms of the nation branding. Natural wonders were found to be another

Demographic Qualities of Participants					
Gender (n=384)	Frequency	(%)	Education	Frequency	(%)
Female	203	52.9	Secondary	82	21.4
Male	181	47.1	Assoc. Degree	103	26.8
Marital Status (n=384)	Frequency	(%)	Bachelor's Degree	162	42.2
Married	178	46.4	Master's Degree	37	9.6
Single	206	53.6			
Age (n=384)	Frequency	(%)	Occupation	Frequency	(%)
18-25	92	24.0	Public Servant	126	32.8
26-35	184	47.9	Worker	40	10.4
36-45	80	20.8	Retired	25	6.5
46-55	28	7.3	Manager	62	16.1
			Housewife	30	7.8
			Self-employed	101	26.3

er attraction factor in their visits to İstanbul. TV series and movies provide another attraction for tourists. We excel at exporting Turkish series, increasing the number of overseas audiences. Nevertheless, I believe that

we should also showcase this excellence in movies and Turkish cinema. In addition to all of the above, among the components contributing to the favorable image of the city are security, stability, democracy, and education. Last, but not least, I enquired about the sources of the country's perceived image among tourists. They suggested that the social network was the primary source of information. Moreover, fairs, congresses, and tourist attractions and trips can all be considered sources of information for tourists. That is all I have to say about this matter in the first stage. Thank you.

Assoc. Prof. Şuay Nilhan Açıkalın

As I mentioned in the introduction in our second round, I noted some very important information and knowledge that you shared with us.

Before I ask the questions, I would like to share my own experience. I have been still working with the Balıkesir municipality in Türkiye. The city is located in western Anatolia, and this city is famous with its cheese, some natural beaches, and historical background.

So we have lots of them. We started to work on how we make the city branding of Balıkesir with the stakeholders of the whole city. The main difficulty that we need to overcome was which element we should highlight. I mean the foods, places, culture, or history that we experienced on very tough days. We discussed this with the students, NGOs, and the mayor. But at the end of the day, finally, it is still an ongoing process. I'm still working with them. I can clearly say that we successfully managed to bring at least a branding of Balıkesir. For example, in the case of breakfast. Right now, both in Türkiye and abroad, people know Balıkesir with the breakfast and they organize a breakfast festival that brings thousands of people from all over the world.

When you are talking about your experience from Cornwall, I just remembered my own experience with Balıkesir. That's why I would like to ask my first question to Malcolm because you mentioned that it's a 20-year process, and compared to 20 years ago, most of the things have quite changed, especially the role of social media and city branding and, of course, after the COVID-19 process, the perception of the tourists or the foreigners also changed. How do you see 20 years ago and today? If you

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

started again from the beginning, what would you like to change, or what new strategies would you bring in?

Malcolm Bell

The major one would be about taking the community in. I think we've also got to do a lot of research on where the human consumer is. The visitor is now in post-COVID era, and I think, one of the things we'll be doing next year is sentiment trackers on where consumers are, but we're also looking at future trends. You know we're quite a seasonal destination. So like a lot of places we haven't got the benefits of all year round as much as we want. So we're now starting to investigate the role of social media. And there are digital nomads, people who can work anywhere.

So when you have spare capacity, it's probably more of a regional issue maybe than the city. They can move around. Somebody said a beautiful thing to me last week that a lot of young people in London don't see their rent as rent anymore. They see it as a travel budget. So instead of paying £2,000 a month for rent in London, they'll go on Airbnb or somewhere else, other platforms are available and they will go to a different city to experience because they can work that way.

The other thing we've actually started to see quite big time is what I like prefer the word "woliday", which is a bit of work, but mainly holiday because there are a lot of people working at home now. They have the opportunity to do well, not the opportunity. The 4 walls are closing in on them. Their sanctuary is gone. They used to go out of their home to work, but now they're stuck in their home most of the time.

So the idea of breaking up their year by going and staying in different places, maybe only for a week, maybe 2 weeks, Still able to do the work, part-time work, but mixing vacation or holiday with work. So there's I think it's time, you know, if you're going to stay in branding and where tourism particularly is going is we need to go back and look at where the consumer is. In the UK, I think COVID has moved people. Anybody knows the challenges in the UK apart from getting through prime ministers at the rate of knots is that, you know, we've got a labor shortage because lots of people have just walked away from working and that's their value

system has changed. So I think we've really got to look at where people's values are.

Some of the things we'll be commencing in the New Year are short term where is the consumer's feeling about energy costs and the current things in the world. But more importantly, what are the indicative trends of where they're moving over the next 5 to 10 years? Because I don't think you can take the past as a predictor of the future at the moment. It'd be rather rash to just think the past is almost a straight line to the future. My way of normally saying it to the industry is if you're in a car and you're looking in the rearview mirror and driving just looking in the rearview mirror, that's fine if the road is straight.

If there's a bend in the road, you'll hit and you'll have a crash. So we're just trying to get people to start to think differently. Just because COVID is over, doesn't mean it goes back to where we were. Hope that answers.

Assoc. Prof. Şuay Nilhan Açıkalın

One more question. When you're speaking it's just something that come to my mind especially when you first commented related to the tourists. Sometimes there's a discussion, it's both academic and practical discussions between the experts that sometimes there are too many tourists. Is it that seriously helping for city branding or is the situation going to vice versa?

Malcom Bell

It's overtourism, tourism and getting the mix wrong is dangerous for branding, especially with social media. It's a bit like with anything now like I said we got to be true and authentic. And when I started in tourism, you were able to lie. You had a brochure that would show anything. You know, you only had a picture, and it was probably the most expensive thing people bought without being able to see.

You come forward now, not only can they see it, they can Google Earth it, they can go on any of the social platforms. So you've got to be true. Equally though, if you attract inappropriate, I don't mean there's nothing wrong with the people. They just come to the wrong place. They've got

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

the opposite effect and they've got a wonderful vehicle to damage your brand so we have to be honest, as opposed to 20 years ago and we could be playful with the truth.

Assoc. Prof. Şuay Nilhan Açıklalın

Thank you, Malcolm. I have also a few questions for Associate Professor, Burcu Zeybek. First of all, I would like to ask a question related to your research, field research. For info for the audience. Which strategies do you use to reach those people in the field research, and also we see the numbers that we are talking about the millions of people who visited İstanbul. We are in the middle of East and West. Our city is quite magical and unique if you ask me. How would you evaluate these results? Especially depending on their experiences as tourists in İstanbul. How it would affect the city branding of İstanbul?

Assoc. Prof. Burcu Zeybek

Indeed, İstanbul is a fascinating city, and I agree with you. We observe curiosity, interest and gastronomy as the most motivating factors for visiting İstanbul. In fact, this gastronomy is not just specific to İstanbul; it is also specific to Türkiye. We are talking about 1.4 million visitors. Of course, it is not possible to reach each and every one of them. After determining the sample representing the research population, the Association of Tourist Guides and the Association of Turkish Travel Agencies provided support in reaching the tourists. I submitted the online surveys to the tourists after complying with the procedures under the Personal Data Protection Law. As I reached these people, I sent them another questionnaire to determine the role of cinema in promoting the country. I would like to emphasize another issue I noticed: The majority of the respondents stated that they had encountered a different Türkiye than the one they had seen in the Turkish movies. Similarly, in another question, they stated that they had more positive experiences with Türkiye than what was portrayed in the Turkish movies or what was portrayed about Türkiye on different platforms. From this perspective, I would like to draw attention to the role of Turkish movies in creating a nation brand.

Assoc. Prof. Şuay Nilhan Açıkalın

It's interesting finding that the tourist comes to the visit to Türkiye to find a very different lifestyle that we saw in the Turkish movies and the Turkish TV series. It's just for the discussions one more question maybe if it is okay for you.

As also Malcolm mentioned promoting the lifestyle of the locals, it's quite important in how you see the branding of Türkiye. How we can manage until now especially when it comes to Istanbul it's a huge metropolitan, and there are lots of different minorities, and ethnic groups living here as well. We have lots of foreigners living in Istanbul too. So, do you think that how we can or which strategies we can use the more lifestyle-centered approach to promoting Istanbul. And its branding?

Assoc. Prof. Burcu Zeybek

First of all, it is necessary to emphasize the dynamic structure of the city. İstanbul's population is quite dense, both in terms of residents and visitors. It is comprised of people from different religions, nations, and ethnic groups. It is necessary to demonstrate that we can live together with the differences you are talking about. In this respect, there have been movies and Turkish TV series that have used manipulative content in the past few years. In order to overcome this, I believe that productions that reflect our own reality should be prioritized. A strategy that prioritizes hospitality, gastronomy, and the natural beauties of the country can be set. An integrated communication and positioning plan should be developed based on these strategies.

Assoc. Prof. Şuay Nilhan Açıkalın

This forum is quite important because the branding is composed of different elements and when it comes to local and city branding, it's not different from the country branding because every city branding or local branding also implies or reflects the general culture of the country. So, it is quite important to hear about your own unique experiences and of course your field research today. I would like to thank, my distinguished speakers that today participated this panel. You honored us. Thank you very much.



**FIFTH
SESSION**

Commercial Diplomacy
Breakthroughs for the Türkiye
Brand: DEİK Experience



Nail Olpak
President of Foreign Economic
Relations Board (DEİK)

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Commercial Diplomacy
Breakthroughs for the
Türkiye Brand: DEİK
Experience**

P A R T I C I P A N T S



Nail Olpak
President of Foreign Economic
Relations Board (DEİK)



01

Until recently, when we talked about branding, we only thought of companies or their prominent products. In this sense, we know that companies that value R&D and innovation, that emphasise innovation in their processes and record those with patents and good practices, that have a good recognition and reputation in the eyes of consumers, have better brand value. A “branding” definition has become significant today and will most likely remain so for the foreseeable future, which encompasses not only the brand value of companies but also many intangible assets such as a country’s geography, history, culture, and social life.

In this sense of branding, unlike in the past when companies were prominent, intangible assets such as athletes, artists, politicians, scientists, cities, and social structures play an important role in the branding of countries in particular. For example, lately, “city brands” have been frequently used. Every city strives to highlight an element that will promote itself as a brand around the world. Scientists also play an important role in this regard. A Nobel-Prize winning scientist like Prof. Aziz Sancar is known worldwide and substantially contributes to the brand recognition of our country. It is obvious that we are an important brand in tourism today as a country. Our historical heritage and natural beauties, our cultural values, our climate with four seasons, and many other features that we can

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

count on are the foundation of this brand. Turkish TV series, which are watched all over the world, are another example, and we can go on with these examples. I believe all of these have made significant contributions to Türkiye's path to becoming a brand. Producing is important for a brand, and when I say produce, I mean a concept that includes every field. However, without being limited to its ability to produce, in a classical sense as well, Türkiye has the potential to produce brands and achieve more value-added results by using the intangible assets I have mentioned and has maintained as a successful example in its region. There are many determinants of branding, but communication is the first and foremost. You can produce very high-quality, attractive, and competitive goods or services, but if you do not communicate properly, you may not be able to achieve the right branding. Similarly, we may be implementing the right policies and developing strategies, but when we do not communicate them with our stakeholders properly, the results may not be so beneficial when it comes to strengthening the Türkiye Brand. Therefore, I find the establishment of Türkiye Brand Office under the Directorate of Communications, bringing together all previous activities under one roof, to be appropriate and meaningful.

The good results will be for the benefit of our country. So, in view of such findings, it is useful to examine what are the duties of a business organisation and where we, as DEİK, are in this process; what are we trying to do; how are we trying to do it; what kind of results are we trying to get; and what contribution does DEİK make to increase the value of Türkiye brand? First and foremost, apart from branding in the classical sense, the contribution of the business sector to branding, in addition to the intangible branding concepts I have mentioned, is important in itself, and we, as the DEİK family, are working for this very purpose. Trade forms the basis of this branding, and that is precisely why DEİK's motto is based on two simple but powerful words: "Commercial Diplomacy." In this case, diplomacy does not mean politics, and as an organisation operating with voluntary membership, politics cannot be involved. Our mission is to boost our country's economic gains through trade while also strengthening our nation's global influence and brand value. DEİK, as the window of the Turkish business world to the international arena, positions itself as an important brand, thus contributing to Türkiye's brand journey. I consider

“DEİK” to be the “Polaris” of our business world. As a “Business Platform” undertaking the mission of “carrying out all foreign economic relations of the Turkish private sector, increasing the exports of our business world, and aiding in the development of trade,” we open new horizons and give confidence to our business sector in every corner of the world. We foster a strong sense of teamwork with our 152 Business Councils, Counterpart Organisations, Founding Organisations, and our dedicated professional staff. With the addition of Brunei Business Council, our total number of Business Councils will soon reach 153.

I would like to commemorate Mawlānā with Allah’s mercy and continue with his famous example of the compass. Mawlānā used the expression, “Keep the needle of the compass fixed, but extend the other arm to reach the whole world.” As DEİK, we say: “Roll open the world map and put your finger down on any random place. At that place, you will find DEİK, and by DEİK, you will find Türkiye Brand.” From Mauritania to Japan, Italy to Argentina, Kazakhstan to Australia, and Azerbaijan to Mexico, we are fixing the needle of the compass to Türkiye and extending the other arm to the entire world in order to carry out our country’s foreign economic relations and successfully bring the Türkiye Brand to anywhere in the world. With the motto “We work to bring our strength to the world,” we function as an organisation that guides like the “Polaris” around the world while also working harmoniously within its own team. Bringing our strength to the world means exalting the Türkiye Brand in the whole world, which is the core of our foundation and the shaping value of our work as DEİK. DEİK has been operating on a voluntary basis for 38 years as the window of Türkiye’s private sector that opens abroad. Under the leadership of our Presidency, as well as the support and coordination of our Minister of Trade, we conduct our activities to increase inter-country investment and trade with the view of “commercial diplomacy.” The backbone of DEİK is comprised of the Business Council, which we expect to increase to 153 soon. The main purpose of business councils, which are mainly country-based, is to work to improve all foreign economic relations between that country and ours. Of course, exports are a priority when it comes to foreign economic relations. However, due to the nature of the economy, imports, tourism, services, investments, contracts, and such economic activities are included in our operations.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD



A business council consists of businesspeople already operating in Türkiye and other countries or those who want to start doing business. In each country, we work with counterpart organisations, not with our branches, like the US Chamber of Commerce and the Japan Business Federation (Keidanren). We also have a magazine called “Business Diplomacy.” It is published bimonthly in two languages: English and Turkish. In addition to printed distribution, it is also available digitally. Our numerous guides, reports, and research publications are delivered to our clients in a variety of languages, meeting the needs of the business sector. DEİK also provides services in English, French, Arabic, Russian, Spanish, and Chinese. Every year, we host thousands of events through our Business Councils to communicate our business world, economy, values, sector representatives, and strategies to our counterparts around the world, introduce ourselves, and transport the Turkish brand to every corner of the globe. In addition to the now commonplace meetings with delegations from various countries and with Ambassadors, Consuls General, and Trade

Counsellors, I would like to provide a few examples of our recent activities. Last week, we first travelled to Paris and then London to attend a series of meetings with our Minister of Trade. In the context of the Türkiye-France JETCO meeting, we discussed the revision of the Customs Union, renewable energy, and cooperation opportunities in third countries during our business world meeting. And the agenda of our UK-Türkiye meetings covered the following topics: revision of the current FTA, R&D, energy, the green economy and digitalisation. Prior to that, we convened our Türkiye-Pakistan Round Table meeting in Istanbul, which was attended by our Ministers of Trade and was graced by the presence of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Shahbaz Sharif.



On the same day, we hosted a meeting with the President of Cuba, Mr. Miguel Díaz-Canel and Turkish Business People, together with Ministers

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

and Ambassadors. Shortly prior to that, we hosted the 12th Round Table Meeting of the DEİK/TAİK Türkiye Investment Conference in New York, which was graced by the presence of our President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, as well as attended by our Ministers, Ambassadors, and representatives of the business world. Our Turkish Technology & Entrepreneurship Investment meeting at META Headquarters was a significant event within the scope of the conference. Our agenda included critical topics such as artificial intelligence, big data, Fintech, 5G, cyber security, and blockchain. It was a meeting organised by the United States with representatives of 15 of the top 50 Fortune 500 companies and 15 Turkish companies. I am merely stating this fact for the sake of illustration. We discussed entrepreneurship in Türkiye and Turkish technology and entrepreneurship at the new headquarters of META. Once again, the existence of a civil society organisation operating at META's headquarters can be associated with Türkiye's brand perception. Otherwise, they will not open those doors for you as a courtesy. I believe that this is a significant accomplishment for our country. This year at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum, within the framework of the Asia Anew Initiative of our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the DEİK ASEAN Working Group, the topics we discussed were the goals of establishing the perception of being not only a sectoral dialogue partner but also a direct partner, along with increasing our effectiveness in the ASEAN region, which has the world's fastest urbanising regions and may offer opportunities for Turkish companies in contracting, digitalisation and energy sectors.

There are so many events that we cannot go over every one of them. Each of the events, of which I have only mentioned a few, is a brand on its own, a brand of Türkiye through DEİK. Another Turkish brand event is the TABEF Turkish African Business and Economic Forum, which we organise every two years and have already started preparations for 2023. Every year, we host thousands of events through our Business Councils to communicate our business world, economy, values, sector representatives, and strategies to our counterparts around the world, introduce ourselves, and transport the Turkish brand to every corner of the globe. DTİK (World Turkish Business Council) is another Business Council to which we place significant importance regarding the Türkiye Brand, in addition to DEİK's

country-based Business Councils. DTİK is our Business Council, which is dedicated to the establishment of a network and coordination among Turkish-origin and Türkiye-friendly businesspeople residing abroad. It also seeks to strengthen the Türkiye Brand among Turkish-origin and Türkiye-friendly individuals in the geographic areas in which they reside. DTİK is dedicated to the advancement of the economic power of the Turkish community residing abroad, as it is a well-established fact that an economically active Turkish community that is engaged in the system of the country in which they reside will make a greater contribution to their homeland and operates in six regions (the Americas, Asia Pacific, Europe, Eurasia, the Balkans, and the Middle East/Africa/Gulf). The World Turkish Business Council operates country and city representative offices to enhance the efficacy of its commercial diplomacy endeavours. Each of them is also a representative of the Türkiye Brand at the same time. The reason why I mentioned these is that our activities indeed have an economic and commercial focus, but as the DEİK family, our purpose beyond making money is to contribute to the perception of the Türkiye Brand, and the output of our activities is directly linked to the Türkiye Brand.

As previously stated, perception and communication are among the critical components of a brand. When we meet with the international business world at the thousands of events we hold as DEİK, we do not exclusively discuss purchasing and selling goods or investments. We establish communication bridges by sharing information about our country, economy, values, and potential from a much longer-term perspective. We accomplish this through our 152 Business Councils, which are nearly as widespread as the capillaries in every corner of the world. We serve as the brand ambassadors of Türkiye.

As DEİK, we carry out commercial diplomacy activities, taking the following principles into consideration:

- We pay attention to developing long-term collaborations rather than short-term profits.
- We focus not on short-term thinking but on strategic fields that will yield results in the long term.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

- We work on the basis of communication, networking and information sharing.

These endeavours are producing favourable outcomes, and we are optimistic that we will achieve even greater success. Last year, our exports exceeded 1% of the global trade share, which was 0.5% 20 years ago. Our objective is to achieve 1.5%. Today, as Türkiye, we are an economy that sells over 4,000 products to more than 200 countries. In other words, our brands—exceeding 4,000 in number—bear the flag on behalf of our country, Türkiye, in more than 200 countries.

Of course, it is essential to express the communication and perception we created together in numbers, but I would also like to share a nice anecdote. During the DEİK Africa session, which I moderated at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum organised by our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where 14 Foreign Ministers attended as panellists, the Foreign Minister of Gabon said the following: “We love you Turks very much because of two characteristics. First, you have never been a coloniser in your history, which is highly notable. And second, you do not behave like hunters, as some others do. The hunter comes, aims, shoots and leaves with the catch. You are not like that; you come to share with us.”

The values that serve as the foundation for our collaborative effort to shape this perception are as follows: a commitment to people, a desire to win hearts, the principle of truth and justice, and a perpetual pursuit of improvement, all of which are consistent with the principles of Türkiye’s communication model.

There is no better brand perception than this. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to everyone who has created this brand and contributed at this point: our statesmen, workers, students, academics, and business world. Of course, within this framework, I could summarise the values we take as a basis, which are also in the spirit of Türkiye’s communication model: “a commitment to people, a desire to win hearts, the principle of truth, justice, and a perpetual pursuit of improvement.” I think that our main achievement is focusing on these values. That is our true brand achievement, and our priority is to continue to work harder collectively to raise this bar even higher and disseminate it to the entire world.

We exist with the goal of making money. Economic enterprises are established to make money, but when you think not only about making money but also acting in solidarity with your country and becoming a brand for your country, it makes sense. In this context, as a member, representative, and president of the DEİK family, I think we are advancing with firm steps in a solid environment. Both our members and our professional team work 24/7, day and night, to collectively carry out our country's commercial diplomacy, enhance it, elevate it, and raise our brand value even higher.

We, as DEİK, are a brand of this beautiful country, Türkiye, and "Our Business is Commercial Diplomacy" is the motto of this brand.

With these feelings, I would like to thank everyone who organised and contributed to the Türkiye Nation Branding Forum.



**SIXTH
SESSION**

Branding in the History of Türkiye: From Mark to Brand



Prof. Ahmet Kala
İstanbul University Faculty Member

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Branding in the History
of Türkiye: From Mark
to Brand**

PARTICIPANTS



Prof. Ahmet Kala
İstanbul University, Faculty Member



01

In dictionaries, mark is defined as the synonym of “sign, trademark, brand.”

The Invention of Nomadic Turkish Marks

The word “mark” initially appeared in the inscriptions on stones, rocks, and columns. We have learned from the information related to the marks on stone inscriptions that the Turks were familiar with and were utilising marks long before the alphabets used on the Yenisey, Orkhon, and Gök-türk inscriptions.

Orkhon Inscriptions

When the available evidence is evaluated, the marks is an invention of the nomadic Turks. Nomadic Turks used two separate marks for each Turkic tribe, first to distinguish their tribes and then their livestock. The first mark was used as a distinct symbol-flag for each of the Turkic tribes. The second mark is the sign of each Turkic tribe, which engages in animal husbandry, millions in numbers.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD



Mahmud al-Kashgari describes the mark as follows: “Oghuz is a Turkic tribe. Each tribe has a unique symbol, flag, and a unique seal on the live-stock belonging to the tribe.”

Symbols and Stamps of Turkic Tribes

Tribe Name	Symbol	Tribe Name	Symbol	Tribe Name	Symbol	Tribe Name	Symbol	Tribe Name	Symbol
KAYI		ISI		M		U			
BACAT	↑	↑	↑↑	↑	↑	o			
ALKA-FULI	U	-----	⊗	U	o				
KARA-EVCI	↑	↑	o	↑	↑				
YOKUR	X	Y		X	↑				
DÖĞER	⊗	X	↑	⊗	↑				
OVUNAN	X	U	⊗	X	↑				
TRIMALI	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	o			
ANSAR	X	↑	↑	X	↑				
KIZIK	↑	X	↑	↑	↑				
BEKICI	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑				
KARXUN	VI	VI	↑	VI					

A bird depiction was present on the flag of Attila, while the head of a wolf was depicted on the Göktürk flag. Since time immemorial, predators have been revered as symbols of tribes. The Anatolian Seljuks used the double-headed eagle motif on castle bastions, coins, tiles, stone, and metal ornaments as a single coat of arms and sometimes with the phrase “es-sultân”. It appears that the double-headed eagle, with its wings and talons spread to the sides, is a symbol of dominance.

Double-headed Eagle Symbolising Seljuk Dominance on the City Walls of Diyarbakır



Symbol and Flag of the Kayı Tribe

Secondly, the use of mark, i.e. a brand indigenous to each region, as a Geographical Indication, geographical embroidered as figures on the carpets and rugs, has also been seen since the nomadic Turks.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

DIVERSIFICATION OF MARKS

Stamps-Seals with Special Marks, Signatures and the Name of the Sovereign Representing the State

Tuğra (Tughra)-Tuğruğ

The tughra, “tuğrağ” in Oghuz Turkish, was the special mark or signature that contained the name of the Turkish sovereigns (Sultan) carved on stamps or seals, and only the sovereign would have these stamps with special signatures. Therefore, the tughra is the special mark-signature of the Turkish sovereign representing the state, imprinted with a stamp. The Sovereign’s (Sultan) tughra maker would design this special signature for the sovereign. In the Ottoman Empire, the high-ranking official in charge of the sultan’s tughra was called “nişancı, tuğraî, tevkîî, muvakkî”. The tughra had been used by the Seljuks since Tuğrul Bey (Tughrul Beg). Although it is accepted that the tughra of Tughrul Beg was the Kınık (a Turkic tribe) seal consisting of a bow and arrow found on Seljuk coins, the originals have not survived to our time. A tughra belonging to the founder of the Ottoman Empire, Sultan Osman, has not been found. In light of this information, the first Ottoman sultan to use the tughra was Sultan Orhan, the son of Sultan Osman. Two of the Sultan Orhan’s tughras from 1324 and 1348 have survived to the present day. From the time of Murad II onwards, the phrase “muzaffer dâimâ” (victorious forever) was added to the tughras as a prayer. This phrase began to be used as “el-muzaffer dâimâ” (Victor forever) since the time of Fâtih Sultan Mehmed (Mehmed II).

State Coats of Arms

Coats of arms are special symbols produced by the embossing technique on stone, metal or fabric. The Turks employed a variety of arms to represent statehood and sovereignty, such as the wolf’s head on the Göktürk flag, the double-headed eagle on the Seljuk flag, the bow and arrow on the Ottoman flag, and the image of a bird on Attila’s flag.



Sultan Abdülhamid II had the Ottoman Empire's Western-style coat of arms designed and implemented it in 1882. However, the use of the coat of arms was not legally regulated. The Ottoman State Coat of Arms was also based on the one that Queen Victoria had previously designed to be placed in the Royal Palace as an arm of friendship after the Crimean War and presented to Sultan Abdülmecit for his approval. The legal use of the tughra, the distinctive signature of the sultan that represented the Ottoman Empire, persisted until the end of the Ottoman period. Furthermore, the Ottoman State Coat of Arms was embroidered with the Sultan's tughra and employed as such.

Flag, Symbol, Coat of Arms, Seal of the Republic of Türkiye



Flag of the Republic of Türkiye



Coat of Arms of the Republic of Türkiye

Flag of the Republic of Türkiye was legally regulated. Crimson is the colour of the Turkish flag, which symbolises the blood of martyrs. The cres-

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

cent moon and star on the crimson colour represent the moon and star that are reflected on the spilled blood of martyrs at night. The colour crimson, together with the moon and star, form the Turkish flag.

The “Presidential Coat of Arms” is a design with the sun at the centre, 8 long and 8 short rays encircling the inner circumference of the sun, and 16 stars encircling the outer circumference, and the background is in the colour of the Turkish Flag. The 16 stars in the Presidential Coat of Arms represent the 16 major Turkish empires in history, while the Republic of Türkiye is symbolised by the sun in the centre.

Presidential Coat of Arms

The Presidential Coat of Arms consists of the Turkish Flag and the Presidential coat of arms in the upper left corner of the flag.



Presidential Seal

In 1925, a competition was conducted to determine the first Turkish State Coat of Arms. The painter Namık İbrahim’s design was chosen, but it was never used in practice.

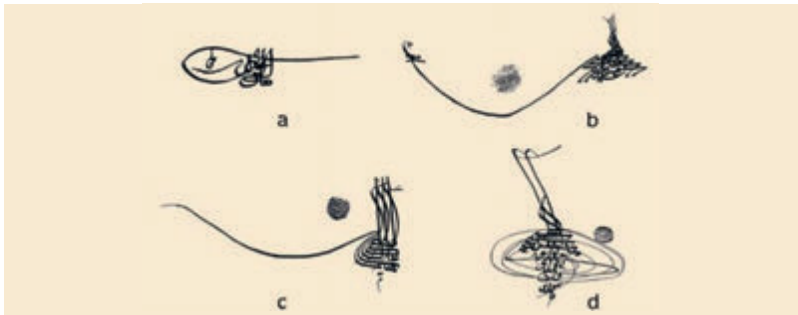


Signed Stamps with Special Marks containing the Names of Senior Executives Authorised by the Sovereign

Seals: regents of the sovereign and chief viziers used signature stamps with special markings to represent the sovereign. This special stamp was only kept in person by the official himself.

Pençe - Abbreviated signature /Claw

The signatures of high-ranking administrators were referred to as Pençe (Claw) in Ottoman diplomacy. The Pençe (Claw) was positioned in the margin of the heading where the text started, while the sovereign's tughra was consistently positioned above the document's text.



Diversification of Stamps: Symbols; Motifs-Patterns

During the transition to settlement, stamp figures were affixed to a variety of regional carpets, rugs, fabrics, leather, and timber, depending on the region, as works of hand embroidery (ornamentation), which has enabled the emergence of numerous local brands and carpet-rug varieties, which are now referred to as "Geographical Indications (GIs)" In addition to stamps, motifs and patterns have been created in the form of special signs and associated products. There have been numerous locally branded products, with a particular emphasis on hand embroidery, rugs, and carpets. The most significant branded products of this era were Turkish/Turkmen rugs and carpets. The name of the region in which they are produced or the name of the producing tribe has garnered global recognition for "Turkish/Turkmen rugs and carpets" in the extensive geography where Turkish tribes reside.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD



The use of animal images in carpet patterns



Anatolian Carpet Motifs



Turkmen Yomut Carpet



Turkmen Bukhara Carpet

Bird Patterned Motifs and Their Meanings

When used as a motif, the eagle, a bird of prey, represents power and might. The nightingale and the dove symbolise luck; the owl and the crow symbolise negativity.

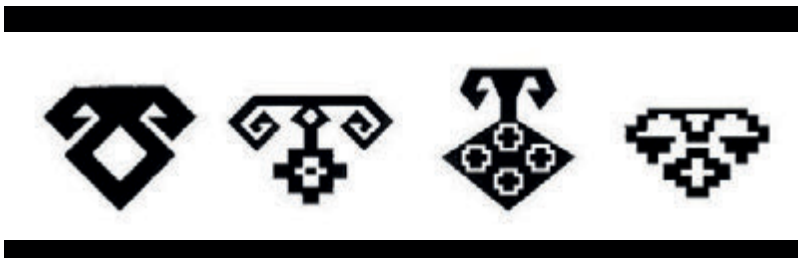
Motifs Representing Abundance, their names and meanings

The “hand on the waist” motif represents the woman, and the “ram” motif represents the man. With the “eye” motif used in the middle, the whole motif symbolises “fertility.” The eye included in the motif symbolises the protection of the family from evil, while the “pıtrak” (clotweed) motif represents abundance and prosperity.



Hand on the Waist, Ram’s Horn and Bukağı Motifs

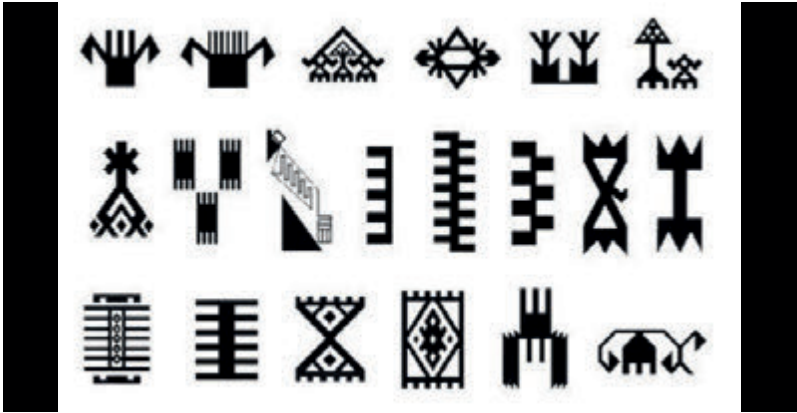
The trammel motif is a symbol of family unity. The ram’s horn motif represents the male element of the family. The motif “eli belinde” (hand on the waist) represents femininity and productivity.



NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Finger/Comb and Hand Motifs

The hands symbolise efficiency and productivity; the fingers symbolise protection from evil eyes; and the comb symbolises birth.



Branded and Patented Products of Anadolu Ahis (Âhiyân-ı Rum) Forming the Artisans Industry Associations

By introducing the method of industrial production by artisan-industry associations in sectoral production clusters, Ahi Evran successfully increased the scale of production compared to the previous individual means of production, which in turn increased production, improved quality, and reduced costs. Every sectoral production association is established to generate a product with a defined design and production technique in three different qualities in a particular geographical area. Thus, each branded product is named after the production association. Such as the Istanbul Coppersmith Artisan Association copper tray, copper plate, copper sini (a bigger round tray), and so on.

The right to production was limited to the boundaries of the kadiluk (judiciary) to which the production association belonged. Thus, in a particular geographical area, for example, within the borders of the Kadiluk of Istanbul, copper goods were produced by the Coppersmith Artisan Association. The production rights of the Istanbul Coppersmith Artisan Association were not valid within the borders of, for example, the Eyüp

Kadiluk. The name of the artisan association is a brand name. However, the name of the artisan or the name and special stamp of the customer was permitted to be stamped on the product.



Copper lenger-plate (large copper plate) with floral motifs



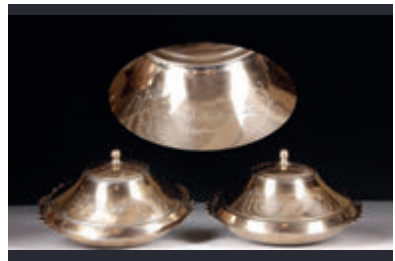
Bursa coppersmith artisan-made embroidered copper bath bowl



Bursa coppersmith artisan-made sliced copper bath bowl



Isparta coppersmith artisan-made copper lenger-plate



Istanbul Süleymaniye Coppersmith artisan-made double brass pan The name of the owner is written on the top of the pans: "devletlü Nazik Eda Kadın sene 1261" (great and wealthy Nazik Eda Kadın year 1261)

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Alamet-i Farika Nizamnamesi (Trademark Regulations) (1871), Registered Ottoman and Early Republican Brands



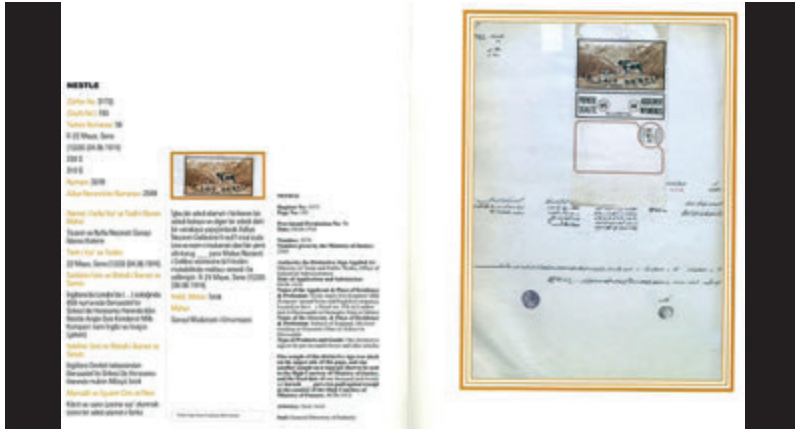
The Ottoman Empire was among the first countries in the world to enact a brand (Intellectual Property (IP)) law for commercial products based on factory-made goods. Shortly after the brand law was enacted in France in 1856 and in England in 1862 for the protection of products whose inventors were known, the Ottoman State announced the brand regulation in 1871. Later, Germany enacted the brand law in 1874, followed by Switzerland and Belgium in 1879, and then other countries. The Ottomans also specifically protected all industrial property rights of Ottoman tradesmen's associations, including their previously registered trademarks, by excluding them from the scope of this law. The 1871 Alâmet-i Fârika Brand Regulation was one of the most important developments in the history of Turkish industrial property rights. This legislation is important in that it is the first legislation to directly protect our industrial property rights, which are now protected based on the production of products.



İhtira Beratı (Patent Law - 1879)



First patents in the Ottoman and Republican periods



First patents in the Ottoman and Republican periods



**SEVENTH
SESSION**

Nation Branding in the World: Experience Sharing



Nur Özkan Erbay

The Coordinator of Türkiye Brand Office, Directorate of Communications | Moderator



James Martin

FutureBrand Global Associate
Director of Marketing



Carmen Julia Garcia

Former Head of the
Image and Country Brand
Strategy Office of PromPeru



Gustavo Koniszczcer

Managing Director,
FutureBrand Hispanic America



Timuçin Güler

Ministry of Culture and Tourism,
Promotion General-Manager



Salim Zakhour

Consultant, Ministry of
Culture of Qatar



**Francesco de Stefani
Spadafora**

Director of the Economic and
Trade Department of the
Italian Embassy

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Nation Branding in
the World: Experience
Sharing**



Nur Özkan Erbay

The Coordinator of Türkiye Brand Office, Directorate of Communications | Moderator



01

Distinguished speakers, once again, welcome to our first Türkiye Nation Branding Forum. We have a very good audience. Our headline is “Nation Branding in the World: Experience Sharing”. Our goal in this panel is to take a deeper look into the field of communication and branding with real-life examples based on nation-branding experiences. We are going to discuss this with experts from the field, including a government official from Türkiye and others who have worked on nation branding management.

Thus, the evaluation and analysis made will be valuable. We believe that these will contribute to Türkiye’s branding process and nation branding values on a global scale. Our questions will be as follows;

What are your priorities and methods when building a nation brand in your country? Examples from Türkiye, Peru, Qatar and Italy.

What are the problems that can be encountered in nation branding processes? These can change due to the political environment, global crises, regional crises or internal dynamics. In this sense, what are the obstacles that one might encounter?

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Who are your stakeholders in nation branding? What are the roles of these actors in these processes?

How is technology used in nation branding activities? Which technology is more popular? In the future, what technologies could be used more and more often in the field of nation branding?

What are the participants' opinions on global nation branding indexes that measure nation brand values?



Reflections of Brand Investment
on Country Indexes: The Case
of Brand Peru

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Reflections of Brand
Investment on Country
Indexes: The Case of
Brand Peru**



Nur Özkan Erbay
The Coordinator of Türkiye
Brand Office, Directorate of
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Carmen Julia Garcia
Former Head of the
Image and Country
Brand Strategy Office of
PromPeru



Gustavo Koniszczewski
Managing Director, FutureBrand
Hispanic America



02

James Martin

Hello İstanbul. Good morning, welcome. Thank you so much for joining us today and for taking the time out of your Saturday morning to attend. We would also like to extend our gratitude to the panellists, our hosts, the presenters from yesterday and today, and, of course, the organisers of this event for convening prominent figures in the field of nation branding.

The things we can accomplish by pooling all of our knowledge and resources are truly amazing. Today we will talk about nation branding around the world. My name is James Martin, and I am the Global Associate Director of Marketing at FutureBrand. First of all, what is a brand? I am confident that the audience would provide a plethora of insightful responses, all of which would be accurate might I add, if I were to pose this question. However, I prefer to approach the inquiry “What is a brand?” in the following manner: Your brand is what is said about you when you are not in the room.

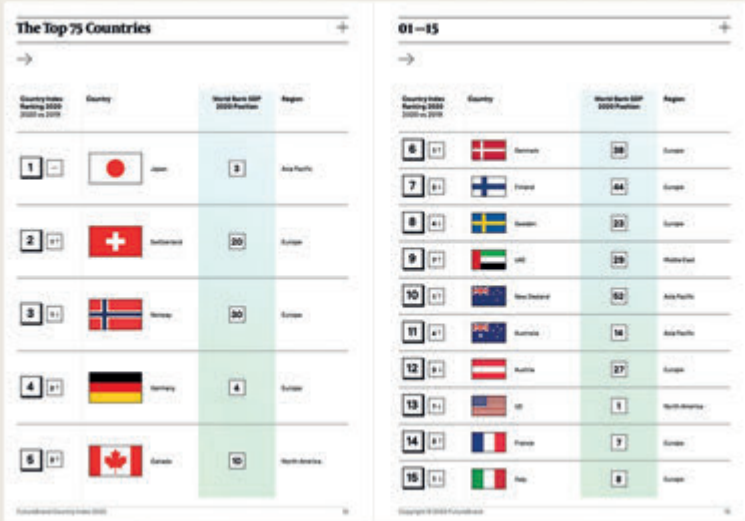
As FutureBrand, we are actually a brand-led business transformation company. We have a team consisting of different branding experts, design experts, and strategic thinkers. We believe that a brand is the behaviour of its employees, products and services, wherever they are in the world. Including the things said when the brand is not in the room.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

We exist to transform the future of businesses by changing how their brands behave today. Because, we truly believe that if you change the brand, you can change the future. Although we are not yet in Istanbul, we have offices in some of the world’s most exciting cities, such as Sao Paulo, Shanghai, London, New York and Buenos Aires. What this means for us is that we have feet on the ground and can understand local nuances. We are where we need to be to balance the global scale with cultural connection. One of the most exciting parts of my job personally and while working with FutureBrand teams around the world is what we come up with in destination branding.

We implement our strategic thinking and design ideas to places, experiences and brand marketing. As part of our comprehensive destination branding initiative, we publish the worldwide-known and industry-leading FutureBrand Country Index. The FutureBrand Country Index provides an in-depth and nuanced ranking of global nation brands. The Index is available in our website. We invite you to take a look. The research we did is being carried out with a globally informed audience. We evaluate the image, reputation and perception of countries ranked in the top 75 according to the World Bank’s Gross Domestic Product ranking.

FutureBrand



Let's take a brief look at the methodology we used to create our ranking. We take 22 features into account when making our ranking. We ask questions about people's perceptions of historical values, natural beauties, health, education, standards of living, political freedom and tolerance. Questions such as "Are there any authentic products?" or "Do they generate high-quality products?" are asked. The ranking of the top 75 countries consists of 22 distinct metrics. The responses of individuals who are highly informed on a global scale are the foundation of our research. Our research is conducted with senior public employees and executives. In addition to their frequent travels, they possess a comprehensive understanding of the countries they cover. We will examine fifteen of the top countries in our 2020 country index. Japan is at the top, followed by Switzerland, then Norway, Germany and Canada. We can confidently assert that Türkiye ranks 51st among 75 nations. I see a great foundation here. As FutureBrand, we look to the future. There is no reason to believe that Türkiye will not achieve a higher ranking in the country index within a few years.

There is only one certainty for us as human beings living in this world, and that is uncertainty. The only thing that can be expected is the unexpected. It could be a global pandemic, a war, a cost-of-living crisis, an energy crisis. All of these external factors are beyond our control. These situations can affect us and our nations at any time. Our research and the data we acquire annually demonstrate that nations that consistently invest in their brands are more capable of enduring such shocks and preserving their global position.

The next time you visit another country, please frame your perception in the context of the dimensions we use in our index. For example, what do you think about this country's exports? Are they authentic? How is their quality? Are they unique and attractive? What do you think about their tourism? What about their attractive points? What do you think about the food in the country or the hotels you stayed in? What do you think about the heritage or culture of the country? What do you think about its historical sites? What are your thoughts on its art and natural beauty? Or what is the value system like? Do you agree with their views on tolerance and environmental sensitivity? Is this a good country for business? Does

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

it have a good infrastructure, advanced technology? What about quality of life? How are the health, education and living standards there? What is it like to live there? Most importantly, what is it like for future leaders to train there?

We have worked with some big brands when it comes to destinations. We have collaborated on various concepts, from the vibrant and colourful Essential Costa Rica to airlines such as Air Malta.

Recently, we also worked with the Tuscany brand. Tuscany is an incredible region. It is a place rich in history, heritage and culture. In this respect, I think it is similar to İstanbul and Türkiye. We were about to talk with my colleague Gustavo. He is the coordinator of our Hispanic America Branch. I had a colleague who was scheduled to provide me with information regarding Brand Peru; however, she was unable to attend due to one of the unforeseen circumstances I mentioned before. She sent me a video that explains our approach to collaborating with various destinations and the steps we take to increase their brand visibility on a global scale. I will be asking some questions, and we will get answers. Both Gustavo and Carmen Julia Garcia will talk about these issues.

Now let's talk about Brand Peru. My first question is as follows: What was the state of the region and Peru during the first decade of the century, and what was the significance of the concept of a "nation brand" during that period?

Carmen Julia Garcia



Thank you very much for inviting me to the Türkiye Nation Branding Forum and I extend my greetings to the participants. In the first decade of the century, Peru experienced sustainable and diversified economic growth and political and democratic stability. It had excellent prospects for trade, tourism and investment. The government's and the state's commitment to modernisation and to the public-private sector was at the highest level. Peru has been promoting itself abroad through different strategies carried out by various organisations. The most prominent of these strategies was to create a brand to promote the country's tourism sector. The other one was to encourage and promote exports. In particular, a brand was created to promote the textile sector.

The Peruvian Ministry of Production has created a brand called "Comprale al Peru" (Buy from Peru) to promote and publicise the country's industry. The "Invest in Peru" brand was also created to encourage investment. This was managed by the ProInversion Agency (Peruvian Private Investment Promotion Agency). This brand competed with the "Peru Now" brand, which was managed by the private sector for investment. For the promotion of gastronomy, a brand called "Peru Mucho Gusto" was created and managed by the Peruvian Brand Office PromPeru. As you can see, there was a diverse universe of brands for the promotion of our country, corresponding to different goals and interests. These brands had different designs and different communication styles. This meant that the country's communication was not strong since the efforts and budget of each brand became diluted. As a result, the impact was limited, isolated, inconsistent, and non-synergistic. This situation necessitated strong international communication, as was already being done with neighbouring countries. Peru had a lot of content and positive elements to share, such as our economic development, the wonder of the world, Machu Picchu, awards, and Peruvian talent. Therefore, we believed that a cohesive nation brand that could be used for both the private and public sectors was necessary. This had to be a brand that expresses the sentiments, values, and concepts of a nation while being inclusive, integrative, and unifying. It had to put forward proposals and be open to all kinds of initiatives, as well as being multi-sectoral and creating opportunities for the nation.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

James Martin

Thank you, Carmen. It used to be too scattered. Different brands were doing different things, and they all needed to be organised and simplified to become more reasonable. So, Carmen, what was the foreign public perception of Peru in terms of tourism and business? Can you tell us a little bit about that?

Carmen Julia Garcia



A variety of information was provided to PromPeru, the institution responsible for the development of the nation brand project, in order to monitor and analyse the worldwide perception of a territorial brand both of Peru and the countries of the region. Country Brand Index studies from 2006, 2007, and 2008 were taken as a reference. Peru reached the top ten in the associations of “history” and “authenticity.” According to these studies, Peru stood out with four strong associations in 2009 with the addition of “natural beauty” and “culture & arts.” Interviews were also held with the allies with whom PromPeru worked. These national and international allies were representatives of two prioritised sectors: tourism and exports. Likewise, the organisations participating in the nation-brand development project made contact through ProInversión and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with investors and/or various other people who know and work with Peru. This initiative made it possible to identify target audiences at the national and international levels for promoting the Peru Brand. At the national level, the primary target audience was

the private tourism, exports, and investment sectors. Opinion leaders and national personalities were also included. They had to understand the need for a common strategy and be an active part of it. Our second target audience was all Peruvians. We needed them to understand and support the brand's objectives.

On the international level, our target audience was potential buyers, investors, and tourists from twelve markets: the USA, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Chile, Spain, France, Germany, the UK, and China.

James Martin

How was this process organised? Who was involved? Did you receive any external support?

Carmen Julia Garcia

The Nation Brand Working Group was formally established to coordinate the development of the project. This group included representatives from the public sector: PromPeru (Tourism and Export), ProInversión, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism (MINCETUR). All of these institutions were coordinated by the Technical Secretariat of PromPeru (eleven people in total). A group of notable Peruvian marketing and communications experts also provided technical support and pro bono advice at different stages of the project. Likewise, PromPeru's Board of Directors, which represents the country's most important trade associations, supported the private sector. The Board of Directors would be the last instance of approval for the technical advances of the Nation Brand Project within PromPeru. The contracting process for the development of the Peru nation brand was launched under the rules of the United Nations Development Programme and awarded to Future-Brand. The validation service was provided by Inmark, a company that provided support, testing, and validation services at different stages of the brand development process at the national and international levels.

James Martin

What are the strategic guidelines defined for the nation brand? I would like to give the floor to Gustavo.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Gustavo Koniszczcer



Hello, good morning everyone. To continue from Carmen Julia's words, the process she described was really well organised. A lot of internal and external support was involved in the process. After undertaking the project as FutureBrand, we began visiting the country. We conducted interviews and online surveys. We have met smart and relevant people from different sectors of the country, as Carmen Julia said. Then we applied to strategic platforms. The following slide shows how the brand can use the location and narrative context to best represent what Peru has to offer the world. We identified three key features: multidimensionality, specialisation, and effectiveness. Believe it or not, these three main features are still at the forefront, filtering each of the country's communications with the world along with defining the message that the Peru brand communicates to different target audiences.

James Martin

Thank you Gustavo, I have another question for you. How do you proceed with creative stages after reaching strategic definitions?

Gustavo Koniszczcer

In a process like this, you must first receive approval. This is the strategic definition of the fundamental principles. Afterwards, as you can predict, a vast visual exploration process begins based on the country's significant, deep, and ancient culture. According to UNESCO, Peru is one of the six cradles of civilisation. So we did not struggle to find a source of inspira-

tion. And we came out with this brand. It is a fully-fledged brand that is not just a logo but a visual system. This system contains the definition of a new typography system and colour palette. As Carmen Julia said, the visual and design elements, respected and loved, gain prominence as significantly rich elements that help the country express itself through its brand.

James Martin

Now back to you, Carmen. How was this process initiated and implemented?

Carmen Julia Garcia

On March 10, 2011, the Peru Brand was officially founded. The main objective was to position our country on a global level, contributing its knowledge through a unique, relevant, and consistent identity. From its inception, Peru Brand aimed to build a high-value Peru that would be observed by key target audiences in the long term. Peru Brand appeared for the first time at the ITB tourism events in Berlin, Germany, the International Tourism Fair in Barcelona, Spain, the BMT fair in Naples, Italy, as well as at the specialised export fairs in the USA, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Peru, and Canada. It was also present at Peru Day on Wall Street, New York, promoting our country as an investment destination.

James Martin

What were the milestones in the history of the brand in recent years, and how do you feel about the results obtained?

Carmen Julia Garcia

With our advertising campaigns, we have obtained great recognition over the years, which supported the intense promotional work carried out by PromPeru in order to ensure that Peru remains in the minds of our people and tourists as a destination with a great historical legacy as well as a forward-looking nation with a vibrant and avant-garde culture.

One of our best campaigns was Peru Nebraska, a national campaign for which Peruvians felt proud and which also won 42 national and international awards in addition to publicity valued at 5.2 million Peruvian soles

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

and 7.6 million US dollars in advertising invested by brand ambassadors. The international campaign, Recordaras Peru, was viewed 8,330,327 times on YouTube in different languages and reached 213 million people internationally.

Other more recent actions that have also brought us recognition and achievements are the “Casa Peru” (Peru House) at the 2018 World Cup in Russia and the Peru Pavilion at the Expo Dubai 2020. Of course, other projects are on the way that we are sure will contribute to the promotion of our country.



James Martin

Thank you very much, Carmen. This is our set-up at the 2018 World Cup in Moscow and our pavilion at the Dubai Expo. I hope this gives you an idea of what we do as FutureBrand for destinations and nations, as well as how we work with clients. Thank you so much for listening. Please visit our website.

Nur Özkan Erbay

Thank you, James, Gustavo, and Ms. Julia Garcia, from Peru Brand Office. Muchas gracias for this presentation. You have beautifully described Peru's challenges, experiences, and successes in nation branding. I will now give the floor to Mr. Timuçin Güler, Promotion General Manager, to talk about our nation's experience in this field.



Türkiye's Nation Branding
from the Perspective of
Tourism

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Türkiye's Nation
Branding from the
Perspective of Tourism**



Nur Özkan Erbay
The Coordinator of Türkiye
Brand Office, Directorate of
Communications | Moderator

PARTICIPANTS



Tımuçin Güler
Ministry of Culture and Tourism,
Promotion General-Manager



03

Timuçin Güler

One of the most difficult areas of marketing is promoting a country and managing its brand. This is a difficult topic that also requires you to be sensitive and cautious at all times, do accurate measuring, and closely monitor the global agenda. Therefore, I would like to mostly address the tourism aspect and focus on the Türkiye Brand in my presentation today.

The Türkiye Tourism Promotion and Development Agency (TGA) was established in 2019 to promote Türkiye's tourism brand abroad. TGA, which was established with a private-sector focus and continues to operate as such, is home to professionals who are experts in fields such as marketing, advertising, communication, and tourism. When we examine the other countries around the world, we see that the tourism promotion agencies have been around for a long time. For example, Italy in 1919, Germany in 1948, Singapore in 1964, the United Kingdom in 1969, Spain in 1982, and France in 1987 all established and launched tourism promotion agencies.

Despite having a relatively young promotion agency compared to other nations, we are currently the country with the most active tourism promotion. At present, TGA is collaborating with local television channels in

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

34 countries and with global television channels in over 200 countries on content and advertising. Among the global news channels we collaborate with are CNN International, BBC, Al Jazeera, and Euronews. We both promote and use advertising throughout the year in order to develop the brand.

One of the points we focus on is the use of digital channels. We run digital advertising campaigns in over 200 countries. As you are aware, digital platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter are exceedingly prevalent worldwide. Additionally, in certain countries, we execute audience-oriented advertising campaigns on the digital platforms of those countries. If you do not use these platforms effectively, then you will not be successful. Apart from these, we have other partners and associates. For example, we work with international magazines. We cooperate with international magazines in 18 countries in terms of advertising and content.

These advertising efforts alone are not enough to promote a country. In addition, we implement another sales-oriented method which we call “Advertising Together”. Obviously, it is essential to establish an international network if you are focusing on a tourism brand and attempting to increase the number of visitors to your country. At that point, you will need partners who can speak on your behalf. This resulted in the realisation of 177 “Advertising Together Projects” in 41 countries through collaboration with foreign airlines and travel agencies.



So far, I have talked about our advertising activities. Another important element of promotion is hospitality and PR activities. As TGA, we hosted more than 6,500 press members, influencers and tour operators from 85 different countries around the world in 81 cities in 2022. Hospitality was part of a very big programme and took place over a whole year. As part of hospitality, we did not focus on merely one or 4-5 well-known cities. Our aim here was to make the opinion leaders in the countries experience our tourism products and show them our 81 provinces.



Goturkiye.com is our official tourism platform. We are talking about a platform with more than 155 million unique visitors in total. Every year, this visitor number increases. This platform offers around 55 experience topics, including cycling, health, faith, archaeology, culture, and golf. It provides access to a comprehensive collection of visual materials and information regarding 104 distinct destinations in 81 cities and 7 regions of Türkiye. The Go Türkiye platform can broadcast in ten distinct languages and features artificial intelligence. For example, after visiting the website once, it will recommend different content the next time you come.

It is well known that Instagram is one of the most important social media platforms. We also have an Instagram account called GoTürkiye. This account has 2.1 million followers (as of December 2022). The most important thing on Instagram is creating content. We are working hard to

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

create as much interesting content as we can. When compared to other countries' official tourism accounts, Go Türkiye has the third-highest number of followers worldwide, trailing only Australia and Dubai.



Another important issue in tourism is sustainability. In the coming years, the concept of sustainability will serve as the foundation for tourist visits and tourism investments. People's vacation choices will prioritise sustainable facilities and countries. Türkiye is the world's first government to execute this as a programme. We created a certificate programme called the Sustainable Tourism Programme in 2021. Furthermore, we stated, "By the end of 2023, every hotel, every tourism area and every accommodation facility in Türkiye must have this certificate". We are collaborating with the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) to develop this three-stage certification programme. This will provide us with an important advantage in establishing our country as a tourism brand.

Gastronomy tourism is one of the most important tourism products in the world. The concept that emerges with it is "gastrocity." Every country is ambitious about gastronomy. Nevertheless, simply stating that "We are adept in gastronomy" is inadequate. It is necessary to document this wealth. As a result, we have ensured that İstanbul, a city with a distinc-

tive cultural heritage and one of the most dynamic metropolitans in the world, is included in the Michelin Guide, a globally recognised restaurant rating organisation. İstanbul has earned the title of a registered “gastrocity.” As a result, a total of 53 restaurants in İstanbul made it onto the prestigious Michelin Guide.

Now let us talk a bit about the brand’s image. It can be challenging to manage these if you do not numerically measure your activities. Because you need to be aware of what others are saying and doing about your brand. When I started working, some surveys were being conducted. But they took a long time to conduct. You needed to wait a long while to obtain the results. The world today does not have time for that anymore; everything changes within hours. And you need to know immediately what is happening around you concerning your brand. At this point, we made the decision to develop a system and dedicated two years to crafting the software for it. It works like a global monitoring system. You can think of this as a system for monitoring Türkiye’s tourism brands and perceptions about them. I can say that there is a lot of information in this system. It also monitors other platforms besides Facebook and Instagram, such as Reddit. The system consists of 3 stages. When Türkiye is mentioned on one of the monitored platforms, for instance, along with Ankara, İstanbul, or any other keyword, the system immediately stores it in the database and activates the next stage. The system also evaluates the negativity or positivity of the mentions. In summary, this system quantifies our image on a global scale and notifies us of negative posts about our country. This is an online system based on artificial intelligence. It is constantly receiving database updates in different languages since it serves in 22 languages. Let us look at the results in light of these efforts. Türkiye has faced numerous internal and external crises over the last three years. However, despite this, our tourism revenue had reached \$46.3 billion (USD), and 51.4 million people visited the country by the end of 2022. Accordingly, the number of visitors to Türkiye decreased by only 3% compared to 2019, which was pre-pandemic.

Meanwhile, the number of visitors decreased by 19% in Spain, 12% in Greece, and 26% in Italy. In terms of tourism revenues, we see that Türkiye achieved a 16% increase between 2019 and 2022. During the same

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

period, tourism revenues in Spain, Italy, and Greece decreased by 7%, 6%, and 3%, respectively. Your brand needs to be crisis-proof. You also need to be organised to tackle these crises. We have structured our organization, marketing strategy, and all our tools in this way. We have taken these steps to respond to crises and changing situations. As I have just said, despite all the disadvantages, we have exceeded our target. I believe that in 2023, we will have over 60 million visitors and more than \$50 billion (USD) in tourism revenue. I will now conclude my speech by presenting some of the films we have produced to promote our tourism brand abroad.

Nur Özkan Erbay

I should point out that Türkiye has some competitive advantages over Australia, and our natural beauties are very important in this regard. Thank you very much for your presentation. I appreciate all your efforts that have led to the success achieved by Türkiye in a short time. Working with your ministry has always been a pleasant experience. I will now give the floor to Dr. Zakhour. His country is currently hosting one of the most popular and grand sporting events in the world. We are very excited for the final match tomorrow. I had the chance to attend the opening ceremony in Qatar to represent the Directorate of Communications of Türkiye. Can you tell us about Qatar's efforts in nation branding? You can provide a broader perspective on how this FIFA event has influenced Qatar's nation branding efforts.

The background of the image is an abstract, marbled pattern. It features a complex interplay of colors, primarily deep blues and purples, with some lighter, almost white, swirling patterns. The texture is organic and fluid, resembling liquid or stone marbling. The overall effect is a rich, textured backdrop for the text.

Qatar Communication
Strategies in Nation Branding:
The Case of FIFA World Cup
Qatar 2022

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Qatar Communication
Strategies in Nation
Branding: The Case of
FIFA World Cup Qatar
2022**



Nur Özkan Erbay
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04

Salim Zakhour

Governments consider the question “who is doing what?” to be very important. As we have seen throughout the forum, this is a significant question that needs to be answered. Who is the prime stakeholder in nation branding? Each country has a different experience. As we have seen from the previous presentation, Peru, for example, has significant experience in this regard. They had to build a new infrastructure for a new nation branding policy. When we look at the United States, we see a different method. Because it has a stronger infrastructure, the United States is more committed to public diplomacy. We are currently facing a world that is changing. Governments are being driven to change due to ongoing technological advancements. Against this background, an increasing number of countries are moving from public diplomacy to nation branding and then to communication policies that incorporate nation branding, ultimately adopting a policy that exclusively consists of nation branding. Marketing strategies are also included under nation branding within this policy framework.

Though they are all consolidated and centralised, these strategies are applied through different stakeholders. In some countries, communication policy is one of the most important policy areas. And I believe

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

this process is currently taking place in Türkiye and Qatar. In Türkiye, we have the Directorate of Communications, while in Qatar, we see the Government Communications Office. Because winning people's hearts and minds through positive perceptions is a difficult task. This is not merely a matter of creating attractive slogans and promotional advertisements; an overarching strategy must be established, and numerous stakeholders must be involved in the process. In my opinion, countries that have achieved a certain level of development and possess a robust communication infrastructure should emphasise this strategy and involve a greater number of stakeholders in the implementation process.

Now I would like to talk about Qatar. The Qatar National Vision 2030 is the primary policy that Qatar is currently implementing to guarantee sustainable development for future generations. This is not an easy task, and it requires hard work. This vision is founded on four pillars: economic development, environmental development, social development, and human development. Achieving sustainable development for a country is not an easy task. In order to achieve this, revenues and economic resources need to be diversified. This refers to the implementation of communication strategies and their key objectives. It pertains to the country's fundamental communication strategy, the core objectives of its vision, the link between these two phenomena, and how to create positive perceptions and win hearts. In this context, I believe Qatar's communication policies directed at foreign societies should have three primary objectives.

The first of these objectives is to attract more tourists, thus attracting foreign capital. The second objective is to attract foreign investors. The third objective is to establish a positive or favourable image of Qatar that can be presented to the international community. I believe these should be the primary objectives.

Today, Qatar is facing many challenges. We all witnessed Qatar being targeted by negative media campaigns in the past few weeks. This is one of the main challenges as it sometimes requires you to deal with negative perceptions, deviating from creating a positive approach.

It is also hard to claim that a specific nation-branding strategy has been fully completed at the moment. There are many different sectors that

are independent of each other. And this is one of the challenges I have mentioned previously. The Government Communications Office of Qatar is currently adopting a more proactive approach; however, there is still much work to be done in this area.

Let's go back a bit in time, to the end of the previous century. Qatar was mostly known through certain elements. We are all well-acquainted with Al Jazeera, the media outlet that brought Qatar into the global spotlight. Initially, they broadcast in Arabic; however, they subsequently began to incorporate English. Another important factor was Qatar Airways. In a sense, Qatar Airways was the brand carrier of Qatar, as its aircraft bore the name of the country. In addition to all these, Qatar also played a role in mediating the conflicts in the region. Qatar has also been recognised as an important host for international events. This fact was cemented by Qatar hosting the 2006 Asian Games. By hosting this event, Qatar has emerged as a significant player in this field. These were the key factors that shaped perceptions of Qatar at the end of the last century.

In the past 10-15 years, significant progress has been made in a variety of sectors, particularly when it comes to hosting mega-events, most notably sporting events such as the World Cup. This sector has grown and developed as a well-established cultural structure over the past 10 to 20 years. This was achieved thanks to their focus on cultural diversity and cultural interaction. This sector plays a very important role in the Qatar brand and will continue to do so.

Another significant aspect that contributes to Qatar's recognition is its role as a hub for education and research. We can also add tourism to this list.

Now, I would like to share more details about Qatar's hosting of major events, particularly the World Cup, and the advantages they bring. These advantages are now being enjoyed. This is not merely theoretical. I arrived here two days ago. Before coming here, I watched ten matches in stadiums. This event was anticipated as a significant chance to establish a fresh image, and it has certainly lived up to expectations. We see Qatar as a good host, and people are experiencing that, which is very important for building a good perception of Qatar. Qatar's exceptional organisational

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

skills have made it a standout host, ensuring a resounding success. We still need to wait for research to be done, but surely there is an evident success. It demonstrated Qatar's ability to accommodate millions of visitors, including millions of future tourists. There is a significant opportunity to establish a fresh image, and this is currently unfolding.

Another important point is the media coverage. It is hard to talk about media coverage. I have seen thousands of journalists working on the ground. They were from different work backgrounds, such as the press, television, or radio. Approximately 5 billion people worldwide watch the World Cup, this means that a massive audience was reached through media. Social media is also crucial at this point. Social media posts go beyond mere status updates; they capture the stories and experiences unfolding in a particular location and time. These stories, shared by the people at the heart of the event, provide a different perspective from the prevailing negative media portrayal of Qatar. Another important aspect for gaining popularity in the media is beIN SPORTS. As you may be aware, beIN SPORTS is owned by Qatar and has the exclusive rights to broadcast the World Cup in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as in countries in other regions, by partnering with local broadcasting companies. This is a fantastic opportunity that is being taken right now. This is undoubtedly a public diplomacy tool. In recent weeks, Qatar has been holding meetings with some leaders with whom it typically has strained relations. We have seen some initiatives being taken in Qatar.

In my opinion, participation and loyalty are of utmost importance in the World Cup. In terms of shaping perspective, what we observe in the fans is crucial. Qatar is now becoming an unforgettable destination for fans experiencing the World Cup and for others watching their emotions. It is also wonderful to see people transcend their religious, ethnic, and other differences.

Emotions are a very important aspect of this matter. Argentine fans now have a very strong connection with Qatar. I witnessed it firsthand when I watched two matches of Argentina. In my opinion, even though we talk about strategies and strategic goals, at the end of the day, what really makes an impact is a video or an experience a fan sends back home. We

may witness this in the future. A very strong bond is being established between the Argentines and Qataris.

Nur Özkan Erbay

You can ask Gustavo about it. He is an Argentine.

Gustavo Koniszczzer

Yes, my son had the opportunity to watch some matches, and now he has gained a positive perception of Qatar.

Salim Zakhour

I also want to say something about the Saudis. The Saudis now remember Qatar as the place where they won against Argentina. It is one idea, one experience, and one story. A similar situation is true for Moroccans and Japanese. Despite Japan's disappointment in not making it to the second round, it was in Qatar where they achieved victories over Germany and Spain. As I mentioned, everything can come down to one idea, one experience, and one story we share. The Germans shared a photo of themselves posing with their hands over their mouths. I can assure you that this photo has had a negative impact on how Qataris perceive Germans, even before any research has been conducted. Germany was one of the countries Qatar targeted to attract tourists, but this must surely have changed following the incident. In another example, Japanese fans shared how they cleaned up the stadium after the match, significantly strengthening people's perceptions of them.

These events are obviously of great importance for Qatar. In the coming year, the Asian Games will assume the role of the World Cup, as well as the Geneva International Motor Show, Formula One and EXPO 2023, centred around the theme of horticulture. This is one of the basic rules for creating and promoting a brand.

I would like to conclude with the issue I mentioned at the beginning of my speech. Communications strategists, particularly those who establish communications strategies within government, especially in Türkiye and Qatar, currently play the greatest role in establishing a fundamental framework and advancing their countries in terms of nation branding.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Nur Özkan Erbay

Thank you Dr Zakhour. The World Cup kicked off with a great opening ceremony. We were there on the first day of the event, and we held the Türkiye-Qatar Nation Branding Panel. I will now give the floor to Francesco De Stefani Spadafora, Director of the Italian Embassy's Economic and Trade Department. You have twenty minutes.



Italy's Nation Branding
Campaign: Belt

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

Italy's Nation Branding Campaign: Belt



Nur Özkan Erbay
The Coordinator of Türkiye
Brand Office, Directorate of
Communications | Moderator

PARTICIPANTS



Francesco de Stefani Spadafora
Director of the Economic and Trade
Department of the Italian Embassy



05

Francesco de Stefani Spadafora

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to you for inviting me to this event. It was difficult to come here from Italy. I consider it a great privilege to have the opportunity to tell you about Italy's nation-branding campaign. There are two keywords I would like to highlight; the first one is 'pride'. Therefore, I would like to quote a person who is probably more important than I am. The video I will present is in Italian with English subtitles.

Giorgio Armani Video Presentation

I didn't want to watch the video in advance; rather, I preferred to do so in your presence, as my colleagues in Rome had informed me that it was highly emotional, and it really was. Although Giorgio Armani is also a tailor, he has shown that he is a much better diplomat than I am. Now, I will read my speech if you allow me. Today, I will focus on a campaign called 'beIT' to discuss nation branding. In 2021, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Italian Trade Agency carried out this campaign in 26 target countries.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD



Türkiye is one of these target countries. The most notable aspect of this campaign is its digital nature. This was because we intended to re-establish Italy's image and support experts, particularly by revitalising COVID-19-affected sectors. We also wanted to focus on the tourism sector and revive it. One of our goals was to diversify our sources of income—the choices that constitute the backbone of our economy. We designed the campaign in two stages. The first stage involves values. At this stage, we are trying to re-introduce Italy based on six key factors. The six factors I'm talking about are passion, creativity, diversity, style, innovation and tradition. In many countries, Italy is regarded not only as a significant trading partner but also as a reference for culture, gastronomy and fashion. For instance, let me talk about the bond between culture and gastronomic art as an element to optimise the effectiveness of the belt campaign. Let's consider, for example, the Mediterranean diet, which is now on UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The Mediterranean diet combines flavour with nutritional variety, suggesting that there is an important bond between the art of cooking and the region you live in.

In Italy, this bond is very strong. The motto we chose for the campaign was "Italy is simply extraordinary. belt." This motto summarises the uniqueness of our country in just a few words. With this, we aim to rebuild Italy's image all over the world, including in Türkiye. For this campaign, we involved different channels, such as influencers, artists, podcasts, Spotify playlists, or longer narrative forms. We also developed a website and localised it to twenty different languages, one of which is, of course, Turkish. Lots of content generated in the media formats that I have just

mentioned can be found here. We employed all the instruments at our disposal to explain the complexity of our country and how detailed it is.



This campaign is of significant importance to us, as we knew that the outputs would be great. We set up certain measurement systems, and the outcomes were impressive. Therefore, we are planning to extend this campaign for another year. If we summarise the activities as part of the campaign, you can see that we have organised events in many different parts of the world, including Türkiye. For example, an important Italian company received an award at the Formula 1 Mexico City Grand Prix. To mark the first flights of our national company, ITA, to Japan, we organised an event to honor Pavarotti. We also organised great events at Atakule, the famous shopping centre in Ankara. We exhibited wonderful photographs of our country's mountains, captured by Italian artists (the exhibition was titled "Mountain Pieces. Reflecting History"). We also showcased Ducati's motorcycles.

Nur Özkan Erbay

Thank you for your presentation, Signor Spadafora. You must have put a lot of effort into this video about Italy. Your work truly demonstrates the creativity and diligence that were invested in this project. In addition, the name 'beIT' is very clever; you have used the initials of Italy. This way of thinking can be useful for us too. Thanks to all of you, I was really enlightened, and I believe that our audience also thought that this panel was an enlightening and special one with the contributions of the esteemed speakers. Thank you very much for your contributions. We have a couple of small presents to give you, and then we will move on to the next panel.



**EIGHTH
SESSION**

Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding Strategy



Assoc. Prof. Ece Baban
Fenerbahçe University | Moderator



Assoc. Prof. Oğuz Güner
Presidency's Directorate
of Communications, Head
of the Public Diplomacy
Department



Dr. Mihriban Akyol Akın
Beykent University



Assoc. Prof. Kılıç Buğra Kanat
Penn State University

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Public Diplomacy
and Nation Branding
Strategy**



Assoc. Prof. Ece Baban
Fenerbahçe University | Moderator



01

Hello, welcome back to the Türkiye Brand Office's Türkiye Nation Branding Forum. Today we will discuss public diplomacy and nation branding strategy. We have very distinguished guests. I would like to reintroduce them.

Assoc. Prof Oğuz Güner, Head of the Public Diplomacy Department of the Presidency's Directorate of Communications, welcome. Dr Mihriban Akyol, Faculty Member of İstanbul Beykent University, welcome Professor. Finally, Assoc. Prof Kılıç Buğra Kanat, Faculty Member of Penn State University, welcome Professor. We will be discussing an important topic today. The importance of public diplomacy efforts, particularly in nation branding strategies, is among the topics that are heavily debated and meticulously followed. This is because public diplomacy is critical to ensuring a country's transparent and effective narrative within the international system. As a result, efforts on the matter are essential for states to introduce and explain themselves to the people of their respective countries, foster beneficial relations, and win their hearts and minds. We are discussing a distinct approach—a very thorough and effective use of communication. Professor Oğuz, I will start by asking you to draw a general framework.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Could you please assess how the use of soft power affects reputation and image in relation to public diplomacy and nation branding?



Public Diplomacy Activities
on the Axis of Contribution
to Türkiye's Nation Branding
Strategies

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Public Diplomacy
Activities on the Axis of
Contribution to Türkiye's
Nation Branding Strategies**



Assoc. Prof. Ece Baban
Fenerbahçe University |
Moderator

P A R T I C I P A N T S



Assoc. Prof. Oğuz Güner
Presidency's Directorate of
Communications, Head of the
Public Diplomacy Department



02

Assoc. Prof. Oğuz Güner

Thank you. To begin with, I would like to thank the Türkiye Brand Office for the programme, the organisation and the invitation. I have seen a truly impressive and highly dynamic engagement. Thank you to everyone who has contributed; great job. Public diplomacy and nation branding are two distinct disciplines or concepts that are closely interrelated. An overview of the academic literature reveals a significant overlap between the definitions of nation branding and public diplomacy. Some sources or references may prioritise public diplomacy and others strategic communication, but, in either case, we observe that nation branding is invariably accorded a substantial place within the academic literature or discipline. Ultimately, if we ask why this discipline emerged, we will discover that classical or conventional diplomacy has failed to handle nations' foreign relations and communications, elucidate their theses to the international community, and promote and showcase their images and reputations to diverse audiences, and that public diplomacy literature has therefore been unfolding since the 1960s.

Public diplomacy is actually a sub-discipline that primarily focuses on enhancing the reputation and prestige of nations. Of course, it belongs to the same cluster as nation branding, and what they have in common is

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

soft power. However, public diplomacy is responsible for image and perception management and prestige building, and this is basically where it overlaps with nation branding. They are both soft power elements and intertwined, but when we look at the history of public diplomacy, the literature reveals that it was initially implemented by governments, indicating that the implementing actors were governments. Put another way, we used to think of it as work done by states to improve their standing with other states, but during the past 60 years or so, non-governmental organisations, international corporations, and citizen diplomats have all emerged as public diplomacy actors. Therefore, if the process requires categorisation beyond the political message you intend to convey to society, the international community or public in a political context, or your target audience, and if efforts are needed to enhance the nation's image, we actually put these efforts within the cluster of nation branding. We have a very basic, very simple and 101-level expression: "winning hearts and minds." So Joseph Nye defines it as making someone do something softly through attraction rather than coercion. Eventually, it can be achieved through cultural images, political messages, or by employing both traditional and cutting-edge methods and techniques, like the media. We can consider many efforts undertaken to improve image and reputation in the international community and to cultivate ideals and perceptions in the context of both public diplomacy and nation branding. The aim is very simple and can be summarised as strengthening your prestige, explaining your values, and improving your persuasion and credibility.

Simon Anholt's definition in 1996 was the first time the concept of nation branding was mentioned in the academic literature. While nation branding methods are more Anglo-Saxon, the American school is more influential in public diplomacy, as public diplomacy acquired traction in academic writing mostly after World War II. Yet nation branding started to gain traction in the literature after the 1990s. Of course, we can wonder if any nation or country can have a brand. The core question is based on this. Yes, it can, and gastrodiploamacy is a prime example. Today, when we think of pizza and pasta, we immediately think of Italy. In other words, the idea that every nation can have a brand in the same way that every company, product, and service can is a matter of discussion. At the end

of the day, the most tangible outcome in the macro sense, or over time, aside from gaining prestige and reputation, is more money invested in your country. So, even though this is not being highlighted, in the long run, every country wants to maximise the advantage, aiming primarily for material output or economic gain. Consequently, attracting investment is one of the purposes and objectives of both public diplomacy and nation branding. For example, there is the “ease of doing business index,” which, unsurprisingly, places the global north at the top. Global North countries have the highest scores on the list. Actually, the message is very clear. Countries with high scores in this ranking have low bureaucracy and a robust digitalization infrastructure, giving investors a lot of options in terms of prospects, capabilities, and ease.

This is a key branding indicator. In other words, high-ranking countries in this index offer enormous convenience to direct or indirect foreign investors. This is an important brand, for example. Ultimately, whether you use public diplomacy instruments and tools or nation branding methodology, offering convenience is an indicator when assessing the investment you bring to your country and, thus, the opportunities you provide to investors. As a result, nation branding may contain more than just cultural imagery and touristic purposes; whatever activity you do in pursuit of economic, political, and social goals falls under the umbrella of nation branding, as well as public diplomacy. Surely there is a scale for this. If you can surpass a country that you perceive as a competitor in this regard, this is actually an output that makes you superior in the fields of nation branding and public diplomacy and demonstrates that you are successful.

As a result, being a centre of attraction and attracting is one of the most significant parts of nation branding. Undoubtedly, we see that nations and societies are branded. For example, the Turkish people are famed for their hospitality, the Germans for their diligence, and the Japanese for their discipline. Nation branding, which is a distinct idea from public diplomacy, is founded on four sources.

The first is country of origin, and the second is place and destination branding, which I think Türkiye has done tremendously well recently. I

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

mean, in the field of city diplomacy and city branding in the cities apart from the ones that are known as tourist destinations, such as Aydın, İzmir, and Antalya...

Assoc. Prof. Ece Baban

I will ask you about it because you are an academic and also hold an important position. You serve as Head of the Public Diplomacy Department of the Presidency's Directorate of Communications. As a result, Türkiye's use of public diplomacy in nation branding should be assessed in terms of branding. As we all know, the term branding comes from the act of marking. In other words, we are talking about a branding process, a system that began many years ago to specifically identify who possesses certain attributes. We are discussing a process of making certain assets centres of attraction, as you indicated, that can attract and connect people while preserving countries' DNA and identities. So, now that you have mentioned it, how are we working on Türkiye's assets beyond tourism? Perhaps you could enlighten us on the work done on the subject of public diplomacy by providing examples.

Assoc. Prof. Oğuz Güner

With tremendous delight. The Public Diplomacy Department of the Presidency's Directorate of Communications also carries out a mission designated by Presidential Decree No. 14. This mission is to ensure the coordination of public institutions and organisations, state economic enterprises, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) involved in public diplomacy in Türkiye.

In parallel with the public diplomacy strategy we have drawn up and the strategy document, we also have a duty to oversee the public diplomacy activities that are conducted within this framework and to provide guidance to these public institutions. The Presidential Decree contains a job description built on this. I would like to emphasise that in many states, public institutions with the highest authorities, including the Presidency, the Prime Ministry, and heads of state, have promoted and implemented activities in public diplomacy, nation branding, and related disciplines. In our country, the Presidency's Directorate of Communications has been

assigned to this task. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also has units for cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy, and alike. For example, Mr. Timuçin, who was here a while ago, works at the Directorate General of Promotion at the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. I would like to use an example from the strategy document to provide a more tangible understanding; the strategy document presents various goals, objectives, and project proposals. Of course, a single department under the Presidency's Directorate of Communications cannot coordinate, manage, and execute all the public diplomacy activities of a country with a population of 85 million. However, it was established as a coordination mechanism to monitor and guide the activities of public institutions. For instance, there is an objective in the field of religious diplomacy. The creation of religious destinations. Religious diplomacy is now being referred to as a slightly different branch of diplomacy from tourism diplomacy. And we have observed a substantial rise in the number of tourists visiting our country for religious destinations, particularly from the Middle East region.

Which institutions are considered stakeholders here? The Presidency of Religious Affairs. Which units are considered stakeholders here? The Directorate General of Foundations, which could be responsible for the restoration of an old mosque. Therefore, there are some duties and tasks for these units beyond the relevant public institutions and organisations in the creation of these destinations. The strategy document outlines this framework. Meanwhile, the Monitoring System takes a snapshot to see whether these activities are being carried out or not. We can view this as a mechanism for monitoring the activities of the internal ecosystem.

Assoc. Prof. Ece Baban

Thank you very much. Assoc. Prof. Oğuz Güner, do you have any other important points to add?

Assoc. Prof. Oğuz Güner

If new issues are brought up, we can discuss them. Thank you.

Assoc. Prof. Ece Baban

Now I would like to give the floor to Dr Mihriban Akyol. When I look

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

through your master’s and doctoral studies, I see that you have been studying nation branding within the context of intercultural communication and as a tool for public diplomacy. Mr. Oğuz explained the scope and field of public diplomacy activities as well as its relationship with nation branding. He even gave us an example from the Public Diplomacy Department. Managing public diplomacy is not an easy process.

Mr. Oğuz mentioned faith destinations, especially within the context of building relations with different nations. Public diplomacy and its tools are constantly evolving, diversifying, and developing in response to people’s needs, new areas of interest, and technological and societal advancements. In light of this, what are the challenges, enablers, and opportunities for building a bridge between cultures and reflecting this in a nation brand or in nation branding?



Nation Branding in the Context
of Brand Communication
Management

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Nation Branding in
the Context of Brand
Communication
Management**



Assoc. Prof. Ece Baban
Fenerbahçe University |
Moderator

PARTICIPANTS



Dr. Mihriban Akyol Akın
Beykent University



03

Dr. Mihriban Akyol Akın

In the global competitive environment, states have begun to shift towards impact and persuasion-oriented policies with the emergence of public diplomacy defined as “soft power,” while they strive to maintain their political, economic, and military hegemonies. Nation branding as a tool of public diplomacy has become a practice conducted by states for the past 20 years. The nation brand indexes, which evaluate the reputations of nations in the areas of tourism, cultural heritage, export commodities, domestic and foreign policy, people, and investment/migration, have determined that nations that achieve the highest rankings in these categories have a favourable image. In a highly competitive world in terms of price, time, quality, and innovation, brand establishment has long been an important goal for companies to improve business performance. Countries have begun to develop strategies to address the need for strong brand value creation in recent years.

However, the concept of nation branding is a relatively new phenomenon in the field of marketing and is gaining great importance every day due to globalisation, which creates competition among countries like companies. In addition to the branding of cities and places, the expansion of the application area of branding has resulted in the consideration of

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

brands in conjunction with larger-scale social and political phenomena. The advantages of city branding to cities and countries have led to the deliberation of international competition, which has been increasing via globalisation, through the lens of branding. The evaluation, creation, and management of nations or countries as a brand became increasingly prominent as the concept of “nation branding” arose in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The term “nation branding” has been defined as “the collection of multidimensional and distinctive components that allow a nation to culturally distinguish itself and establish a connection with its target audience.” The objective of nation branding is to establish a desirable image of a nation and enhance its economic, cultural, and political appeal by managing, redirecting, or reconstructing the perception of internal and external stakeholders. Nation branding enables a nation to establish a realistic, competitive, and persuasive national vision strategy and aims to ensure that this vision is embraced, implemented, and further developed in all communication processes between the country and the world. The elements of globalisation, public diplomacy, branding, and competition are employed in all of the definitions of nation branding. Consequently, it is feasible to assert that nation branding is associated with each of these components. In a globally competitive environment, not only brands but also nation brands clash with each other. Being powerful is not enough in the global arena; it has also become a virtue to “appear strong.” This is the point at which the significance of strategic approaches and perception management is highlighted.

With the right branding strategies and perception management, a nation that is not particularly assertive in the international context can become a tourist attraction, be perceived as a friend of immigrants, be recognised for its quality products, or be known as the home of democracy. It has been noted that competition in the global context is advancing in economic, political, cultural, and technological dimensions. This has underlined the fact that it is not enough to just govern a country, while simultaneously highlighting the concept of nation and the requirement of managing the peoples’ perceptions. Public diplomacy processes have commenced in response to this necessity. Public diplomacy is practiced as a form of “soft power” that is closely associated with diplomacy, pub-

lic opinion, target audiences, and the concept of power. Communication disciplines are closely associated with soft power, as it is administered through persuasion and influence processes. Digital media, advertising, lobbying, public relations, and media practices are frequently employed in the practice of public diplomacy. The effectiveness of digital media has been particularly evident in recent years. Due to its accessibility and status as an alternative medium, it continues to be one of the most potent instruments of public diplomacy. Furthermore, public diplomacy is influenced by the extensively debated fields of propaganda, consent fabrication, and disinformation. The necessity for nations to maintain a favourable image is a consequence of the soft power process and perception management that we encounter in public diplomacy practices. Certainly, economic, military, and political power are significant in the contemporary world. However, not all countries that possess these powers have a favourable brand image.

In this context, the era of public diplomacy has prompted nations to focus on branding, and the concept of nation branding has emerged as a result. Public diplomacy and nation branding share the commonality of prioritising values, culture, individual and institutional relationships, dialogue, and relationship building over classical diplomacy, which concentrates on foreign policy matters. These two concepts, which are derived from the disciplines of international relations and international marketing communication, are currently becoming more closely related, and it has been noted that there are studies that complement one another. When the perspectives and assessments in the literature are considered, the two concepts share numerous similarities and affinities. The work conducted in both domains is directly correlated with the external communication and image of countries. The management of this communication also affects the nature of the perceptions and images of foreign audiences. When we rank the branding activities of countries as place branding, city branding, country branding, and nation branding from tangible to intangible values, nation branding, which is the highest level, is associated with public diplomacy due to its association with identity, culture, values, and images. In the majority of cases, place and country branding efforts aimed at economic and development purposes fall short in helping

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

nations manage their overall communication with other societies and establish their image. The foundation of the concept of nation branding is constituted by the term “brand.” The concept, distinguished by branding nations as if they were products, possesses a value comparable to that of any other product. In this context, it should be managed by assessing various dimensions, including brand awareness, loyalty, associations, and perceived quality. However, different variables are at play when it comes to a nation as opposed to a commercial product. The nation branding process also allows for the altering of individuals’ attitudes, behaviours, and perceptions regarding the target country.

Prejudices, stereotypes, experiences, the country of origin effect, archetypes and past images of the nation brand can influence the attitudes of individuals, audiences or other nations towards the nation brand. The way to overcome this process, whether positively or negatively, is again considered to be a strategic and integrated branding effort. The concept of nation branding is discussed by Simon Anholt in six dimensions: Tourism, citizens, export brands, domestic and foreign policy, investment and migration, and cultural heritage. Effectiveness, competence and a positive image in these six dimensions are determinants of nations becoming strong and valuable brands. While factors such as tourist attractions, attitudes and behaviours towards tourists, natural beauties, and historical places come to the forefront in tourism branding, the citizens, scientists, and artists of a country and general perception towards citizens also constitute the humanitarian aspect of nation branding. On the other hand, export brands are associated with a nation’s features, such as quality, economic competence, technological superiority, rarity or authenticity. Domestic and foreign policy are also important in the process of a nation being perceived as a strong and valuable brand. Political stability, the level of prosperity and domestic tranquility of the nation, the personal image of the leaders, terrorism, coups or sudden changes of government are among the factors affecting this aspect. In the context of investment and migration, perceptions of how livable a country is can be addressed. Variables such as the level of social welfare, personal rights and education are highlighted as concepts that bolster migration. The migrant-friendly perception of the nation plays an important role in this

regard. Investment is also viewed as being closely related to domestic and foreign policy. It is possible to say that the stronger the political stability in a country, the more it is at the forefront in terms of investment. It is seen that nations with a positive image regarding investment are also among the prominent nations regarding migration. Finally, the cultural heritage aspect is one of the elements that make a nation valuable and strong as a brand.

Brand communication management comes from the field of marketing; over time, countries must enter this competitive environment, just like brands, due to either capitalist reasons or, of course, the aforementioned variable nature of people. In the branding process, people have the tendency to see brands as individuals, as characters. People tend to mentally transform, particularly abstract and metaphysical entities and concepts, into tangible forms to personalise and visualise them. Therefore, in marketing, a character is assigned to each brand, certain characteristics are attributed to them, and brands are introduced in this way.

In the nation branding endeavours, if the Türkiye example is followed, this is deemed one of the strategies that should be implemented. However, the important point here is to be realistic and to objectively assess the current state of the brand. The importance of realism is valuable at this point because the concept we call persona is essentially a personality, and when approaching this personality, it is necessary to be able to see and acknowledge its good aspects, bad aspects, and the aspects that need to be improved. The handicap here is to develop strategies around the currently existing Türkiye brand.

As mentioned earlier, it is precious to be a strong and developed brand, but from today's "consumer" perspective, it is not so easy to become a "Lovemark" in people's minds; it is only possible through perception management. In the discipline of communication, it has been experienced that perceptions can be managed in line with objectives. Based on that, the persona to be created should be oriented towards internal and external target audiences. It is believed that a level could be achieved where internal and external target audiences can be monitored and observed via data from a certain application, and in line with this data,

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

these audiences can be directed and their perceptions can be managed. With the information received, it is imperative to be effective in positioning the country as a brand, since positioning is quite important concerning the brand. In this era of fierce competition and branding endeavours, the question of how to position the Türkiye brand in individuals' minds brings with it new questions and decisions to be made.

If we consider this study as a mental workshop, the following questions could be prioritised to fill in the gaps related to the question "If Türkiye were a person": Who is Türkiye? What is the first word that comes to mind when Türkiye is mentioned? It is known that the Türkiye brand is a strong brand, but what would its character be like if it were a person? What kind of lifestyle would it have? How old would Türkiye be if it were a human being? What would it eat, drink and wear? What kind of job would it have? How would it earn money? What would be the brands that it loved, consumed and even felt loyal to? Which one of its brands would it be most proud of? What would its beliefs and values be? Which colour would it prefer to wear as a brand, as a person? Actually, like the slogan of the forum, what would be the true colour of Türkiye? What would be its hobbies, goals, likes, and joys? What would the reasons be that make it very unhappy, angry or maybe even nervous? What would be its biggest source of pride? What would be its darkest fear? As a result of these questions, what we are actually going to find out is: What would be Türkiye's story?

Storytelling has become one of today's most popular concepts because people want to hear, see and live the stories. Therefore, "experience" is very valuable to today's consumer. This can be easily observed in the promotional films of the countries. However, the question of whether it is enough to create a branding study based on experiences comes up again here. At this point, nations need to be aware of their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities to be used to their advantage, and foreseen threats or dangers concerning them through situation analysis, which is often used in marketing.

It is suggested that the strategy should be built on the following: emphasising strengths and managing the nation brand perception based on

these values; polishing the features that need to stand out; evaluating weaknesses for improvement; seizing and evaluating opportunities and advantages interactively and instantaneously; and finally, anticipating potential threats and having crisis communication plans ready and waiting. At the point where we can manage perceptions in the political conjuncture, in social life and even in our personal lives, it is possible to be one step ahead in achieving our goals. Based on this, it is deemed significant for “nation brand managers” to implement the necessary strategic approaches by siding with science, closely following academic studies, current campaigns and the digital age, evaluating theory and practice together, and conducting regular nation brand perception research.

Assoc. Prof. Ece Baban

I would like to thank Professor Mihriban very much. You have depicted a nice and broad perspective in terms of nation branding. Our professor conveyed some very important information, especially about brand identity and brand personality. A brand needs to be positioned like a person, at least when creating its own personality. Therefore, when a country is positioning itself as a brand, it is very important to know what aspects it wants to promote, in what ways we need polishing and change or in what subject we need a perception study. Now, I will continue with Professor Kılıç on this thought. While we use nation branding and public diplomacy instruments to try to manage perception, all countries want to position themselves and perhaps emphasise more than one value. Professor Oğuz gave the example of hospitality; in Türkiye, hospitality is one of the first things that comes to mind when we think of Turkish people. In this way, while we manage the perception of our own brand and our own country, we also have to fight against the perceptions directed at ourselves. So I will ask you to take a look at it from an international perspective. Since you live in the US, maybe you can share your experiences there. In public diplomacy and nation branding, are a country's own public diplomacy efforts sufficient to explain itself? If not, what needs to be done to combat other perception management efforts, especially disinformation? When you look at the whole, how do you evaluate this from both an internal and an external perspective?





Public Diplomacy and
Nation Branding Activities
on the Axis of Foreign Policy
Achievements

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Public Diplomacy and
Nation Branding Activities
on the Axis of Foreign
Policy Achievements**



Assoc. Prof. Ece Baban
Fenerbahçe University |
Moderator

P A R T I C I P A N T S



Assoc. Prof. Kılıç Buğra Kanat
Penn State University



04

Assoc. Prof. Kılıç Buğra Kanat

Public diplomacy is a very important instrument and an instrument of foreign policy. Public diplomacy is something that is often attributed to the US; it is said to have been born, raised and shaped in the US. There is a story there. In 1776, when the US was fighting for its independence, Benjamin Franklin was sent to Paris. Benjamin Franklin stays in Paris for 2 years. He dances very well, he speaks French very well, and he impresses everyone there. He especially impresses the court gentry and people within this circle. What is the main issue here, then? It is getting France's support during the War of Independence. There is already a diplomatic channel, but it is about conveying who the US and the Americans are. Because it is an emerging nation. This is what we call nation branding; think of a company starting from scratch. It behaves like a start-up. And Benjamin Franklin was very influential during that time. He becomes one of the most important people in Paris. He attends all the gatherings and talks about the US and the war of independence all night.

Later, around the 1900s, when the US positioned itself at the centre of the world, it experienced the same thing, this time with Theodore Roosevelt. Actually, the establishment of public diplomacy in the United States as an active department within the State Department occurs

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

during this period. It was initially established as an informative branch of the US State Department in 1902–1903. Later, when it returned to the global scene during the Cold War, it was more aggressive, occasionally propagandistic, but always within the context of public diplomacy, using its own public diplomacy instruments. When the Cold War ended, the discourse shifted to soft power. It was no longer an ideological propaganda centre for the Cold War but rather a soft power element that had been re-conceptualised.

What is soft power? It is making countries do what you want unintentionally by creating certain points of attraction and gaining their trust rather than forcing them. When a new crisis erupted in 2001 following 9/11, the central question was, “Why do people hate us?” There was a Newsweek cover that read, “Why do they hate us?” “We will combat terrorism militarily, but it is equally crucial that we win their hearts and minds.” This is how the process began. It has been an instrument in every American crisis, including the Vietnam War, the 1929 economic crisis, and the 2008 financial catastrophe. It is an instrument that makes us say, “We need to use it more.” Nation branding is a more recent concept, more economy- and business-oriented, and it has been enhanced by globalisation. When we look at public diplomacy and nation branding, we always see a chicken-and-egg situation.

When you ask, “Which aspects should we put forward, and what should we do to combat negative perception?” public diplomacy comes to the fore. In other words, public diplomacy is a foreign policy instrument that works best when not used in isolation. Public diplomacy is a method geared towards a specific audience, which typically includes elites, journalists, non-governmental organisations, and prominent opinion leaders. So you do not pursue public diplomacy only to “improve our image in a country.” If you need a makeover or want to make your case, you set more micro goals and influence the perceptions of opinion leaders, civil society, and media members in that country, expecting them to pressure their governments to modify their policies. Here, the situation is this: In times of crisis, every country with an image problem faces the following issue: “Are we unable to explain ourselves?” The essential point to remember here is that there may be reasons beyond public diplomacy, such as stra-

tegic relationships or disagreements between countries. For example, a strategic disagreement between Türkiye and the United States can be motivated by factors other than your capacity to communicate or whether that message is being properly received. For example, we frequently observed this in the YPG issue. During the Kobani crisis in 2014–2015, we in Türkiye pondered, “Are we failing to clarify that the YPG is the PKK?” No, that is not the case. This is something they are aware of, but it is related to their particular aim.

Assoc. Prof. Ece Baban

Professor, may I ask you a question? It is particularly related to this issue. Certain strategies are formulated in line with the objectives of the United States; in fact, all countries do so, and diplomacy is critical in terms of influencing peoples and ensuring that those people exert pressure on their own governments. As a result, perhaps the difference in perception of the terrorist organisation between Türkiye and the United States on the YPG-PYD issue is that the US presents its own arguments based on its own strategy, and there is a perception of interest that will not change no matter how much evidence is presented... If we consider the function of public diplomacy at this point, is it not critical in terms of communicating the facts to the American people and their potential to exert pressure on the government after a while or create a different perception from the US discourse?

Assoc. Prof. Kılıç Buğra Kanat

There are limits to this. We need to take this into consideration. There is a saying that no matter how much you say, it is only as much as the other person wants to hear. You can travel there, offer all of the materials and documents, and influence the media, but if the state structure there does not want it, you will be caught within this limit.

One of the primary distinctions between public diplomacy and nation branding is that nation branding can evolve in response to technological advancements, globalisation, and changes in countries’ strategic positions. For example, the Ukraine War brought Türkiye’s geopolitical position to the forefront. Mark Twain once said, “God created war so that Americans would learn geography.”

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

As a result, whereas nation branding is directed not only at Americans but at all peoples around the world, public diplomacy requires a more strategic approach. This includes making good use of resources, promoting unity in discourse and language, and structuring institutional discourse and connections. These preparations should start early and be handled strategically. Despite the belief that public diplomacy is more tactical and nation branding is more strategic in the long run, we can actually see that short-term actions do not yield long-term benefits unless a public diplomacy strategy is set up beforehand in such micro-issues and a long-term game plan is developed. Türkiye, as well as other countries, sees this. We see this in any nation that invests billions of dollars in public diplomacy, attempts to manage nation branding and public diplomacy simultaneously, and strives to mobilise political and geopolitical interests in the same way as economic ones. Without long-term planning, the debate revolves around the question, “We spent so much money; we did so much; was it worth it?” Result analysis is therefore always important. At a certain stage, countries that focus on distinct yet interconnected fields such as branding, public diplomacy, lobbying, and PR have started producing autopsy reports. Because despite investing millions of dollars and exerting significant efforts, the anticipated political outcomes did not materialise; therefore, at a certain point, politicians turned around and began to question, “We have spent this money, we have put in so much effort, we have been thinking of getting somewhere with so much creative thinking, but have we got what we wanted? Have we achieved the goal? Has this effort served its purpose?” I believe that the result analysis is one of the crucial points in this case.

In doing so, countries aim to promote themselves in every field, from gastronomy to sports, and to enhance their image or establish a new one. However, the crucial question at this juncture is whether these efforts will yield results, and if so, what kind of outcomes they will yield. Although it has been a longstanding political and economic practice, it is a recently established academic discipline. I believe that everyone, particularly academics, will revisit the history of nation branding, and at some point, they will reassess how successful countries have been in their nation branding efforts, where they have failed, and the reasons

behind these failures. Finally, they will recognise that neither nation branding nor public diplomacy is a magic wand but rather a goal to be pursued with a certain rationality and long-term strategy within certain mechanisms.

Assoc. Prof. Ece Baban

Thank you very much, Professor. Thank you very much. If you do not have any other significant points to add, I would like to provide a concise summary and conclude our session. Professor Kılıç specifically highlighted the limits of public diplomacy, its close connection to strategic communication, its improved efficiency through integration of certain concepts with other disciplines, and our use of nation branding, public diplomacy, and strategic communication, occasionally in conjunction with propaganda and public relations. We use soft power in international relations, integrated with foreign policy.

In other words, the most important step leading to genuine success is to evaluate and work in integration with all the units that constitute a country, explain it both internally and externally, and build its values. Of course, while discussing nation branding and public diplomacy, we have occasionally mentioned the use of information and technology, because information is one of the most crucial components in conveying a country's own story. As you update the data embedded in that information, build it, transfer it, and disseminate it, you actually become the first person to write the story, thereby expanding your sphere of influence. Because trying to correct a story about yourself can be a challenging communication effort, it is crucial that you always write the first story about your own country and brand. As such, we are currently in a phase in which we can discuss the power of information, the manipulation of societies through soft power, the occasional use of propaganda, generation of consent, and the emergence of consent automatically. Numerous changes have occurred as a result of wars, crises, and the pandemic. Likewise, nations encountered enormous opportunities and threats while managing crises.

Accordingly, we may conclude as follows: I believe that success is almost certain if efforts on public diplomacy and branding strategies are

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

combined and integrated efforts are carried out on a country's self-positioning and perception management.

I would like to thank you very much for your valuable contributions. Assoc. Prof. Oğuz Güner, Head of the Public Diplomacy Department of the Presidency's Directorate of Communications. Thank you very much. Dr Mihriban Akyol, Faculty Member of İstanbul Beykent University, thank you very much Professor. Assoc Prof. Kılıç Buğra Kanat, Faculty Member of Penn State University, thank you very much. Finally, I, Ece Baban, thank you all very much for listening and taking your precious time.







**NINTH
SESSION**

Nation Branding in Broadcast Production and Cultural Exports



Prof. Edibe Sözen
Rector, Maltepe University | Moderator



Dr. İsrail Kuralay
Producer



Duygu Çeçen Yaygır
Head of Cultural Services and Creative
Industries Department, Ministry of Trade of
the Republic of Türkiye



Reshad Strik
Actor



Mehmet Bozdağ
Producer / Screenwriter /
Founder of Bozdağ Film

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Nation Branding in
Broadcast Production
and Cultural Exports**



Prof. Edibe Sözen
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01

Esteemed panellists and distinguished guests, welcome to our sixth panel. Before we proceed to the panel, I would like to express my gratitude to the Türkiye Brand Office of the Directorate of Communications for organising this event, and I would especially like to congratulate Fahrettin Altun, the Head of Communications, and Nur Özkan Erbay, the Head of Türkiye Brand Office, for their valuable contributions. From now on, branding efforts will lead to much better projects in Türkiye.

This panel will explore the “Türkiye Brand,” “Nation Branding,” potential future initiatives, and future visions, particularly concerning broadcasts and TV series. You are all familiar with our guests, who are recognised as experts in their respective fields and have achieved significant success. First, İsrail Kuralay. He was both the individual with whom I collaborated on my initial television programme and the instructor for the “television production” courses during my college years at İstanbul University. He is a well-known figure who has undertaken major projects and successfully combined both the academic world and the visual communication world.

Our second panellist is Duygu Çeçen Yaygır, who is also a very successful department head in her field. We have had a long-standing relationship with her since the university. Besides her bureaucratic duties, which demand a significant amount of responsibility, she currently holds a

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

position as a decision-maker both in the production of content and the promotion of innovative ideas.

Another panellist is the producer and screenwriter of the TV series, which you all know very well and watch with great interest. Mehmet Bozdağ is a successful young man who shifted the TV series paradigm. He is undertaking truly great projects for our country and its promotion abroad. “Paradigm shift,” I said. He introduced us to novel types of TV series and united the audience in a manner that strengthened their connection to history. He introduces the globe to Turkish history’s achievements, bravery stories, and struggles.

Reshad Strik, an opinion leader and cultural ambassador, has also gained recognition in Türkiye following his international achievements. We all admire him for his ability to introduce diverse cultures to us and share our own with them through the documentary ‘The New Member of the Family’ on TRT. Additionally, he is one of the lead actors in the movie “Don’t Look Up,” which has garnered considerable attention and inquiry in recent years.

Due to time constraints, I have briefly introduced our panellists to you. Let us start with Mr İsrafil. He serves on Istanbul Ticaret University’s board of trustees, works for the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce (ICOC), and is also a producer. He is a successful producer with projects on many channels, particularly TRT Arabic. The hall is very nice, lively, and crowded. Given our topics’ popularity, the audience may be curious about a variety of topics and have questions. I will take your questions, too.

The background of the page is a traditional marbled paper pattern. It features a complex, organic design with swirling, wavy lines in various shades of green, from light lime to deep forest green, and yellow. The overall effect is reminiscent of natural stone or water patterns. The text is centered in the upper half of the page.

Turkish Printing and
Publishing in the Context of
Contributions to the Türkiye
Nation Brand

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Turkish Printing and
Publishing in the Context
of Contributions to the
Türkiye Nation Brand**



Prof. Edibe Sözen
Rector, Maltepe University |
Moderator

PARTICIPANTS



Dr. İsrail Kuralay
Producer



02

Dr. İsrail Kuralay

Thank you very much, Professor. Let me call you “Professor.” Mrs Edibe did not mention it. I completed my academic studies with a delay. Mrs Edibe Sözen was my master thesis advisor. As I was a delayed thesis student, I decided to abandon my work. One day I went to İstanbul University and the professor told me, “You will complete your thesis.”

“Professor, I don’t have time; I’m busy with the company; I’m dealing with other things,” I said. She stated, “I don’t care. You will complete this thesis in such and such a time.” I am very grateful to the professor; I pray a lot for her. This was how I obtained my master’s degree, but I also completed my doctorate. When we discuss the concept of ‘Nation Branding’ in the context of media, or printing and publishing, we are referring to a broad framework. However, in recent times, we mostly think of “TV series.” Our TV series came to the forefront as a brand. In fact, we need to consider various media such as books, cinema, radio, television, and TV productions, including documentaries, animation, and TV programmes. Perhaps we should look at the process in a broader sense, in terms of dissemination of media and books, and start with the establishment of the printing press in the 1450s. On my way to the programme, I thought to myself, “TV series will definitely be discussed, but I would like to make a change in

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

the introduction.” I would like to begin by discussing a topic that is effective for nation branding and one in which we have achieved success: books. We all have the same misperception. The data suggests that there is one book for every ten Turkish person. However, according to recent data, it is eight books per Turk. Again, contrary to current perceptions, Türkiye is currently ranked fifth in the world in terms of our subject-matter. We are in the top 10 in terms of publication. Let me say the last word on perception and brand at the start. As a friend who has spent a significant amount of time overseas, I can tell you that our perception and brand power are stronger abroad than at home. When we travel overseas, we are overjoyed and proud to be Turkish with the “Türkiye Brand,” but when we return home, we are in disarray. Perhaps we should explain branding more clearly at home. Regarding books, I would like to highlight the Ministry of Culture and Tourism’s services. Before I came here, I spoke with Mr Tamer, Deputy Director General of Libraries and Publications. I said, “I will also mention the issue of the book,” and he said, “I would be very happy, brother. They do not take us very seriously on this issue, but...” Nearly three thousand Turkish books have been published in foreign languages through the TEDA Programme (Ministry of Culture and Tourism’s Project to Support the Expansion of Turkish Culture, Art, and Literature Works) so far. This is a massive and vital undertaking.

In terms of branding, we may divide our media history into two periods: before and after 2000. Indeed, fantastic work has been done in Türkiye in every sense since the 2000s. The TEDA Programme is a very successful project. Previously, only a few books were translated into foreign languages from an ideological perspective. Except for a few writers, Turkish writers were generally disregarded on the international stage, especially during the Soviet era. Many of our writers are now widely read around the world. These books inspire the creation of other projects. When we look at our cinema, we have a 120-year history. Cinema first appeared worldwide in 1895 and in our country in 1896. We immediately moved into the world of cinema. In 1896, Sultan Abdülhamit Khan invited the Lumière Brothers to make footage in Istanbul and Bursa. However, we did not make significant progress in the realm of cinema until the 1950s. After the 1950s, we began to experience what we would refer to as the tel-

evision generation throughout the world. The United Kingdom and the United States were the first countries where television was widely used.

The story is long, but in the 1980s and 1990s, everyone was familiar with American television shows and films. In fact, we must talk about Hollywood, which made the twentieth century an American century. Almost everyone has a little piece of Hollywood inside. The costumes in the movies, the accessories, the dresses, and the way we move are all influenced by American, English, and French styles. These are shaped by the power of the media. Countries are powerful, but their media has an even greater impact. In fact, due to Hollywood's contribution to the American brand, the American Chambers of Commerce provided screening equipment to all cinemas for a long time for free. So Hollywood did not automatically become Hollywood. Hollywood has revealed the American brand. However, the television business in Türkiye began in 1968.

Until 1990, we had a single-channel television. In the 1970s, some dramatic items dominated, while literary products were changed into visual ones. Until the 1990s, we had a single-channel television. In the 1990s, the history of broadcasting in Türkiye saw a transition as new private channels were launched by the son of the late Turgut Özal under the conditions of that period. Private channels began broadcasting with staff transferred from TRT, and they eventually developed their own formats and production genres. Dramatic series, films, and soap opera-style works have steadily emerged. All of this was a preparation stage. After the 2000s, Türkiye truly stepped into a new age economically, socially, politically, and culturally. I personally witnessed this period. I worked for NGOs for a long time. I served as Vice President of Istanbul Chamber of Commerce. I served as the Chairman of the Fairs Committee and the Press and Broadcasting Committee. I had the opportunity to follow this period very closely, both domestically and internationally.

When we first started going to fairs, the people there were not particularly interested in us. Let me offer you a specific example: in recent fairs, people have attempted to communicate with us in Turkish and asked how we are doing. They also ask for the names of TV show stars we have seen but forgotten. We encounter such an interest.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

We are a nation with a rich past. We are a nation with its own culture and civilisation. There is also a phrase that states, “World history cannot be written without the Turks, and if it is, it will be incomplete.” I truly believe this. Wherever you go on the globe, saying “I am Turkish” causes the other person to smile.

At first, I did not understand why everyone was so interested in us. Over time, I recognised that all of humanity has a common story with the Turks. This is one of the most important factors influencing TV series viewership and broadcast interest! Our producers are here, Mr. Mehmet is here, they are doing very good, very successful work. I congratulate them too. Türkiye is rapidly transitioning from a national to a global brand, following in their footsteps. Turkish TV series currently rank second only to American TV series in terms of global sales. 25 percent of the TV series sold to the world are Turkish TV series. It is expected to reach 1,4 billion people.

Prof. Edibe Sözen

When our digital platforms diversify, the number of viewers will increase even more.

Dr. İsrail Kuralay

We’re talking about a \$500 million export figure based on information we received from producers. 156 countries watch Turkish television series. We have reached two thirds of the world. This is a huge impact. as the Chairman of the Fairs Committee, I was also involved in fairs for food, construction, machinery, and other fields. In other words, there is a food cycle that involves the consumer, producer, and distributor, but the added value of a cultural product cannot be measured. Our first export was to Kazakhstan. There is “Deli Yürek,” TRT’s “Aşk-ı Memnu,” “Çalılıkıuşu” which were sold to France; but it is very difficult to follow now. Turkish TV series are breaking ratings records. Even in Argentina and Uruguay, our embassies have been asked, “Is the actor’s name in this TV series real or fake?” Children’s names are being changed by adopting names from the television series.

Prof. Edibe Sözen

In Latin American countries, many newborn children are named Elif because of the series “Elif.”

Dr. İsrail Kuralay

In Croatia, a guide was taking us around and said, “I studied Turkology.” At first, his friends said, “Are you stupid? Why are you studying Turkology? You will starve?” He told me about that fond memory, saying, “Because I studied Turkology, I am currently the one who earns the most money thanks to Turkish TV series.” Another memory is from Hungary. We attended an anime fair in Budapest, and a friend told me, “There is an auntie who sells herbal products. She’s outside Budapest; I’ll take you to her and get you some products.” I went there. When the lady realised that we were Turkish, she said, “Merhaba, nasılsınız?” I asked her where she learned Turkish, and she said, “I watch Turkish TV series every day.”

We attended a fair called Discop in South Africa. Going out on the streets of Johannesburg poses some challenges for white people. They said, “You white people should not go out into the streets,” but as usual, we Turks did not listen to them and went out into the streets. We entered a public market. The vendors at the public market realised that we were Turks and greeted us with lines from Mehmet Bozdağ’s TV series. We left that public market with great happiness.

Let me end with one last memory. We were in Doha, Qatar. A businessman invited us for dinner. While we were conversing, a young man in Arabic attire and a robe sat next to us, playing on his phone. He said things in Turkish, and he also used humorous slang words. I couldn’t stand it, I asked, “What is he doing?” and “Why is he acting like this?” He said, “This is my son. He’s watching a Turkish TV series. He learned the language from TV series; he likes slang words a lot.”

I would like to say one last thing. The story of the Turkish nation is not over yet. We need to keep the story going, which requires strong productions and producers. In my opinion, we should not limit ourselves to TV series. I want to emphasise that there is a world that awaits us. Thank you very much for this event, thank you.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Prof. Edibe Sözen

Thank you, you explained it so well. You provided many invaluable examples. In the new sectors of the industry, we have clearly caught up to what we were unable to do in the field of cinema.

Dr. İsrafil Kuralay

We also have very successful products in cinema. Our cinema is older, but there was an issue with distribution and marketing. I forgot to thank you. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and the Ministry of Trade. As members of the film commission at the fairs committee, we collaborated with Ms. Duygu. We have successfully implemented the governance model, which involves state, semi-public, and sectoral collaborations. Thank you.

Prof. Edibe Sözen

Thank you very much, İsrafil Kuralay. The Directorate General of International Service Trade, which was established within the Ministry of Trade, as well as the Department of Cultural Services and Creative Industries within this directorate, of which Duygu is a member, revived and mobilised the sector. Producers must be feeling much more comfortable now. I believe the key here is the assistance. It is impossible to understand Hollywood without understanding the financial structure behind it. Donors and philanthropists occasionally visit Hollywood to provide financial support. There are even people who say, “Make this movie, make that movie.” Entrepreneurship in the arts and culture sector has also gained substantial momentum. Duygu Çeçen Yaygır is the supporter and support planner of these processes. Ms. Duygu, your experiences are very important for us.



Models for Supporting
Cultural Exports: Turkish TV
Series Export Assistance

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Models for Supporting
Cultural Exports:
Turkish TV Series Export
Assistance**



Prof. Edibe Sözen
Rector, Maltepe University |
Moderator

PARTICIPANTS



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Head of Cultural Services
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Reshad Strik
Actor



Dr. İsrail Kuralay
Producer



Mehmet Bozdağ
Producer /
Screenwriter /
Founder of Bozdağ
Film



03

Duygu Çeçen Yaygır

Thank you, Ms. Sözen. At the outset, I would like to express my gratitude to the Directorate of Communications for inviting me to participate as a panellist in such a delightful event. Thank you for your precious invitation. I am also proud and honoured to be with such a brilliant team. Mr. İsrail has also recently mentioned this. Today, we are present in more than 160 countries, where we reach people from various socioeconomic or political backgrounds through televisions in their living rooms. It is a truly valuable promotion. It is a valuable element of “soft power.” As the Ministry of Trade, we collaborate with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Directorate General of Cinema, the İstanbul Chamber of Commerce (ICOC), as well as the NGOs, such as the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye’s (TOBB) Creative Industries Council, aiming to answer some questions. These are: “How can we support the sector more at the moment? How can we further promote the sector around the world? How can we come up with a palette of support elements more specific to the sector?”

I want to point out again, as Mr. İsrail stated, “over 160 countries.” Especially with the acceleration of digital platforms during the pandemic, the number of viewers exceeded one billion in many regions. According to the sector data, our exports are currently ranging between \$550–600

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

million. However, these figures are derived from sales in the conventional television industry. This figure now includes the national and international digital platforms that we have recently begun to measure. When we include the digital platforms, that figure reaches around \$650–700 million. Lately, in addition to our exports of conventional television, we have diversified our composition of digital and television series exports. To me, this is also quite important. We now sign co-production agreements as well. Today, our prominent producers are making mega-regional co-production and co-distribution agreements with other prominent global or mega-regional production companies.

Prof. Edibe Sözen

What is the ratio of these joint agreements?

Duygu Çeçen Yaygır

We can say that the ratio is approximately one-eighth of our current exports. This is quite valuable because we now have the opportunity to transfer the “know-how” significantly improved by Turkish producers over the last decade, which is a service export for us. It is also crucial to avoid putting all of our eggs in one basket. We, as the ministry, offer support at this point. In this new era, we expect Türkiye to gradually start its own Netflix, Disney Plus, and digital platforms. We have revised our facilitative legislation in this direction.

Prof. Edibe Sözen

TRT has such a project, right?

Duygu Çeçen Yaygır

Yes, TRT has a project to commence very soon. We have reviewed our legislation on supporting Turkish digital platforms and our producers that export productions globally. I think this is also an important step. There are dozens specialising in this field in the sector. I am not an expert, but there are examples within the genre we call Turkish dramas that have significantly transformed content that appeals to different cultures and embraces everyone. There are docudrama examples as well. With such work, we are reaching various corridors in various parts of the world. We work very closely with the İstanbul Chamber of Commerce. We

have expanded our palette of fairs and our support for fairs. We were in Cannes two months ago with Mr. İsrail at the TV series-movie content fair. Cannes MIPCOM hosts all the forerunners in the field. It is an important fair. In order to further support this fair with a larger budget, we have included it in the list of prestigious fairs. This was not enough, for sure. We also included the fair in South Africa within the scope of support. Our closest rival is South Korea. They are very similar to us because of the joint productions, physiognomy, and so on. With the aim of making co-productions with South Korea, we have included Busan and other fairs within the scope of support. Russia's World Content is similarly within the scope of support.

Prof. Edibe Sözen

What do you do with individual applications?

Duygu Çeçen Yaygır

We also support individual applications. We encourage national participation at a higher level when the İstanbul Chamber of Commerce or other collaborating organisations bring together a few companies and take them abroad. Additionally, the fact that the pavilion is a Turkish pavilion is extremely significant for us. Last week, İstanbul Chamber of Commerce returned from Singapore. Our productions are highly regarded in certain countries owing to the similarity between our cultural values, and we are at the vanguard of docudrama productions in Singapore and Asia.

Prof. Edibe Sözen

Ms. Duygu, at what point does the producer or company reach you?

Duygu Çeçen Yaygır

This is how it works: our Ministry of Culture and Tourism provides support for all phases of production, including synopsis, script writing, and export. It is very valuable. We act immediately upon its internationalisation. Therefore, the product must be exported, at least in my humble opinion. Not just the fairs.

Prof. Edibe Sözen

How many fairs do you support in total?

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Duygu Çeçen Yaygır

There are many fairs we support. Currently, there are approximately twenty fairs that we support. Three of them have the status of a prestigious fair. There are different fairs that we attend, on the national or individual levels, and those that our animators attend. They have their own separate fair. There are fairs where programme format designers say, “We better not miss this one.” Sub-categorising them and collaborating with them is highly beneficial.

Dr. İsrafil Kuralay

There are also those in the context of countries. For example, MIP TV, MI-PCOM in Cannes. NATPE in Miami and ATF in Singapore in Far Asia. There is also another fair in Budapest, Hungary.

Prof. Edibe Sözen

For example, is there a fair covering the Turkic world?

Duygu Çeçen Yaygır

There are efforts as well as a strategy to establish an organisation to achieve it. The matter was discussed during the visits of our President and ministers to the Turkic Republics. For instance, we are currently engaged in close collaboration with the Ministry of Culture of Azerbaijan regarding this subject. We are aiming to produce fair content for the Turkic geography.

Dr. İsrafil Kuralay

You might have heard about the Korkut Ata Film Festival. It is currently one of the most important festivals in the Turkic world. It is an event held in the cultural capitals of the Turkic world. Next year, it will be held in Shusha, Azerbaijan. The Organisation of Turkic States is planning to create a fund for it. Ministers of Culture have already signed this fund. Hopefully, we will take part in events soon.

Duygu Çeçen Yaygır

Fairs are quite valuable. These are products with a high level of intellectual property, our new generation of export products, and products with a high level of added value. Game exports, the IT sector, the TV series and movie sector... Our President and our Ministers also mention this

at every opportunity. As an insider, I would like to assert that there is a significant bureaucratic will at play in this situation. Consequently, our Minister also declared, “We will further raise our export incentives for TV series.” In addition to fair participation; dubbing, subtitling, advertising, promotion, marketing activities, galas and show organisations abroad, and registration protection expenses will be supported. In reality, it has been supported since 2012; however, it has been further supported in the past year through an increase in resources and an expansion of the palette. Thank you.

Prof. Dr. Edibe Sözen

Thank you very much, Ms. Duygu. The information you provided was essential for all of us to see the extent of our progress.

Our third speaker is Reshad Strik. How about we start with these questions, if you don't mind? What is the cultural perception of Türkiye in other countries? What is the perception of Turkish series and movies?

Reshad Strik

May I speak in Turkish?

Prof. Edibe Sözen

It would be appreciated.

Reshad Strik



NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

At the age of 16, I began my career in the film industry. I have had numerous experiences, including studying in Australia, then in Hollywood, graduating from university, working, and travelling the globe. I love cinema, and I love history. Türkiye is, in my opinion, a very strange country; it is very successful. It produces a lot, sells a lot and exports to the world. But I believe Türkiye can do even better. I believe, Türkiye may emerge as the world's premier film industry within the next five years. At present, Türkiye is the country that exports the highest-quality television series. Mehmet Bozdağ, in particular, accomplished remarkable feats. Remarkable historical feats. In reality, the industry in this region has transcended Hollywood's efforts to produce horror films and Marvel's efforts to produce X-Men and similar properties. To top it off, they have a different religion. So, for that market, we might as well not exist. Especially historical and religious things are executed exceptionally well here. This is, in fact, our identity. This is actually very useful, so the world craves to watch it and learn. We are extremely grateful to Mehmet Bozdağ for creating captivating and engaging narratives for us. This is very important for the next generation. I love Türkiye and "Türkiye is my home".

Prof. Edibe Sözen

And everyone in Türkiye loves you too.

Reshad Strik

Alhamdulillah, I'm from here now.

Prof. Edibe Sözen

While you were filming "The New Member of the Family" (Ailenin Yeni Üyesi), what were people's impressions of you?

Reshad Strik

I travel with a team. I find it fascinating that people from all over the world watch Turkish TV series. Even in Brazil and from up north in a far-away place like the Amazon, everyone is talking about the Resurrection. Women love the Resurrection. When I was performing in the Resurrection, I noticed that fans from the Philippines, Mexico, and all around the world were continuously sending me messages on Facebook. It was not only Muslims, but everyone.

Prof. Edibe Sözen

Indeed, another aspect of universality is the ability to appeal to all cultures. Thank you very much, Reshad.

Reshad Strik

In my opinion, Türkiye is currently headed in the right direction. I mean, historical series place a greater emphasis on culture and religion. Because they are items that serve as reflections of who we are. The “religion, culture, and history” trinity is of paramount significance.

Prof. Edibe Sözen

Thank you very much, Reshad. In another programme, you mentioned that you had rejected a few significant projects because they contradicted your values and our culture. I would like to share your attitude and stance with the audience here. It is an undeniable fact that an artist’s stance is important.

We will resume our panel with Metin Bozdağ, a person who has become the pride of Türkiye with his contemporary productions and a producer whose name has turned into a brand with his series. Afterwards, we will conclude our panel. Mr. Bozdağ, there is no need to reiterate each one of your works. I believe, everyone here already knows about them. Now, let us hear from the producer himself. What is the perception of Türkiye? You are already leading as a trademark. What can we expect in the future? The floor is yours.

Mehmet Bozdağ



NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

First of all, I would like to begin with a thank you to our Head of Communications, Prof. Fahrettin Altun. With the establishment of the Türkiye Brand Office within the Directorate of Communications, the strategy for Türkiye's brands to achieve long-term success and longevity will be determined. I would also like to thank the esteemed head of this office.

Thank you for your kind introduction. First off, I would like to start with a fundamental question. Turkish series have become very famous all over the world in the last 15–20 years. In the past, we were importing foreign TV series. We were watching TV series from Brazil and Argentina. We were also importing TV series from Latin America. What change has commenced that we have now become the ones to export TV series? Today, the whole world is watching Turkish TV series and, in a sense, Turkish culture. This makes us all happy on behalf of the whole nation. In the last twenty years, foreigners have fallen in love with and learned the Turkish language. Above all, simply doing your job is insufficient to drive sales anymore. It is only one of the many factors. In the last 20 years, Türkiye has achieved political and economic stability. And TV series are an economic power. Without a stable economy, you cannot work towards the project or atmosphere that you imagined. This 20-year-strong political and economic power had already begun to shape Türkiye's brand image abroad. Within 5–10 years, with this economic power, TV networks started producing series with larger budgets and longer runs. Actors have begun earning better pay. In a short amount of time, such as within 5–10 years, many production projects had been realised. Those were able to be sold all over the world. At this moment, I would like to talk about the tremendous work done by the Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Afterwards, I will continue with my projects. We collaborated with Ms. Duygu, and they greatly encouraged us to export the series. It used to be the other way around. Indeed, it was a struggle to try and ask the state for an opportunity.

Today, the Directorate General of Cinema, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, our Minister of Culture and Tourism as well as our Minister of Trade, and every bureaucrat in the Ministry of Trade are really providing us with tremendous support. They work day and night, treating it as their own work. They participate in fairs. Our channels are also very important. All of our channels are working hard to ensure that everything turns out successfully.

Producers, screenwriters, and directors are fully involved in this. Now we

began to think: Which project will receive attention not only in Türkiye but also worldwide? Sometimes a series can have a lot of viewers in Türkiye, but not worldwide. This is quite important. The series you produce must have a universal appeal. I was 29 years old when I started *Resurrection: Ertuğrul*, which is around the time when I also began writing the script. I am a historian. The series aired when I turned 30. On its premiere day, the series ranked number one around the globe on social media. With five seasons of *Resurrection* and about 3 to 4 seasons of *The Ottoman*, a total of 250–260 episodes were aired. In these 260 episodes, a series of exceptional quality that rose to the top was born. When I began writing *Resurrection: Ertuğrul*, had I ever dreamed of reaching such heights? I had not. Once, 60 Brazilian ladies came to visit the set. Had I ever thought they would love my series so much? The simple answer is “no.” Then, why did they love *Resurrection* so much? Because *Resurrection* made everyone happy. Above all, there is this: We sell Turkish TV series all over the world, but on the subject of representing us in terms of historical identity and cultural representation, I think the *Resurrection* has put us all at ease. And it is the story of our founding father. We are all extremely pleased with the endeavour to disclose it to the entire world, our objective to convey it to numerous cultures through the series, and the fact that *Resurrection* has a mission in this regard. Mr. Maduro visited us and showed incredible respect to our actors. He watched the series with great interest. I said, “I’m trying to understand why you love *Ertuğrul* so much.” He said, “*Ertuğrul*’s struggle for justice against the oppressors impressed me a lot.” Actually, *Resurrection: Ertuğrul* has resumed in *The Ottoman* starting from its first episode. I have always tried to deal with universal emotions in my works.

A female character who is subject to oppression by bad guys appears in the first episode. A man comes and saves her. And the man who saves her is *Ertuğrul*. Crusaders are the oppressors. He brings the girl he rescued to the camp, which triggers a lot of subsequent events. This is a universal emotion. It’s an emotion that can be seen anywhere in the world. It is in every human being’s nature to dream of being a hero. Especially in an unfair, crisis-ridden world, there is a need for a hero to fight against political and economic forces. *Resurrection: Ertuğrul* corresponded to this situation sociologically and socio-psychologically. And within this, we have handled universal emotions. Today, *Resurrection: Ertuğrul* and *The Ottoman* are watched in 80–100 countries. Russia, Spain, Portugal, Latin America, Taiwan, Tanzania, Indonesia, Austria... Everywhere, all over

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

the globe. This really surprised us. There was a commentary in the New York Times that said, “The Crusaders are losing. I should be rooting for the Crusaders, but I’m rooting for the Muslims.” It was quite a famous comment. We have seen something universal in this sense. But what I believe is that it can only be considered a success if it is sustainable. We should be able to carry out this work for 50 years, not just 4-5, 6 or 10 years. This requires institutionalisation. In this sense, our company is now at a level that can set up plateaus anywhere in the world. We have close to 2500–3000 employees. When we first started in this sector, there were no other competitors in Türkiye. We have not only told the story of Resurrection: Ertuğrul in terms of content; we have also built an industry. We will open our plateau to tourism if we are lucky.

It is now the biggest plateau in Europe. We also aim to contribute to tourism. Apart from the Resurrection: Ertuğrul and The Ottoman series, we are also shooting a new series this year. We are making series for four different countries, simultaneously. They are about their own histories. I think that is very important. We have shot Jalaluddin Kharzemshah in Uzbekistan. We built the plateau in Uzbekistan. We are shooting a series for Qatar. We are shooting another series for Azerbaijan. Now Mr. Maduro has invited us. He wants us to shoot the life story of Simon de Bolivar. He especially wants us to do it. If we can shoot Simon de Bolivar in Latin America, we will have achieved a great job. Thus, we have also learned how to work internationally. Now, we are working on these projects very well. As I am a bit of a historian, I have carried out many historical projects. I would like to steadily move onto our present day. Because, I have some things to say about today as well. That statement is: Türkiye is growing. If Türkiye did not grow, the TV series sector would not have grown either. I would like to wholeheartedly thank our President. He lit a fire in our hearts by setting a goal. With this fire, success was achieved in the defence industry, in every field and in every sector. The TV series sector has also been successful. We are able to have Kızılcıkma soar through the skies right now. Development and growth in all sectors. What made Mimar Sinan so great? If I made myself clear, it was because Suleiman the Magnificent provided him with the opportunity. Could Mimar Sinan have been great without realising his dream? A suitable atmosphere was created around him so that he could fulfil his dream.

The biggest obstacle in front of our TV series industry right now is this: How should I put it? I had previously said some very different things

while keeping my words in check. The global platforms. They have seriously started to take things to another level. The thing is, in Türkiye, they do not allow Turkish producers to undertake the entire work alone. I think they are the biggest obstacle to Turkish TV series exports.

I haven't worked with them personally, but right now, they are only giving 15 percent to the producer. As a result, they are making the producer a mere subcontractor. They are jamming the system by offering horrible budgets to the actors and work crew. Unless we can stop them on a legal basis, they will undoubtedly cause the sector to collapse. Now, what is it about Turkish TV series that makes them so popular? Indeed, we produce 36 episodes a year, each lasting 130 minutes. The other side is producing 8 or 10 episodes. Our budget is much larger. In other words, we achieved success with large budgets by working hard as a sector. I speak very openly about this. These global platforms come and make TV series in Türkiye. They hinder producers and export opportunities. They basically wreck the sector tremendously. Previously, 5–6 global production companies came and defrauded us. They failed, but they caused a deadlock in the sector. The same applies to this case. We must definitely take preventive action against this. If not, these export figures will be nothing more than a dream after 3–5 years. I say this with great clarity and precision. As I previously asserted, if we fail to take precautions, the TV series industry is likely to gradually lose its lustre.



Prof. Edibe Sözen

Of course, you have to manage the risks as well.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Mehmet Bozdağ

Much like we are happy to see people worldwide learn Turkish, the other side has employed this as a psychological weapon for many years. Everyone looked up to Rambo and Rocky back then. We have managed to reverse this situation now, and as Türkiye, we need to make this success permanent. The methods and technical systems to achieve this must be developed as soon as possible. Not everyone should be able to do as they please. Here, I believe the concept of total warfare should be taken into consideration. In the defence industry, it is possible to design exceptional defences; however, it is still essential to cultivate a defence reflex in one's mind and spirit first. In this context, I hope that this need or this incidental situation will be resolved. I would like to thank you for taking the trouble to listen to me.

Prof. Edibe Sözen

You have achieved many great things at a young age. I hope this lasts for a lifetime. One aspect of the Ottoman Empire that experts have identified as particularly significant is its justice and tax system, which, according to the experts, sustained the empire for 600 years. Justice is necessary for everyone. And the heroes in your TV series are fighting for justice. It is very important. Historians call the 16th century “the Age of Turks.” I believe the 21st century will be “the Age of Türkiye”.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Guest Question:

Hello. Mr. Mehmet, I would like to ask you a question. We have mentioned the “Century of Türkiye.” Diplomatic vision, too, may play a decisive role. Perhaps Ertuğrul would win if he were to be up for candidacy in most regions, even without making speeches. So how can Ertuğrul's longevity be ensured for the term after? It might be true that Ertuğrul's narrative has ended in the TV series; however, there must be a tangible product associated with it. Or should it be selling clothes? I would appreciate it if you could talk about the brand's longevity here.

Mehmet Bozdağ

Thank you very much. You have asked a very good question. We have

been working on this for a long time. In English, it is called “merchandising.” You see, we considered manufacturing Ertuğrul’s toy and figurines in the past. Unfortunately, the toy industry has not developed much in Türkiye just yet. And I did not want to outsource it to China either because of my feelings. So we could only work on the gaming platforms. The gaming industry in Türkiye is developing rapidly. Now the toy industry is also starting to develop. So yes, inshallah, we will take steps for its longevity in the next 1–2 years.

If everything works out right, as a company, we will be opening our plateau to tourism starting in April or May. It is truly a legendary plateau. We will be having visitors from many parts of the world. The tours will start soon. People from Indonesia, Malaysia, Latin America, Brazil, the Arab region, the Gulf region, and the Muslim-Turkic region are already coming to Türkiye. However, we will also be having visitors from Latin America, Africa and the Far East. But for that to happen, we need to ensure that brands are lasting. Apart from that, there should actually be something like this: Other companies, namely those producing toys and those in the textile sector, are not ready for this just yet. For example, one of our biggest problems is that we have failed to utilise Türkiye’s strength in the TV series industry. Meaning, we enter almost every living room with our Turkish brands. As the Turkish TV series industry, we are on the board of the Service Exporters Association. We are also discussing this exact issue there. For instance, those who admire a hero should watch it on the TV channel where that hero is featured. If the hero uses a Turkish product, he should be using it as well. If we follow this approach, I believe we will reach the export figures we dream of much faster. In that sense, a collective mind is needed. And that is being built from the ground up slowly. I believe the industrial sector should also benefit from this.

Guest Question:

Hello, I am Sezer Aksoy. I am currently working on a doctoral thesis that will explore the influence of Turkish TV series in South America and their potential for enhanced use as a soft power instrument. All participants can respond to my question. I am interested in learning how the actors and activists in our TV series can be more actively utilised in public diplomacy and nation branding, as well as how our actors can take on a more active role as cultural diplomats in the world. Just like the Angelina

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Jolie example. As you might know, she possesses the status of a peace ambassador. Our actors and actresses also have very large fan bases. Do you think we are utilising this strength sufficiently? Also, how can we better utilise it in the future? Thank you.

Dr. İsrafil Kuralay

If I may, I just remembered something when you mentioned Latin America. I shot a 13-episode documentary called *El Turco*. According to the late professor Kemal Karpat, 20 million Ottoman descendants live in Latin America. I think it is 30 million. That is my guess. Indeed, that is one of the reasons why TV series are very popular there. For instance, there are 300–500 thousand Palestinians living in Chile who emigrated during the Ottoman period. Chile has the highest number of Palestinians outside of Palestine. I would like to express that they are also proud of being *El Turco*. Establishing a convenient atmosphere is necessary for actors in the TV series to serve as cultural ambassadors. This starts with press work. We organised an international fair in Qatar. Some of the actors from the TV series also participated. Thousands of Qataris chased after the actors. As Mr. Mehmet has said, it is important to combine cultural products with other industrial products. For cultural diplomacy, it is beneficial to occasionally invite our actors to meetings and festivals. Similarly, it is significant that the actors represent our culture and civilisation. We certainly need cultural ambassadors.

Mehmet Bozdağ

In fact, this is a national issue. The actors should voluntarily participate, even if we do not propose it. But first, the actors must make peace with this nation. Do you understand what I mean? I actually want to talk about it. Yet, doing so could lead to numerous issues. When *Resurrection: Ertuğrul* was first aired, many of the actors were reluctant to perform quite a few things. I had overwhelming struggles until the start of *Resurrection: Ertuğrul*. And now, remembering the past, I am also a little angry.

Guest Question:

Hello. I am a journalist from Azerbaijan. The official representative of the *Şərq* (East) Newspaper to Türkiye. I have a question for Mr. Mehmet. As you know, there was a 44-day war in Azerbaijan in 2020. Türkiye also

provided great support to Azerbaijan. Would you consider shooting a TV series depicting this war? Also featuring actors from Azerbaijan...

Mehmet Bozdağ

We are already shooting it.

Guest:

Is that so? Nice to hear; thank you very much.

Mehmet Bozdağ

Our team got there, an agreement was made, and everything was arranged. It took eight months to write the script. It has eight episodes in total, telling the story of Karabakh. From my own point of view, I can only say that I am grateful for the point we have reached. Sometimes people forget the value and meaning of their time. We used to listen to Cem Karaca's song "Karabağ'da Talan Var" (Plunder in Karabakh). Our hearts would fill with grief. Now that song no longer bears a meaning; it has remained in the past. On the other hand, when we take a look at the Turkic world today, for instance, there is a poem called "Güzel Türkistan" (Beautiful Turkestan) by the renowned Uzbek poet Cholpon, and it has been around for almost 100 years. At the moment, this piece is coming to life and reviving, but I am not sure whether we in the Turkic world, particularly in Türkiye, are aware of this. An extraordinary epic is being written right now. A tremendous epic is being written. Inshallah, we will be able to comprehend it too. Alhamdulillah, the Turkic world is coming together again.

This is a magnificent epic. Many people gave their lives for this epic. Take Ahmad Javad's "Çırpınırdı Qara Dəniz" (the Black Sea Would Flutter); we can say it does flutter now. And, inshallah, soon it will be much brighter...

Guest:

Thank you very much for your efforts. Thank you very much. I hope it will be a very good TV series and reflect heroism.

Guest Question:

Hello, I am Ahmet Gemici. My question is for Mr Reshad. Mr Reshad, your documentaries are very popular in Türkiye and around the world. What was your motivation for these documentaries? How did you start? What is your story? Could you tell us a little bit about it?

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Reshad Strik

Mashallah, very good question. How did we start? We travelled to Nepal for the first episode of the documentary. We went to the Himalayas. Our producer was taking notes there. We wanted a family documentary, but we also wanted an adventure, and he was conferring that with TRT. How could we do it all? Adventure, food, family, drama. It was a bit difficult to do it all. We needed to decide on family, job, challenge and situation. That was how we started. We travelled a lot in Nepal. We found honey there. It was quite an adventure. There was a Nepalese man in the mountains. Bees would sting him all the time. I recorded it with a GoPro. It turned out to be decent work. TRT Documentary liked it very much. An old Nepalese man said, “Hey, come wait here.” There was a fireplace. He said, “The bees do not come near the fire.” I recorded all of it with a GoPro. Everyone loves adventure. They love challenge, adventure and drama. But at the time, TRT Documentary wanted both a drama, a challenge and a family theme. I believe that family is of utmost importance in Türkiye, followed by neighbours and then the neighbourhood. Your village, your city and, of course, your country are important.

Prof. Dr. Edibe Sözen

Distinguished panellists, You have shared with us your beautiful ideas, the work you have done both locally and globally, your efforts and your vision. Thank you very much.

Esteemed guests, we would also like to thank you very much. Thank you...







**TENTH
SESSION**

The Branding Strategy of the
Most Valuable Turkish Brand,
Turkish Airlines: Just Imagine



Bilal Ekşi
CEO, Turkish Airlines

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**The Branding Strategy
of the Most Valuable
Turkish Brand, Turkish
Airlines: Just Imagine**

PARTICIPANTS



Bilal Ekşi
CEO, Turkish Airlines



01

The sky has always been a passion that captivated humanity throughout history. From ancient tales to fairy tales, and in the works of inventors of every era, the desire to fly has been a part of life. Although the act of flying, which became possible with advancements in technology since the early 20th century, has become a part of our lives, it continues to retain its inspiring aspect. Civil aviation, in particular, is a very special sector surrounded by this passion and inspiration.



NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

The story of one of our country's most valuable brands, Turkish Airlines, dates back to the past and includes thousands of incredible moments.

Turkish Airlines is a brand that started its journey with the dreams of our nation. Inspired by the motto “The future is in the skies,” it made its first flight in 1933. Founded with a modest fleet of five aircraft and inspired by the wild goose, which can fly the highest, Turkish Airlines today is a global player connecting every corner of the world.

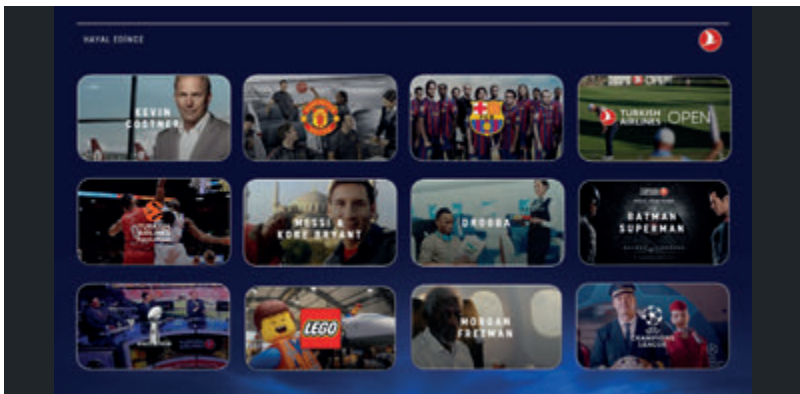
What transpired on this journey? To understand the transformation of Turkish Airlines, which from its inception until the 2000s positioned itself as a local airline rather than aiming for global growth, we need to focus on the year 2003. For our brand, which had reached the limits of its existing scale, a decision had to be made. Would it remain a regional company, or would it pursue a new vision with the goal of becoming a strong and leading airline on a global scale? Under the vision set forth by our then-Prime Minister, now President, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Turkish Airlines, which operated as a state institution, raised its targets. Strategies were developed and implemented to transform it into a global brand. This period of transformation, which coincides with the beginning of my career at Turkish Airlines in 2003, can be defined by two fundamental approaches.

First, to adopt a more competitive structure, Turkish Airlines was privatized. Distancing itself from its bureaucratic structure, the brand could now make quick and effective decisions and manage risks more accurately. Another important point was the re-planning of Turkish Airlines' communication with its passengers. We accepted our passengers as our guests and focused on improving their experiences. This approach naturally involved re-planning all touchpoints. We reorganized both our management structure and services in line with our new approach.

With our new goals and strategies, our brand experienced a rapid rise after 2003. Increased aviation investments in our country, the completion of domestic airports, and strengthening international influence also contributed directly to our brand, bolstering our momentum. The developments and every success during this period motivated us for new achievements with great excitement.

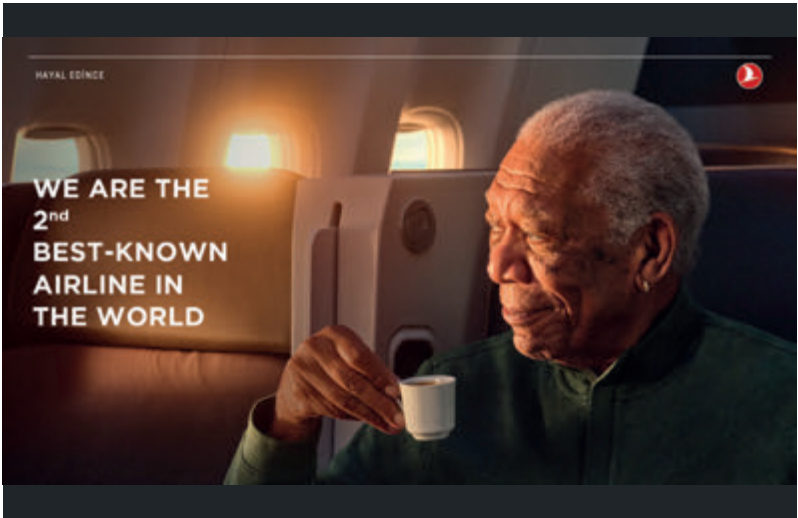
In 2008, Turkish Airlines became the 20th member of Star Alliance. This was the most significant indicator that we had leveled up and needed to advance towards our new goals. These developments were not limited to our main brand alone. Brands like AnadoluJet, Turkish Cargo, and Miles&Smiles also rose rapidly. Through global sponsorships and advertisements, we increased our global recognition. We became Türkiye's most valuable brand. On the day we completed our full move to Istanbul Airport, which we called the "Great Migration," we began working towards much higher goals. We focused on our brand strategy. While perfecting the experience we offer, we brought our perception to where we wanted it with our global communication efforts. Campaigns like "Widen Your World" strengthened our position in people's minds.

This rise can also be measured by numbers. From 2003 to the present, except for 2016 and the pandemic period, we have made a profit every year. With growth rates of 10% and above, we continued our ascent. Comparing the data from 2003 to 2022; our number of aircraft increased from 65 to 390, the countries we fly to from 52 to 129, and we reached a total of 340 destinations. While the number of passengers we carried was 10.4 million in 2003, we expect it to exceed 70 million by the end of 2022. We achieved more than an eightfold increase in the number of cabin crew and pilots. We will continue to develop rapidly in the next 10 years. To summarize: Türkiye is growing, and Turkish Airlines is flying high.



NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Our brand journey is full of unique stories. As a company that will turn 90 in 2023, it is somewhat difficult to briefly explain ourselves. Looking at the periods that changed us through our significant moments, we can categorize them into three headings. From our foundation until the 2000s, we were a regional Turkish Airlines. From 2003 to 2023, we rose with the strength we derived from our roots, investing in brand value by becoming “the airline that flies to the most countries in the world” and treating our customers as guests. From 2023 to 2033, in Türkiye’s new century, Turkish Airlines will plan to achieve much higher goals.



On our journey that began with a dream, we are progressing towards new goals with the strength we derive from Anatolia. I congratulate all my colleagues who contributed to these achievements we are proud of and extend our sincere thanks to our nation, whose support we always feel.





**ELEVENTH
SESSION**

Transferring Nation Branding to the Global Scale: International Fairs



Murat Karagöz
Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye
to Portugal | Moderator



Nick Cull
Professor, USC Center on
Public Diplomacy



Erdoğan Kök
Ambassador | EXPO 2023
Special Advisor



Eduardo Chaillo Ortiz
General Manager for
Latin America at Maritz
Global Events

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Globalizing Nation
Branding: International
Fairs**



Murat Karagöz
Ambassador of the Republic of
Türkiye to Portugal | Moderator



01

Good afternoon everyone. It is a great pleasure for me to join you today at this panel titled “Transferring Nation Branding to the Global Scale: International Fairs.” A month ago, I was invited to Doha, Qatar, for the first international event organized by the Türkiye Brand Office. Along with Ms. Nur, I participated in the panel, just before the start of the World Cup. As a former football player during my university years, I found myself referencing football. I recalled Simon Kuper’s book “Football against the Enemy,” which was translated into Turkish as “Futbol Asla Sadece Futbol Değildir” in the late ‘90s. It was a remarkable work.

The book explained how football was more than just a sport, touching upon politics, economy, bureaucracy, and finance. It summarized interviews with a variety of individuals, from heads of state to footballers, mafia leaders, media personnel, business people, and think tank representatives. Indeed, it was an intriguing book. I also referenced it in Qatar. As we have seen from Mr. Infantino’s statements so far, we are discussing more than just football in the Middle East—politics, human rights, economy, infrastructure, transportation, and nation branding. Tomorrow will be the final match. In 2018, when I was an ambassador in Jordan, statistics showed that 32 billion people watched the World Cup on television, and it was predicted that by the end of the tournament, the viewership could reach 4.5-5 billion people.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

The World Cup, like the Olympic Games or many other different competitions, is a major event. Essentially, today we will try to answer the question: “Should international fairs be seen merely as international fairs, or are they something much more?” I would like to begin with an introduction, then introduce our panellists and give the floor to them. With globalization, transportation and communication networks have diversified, making public diplomacy, aimed at directly reaching and informing foreign publics, highly significant. International fairs play an important role in this regard. Participating companies have the opportunity to showcase their products and services and seek new partners and markets. International fairs offer companies wishing to operate outside their home countries significant opportunities to reach large audiences and major markets. In this context, EXPOs not only bring together like-minded companies and people but also leading brands, facilitating mutual interaction. Some countries, including Türkiye, continue their steady progress towards becoming a trend in international trade with what we call enterprising and humanitarian diplomacy, which is effective diplomacy.

Today, we have a wonderful panel consisting of esteemed experts. I would like to start with Professor Nick Cull, sitting right next to me. He comes from the University of Southern California. He is the founding director of the Master’s program in Public Diplomacy at USC and a faculty member. His research and teaching focus primarily on the role of public engagement in foreign policy. He has lectured worldwide at the invitation of foreign ministries. Therefore, we are delighted to host him here, and we look forward to seeing him at the third Antalya Diplomacy Forum this year. He is also a regular guest speaker at the US Foreign Service Institute. During my time in Washington D.C., I would visit there and provide information about Turkish foreign policy. Nick Cull has also worked as a consultant for the foreign services of the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Japan.

Mr. Nick Cull, is there a magical formula for achieving success in public diplomacy through EXPOs?

The background of the image is a complex, abstract marbled pattern. It features a rich palette of colors, including deep blues, purples, and magentas, which are interwoven in a swirling, organic fashion. The texture appears fluid and dynamic, with various shades and patterns creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall effect is reminiscent of traditional marbled paper or a digital art style that mimics natural, organic forms.

Concept of Security Based
on Reputation in the Context
of Nation Branding and
Public Diplomacy

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Concept of Security Based
on Reputation in the
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PARTICIPANTS



Professor Nick Cull
USC Center on Public
Diplomacy



02

Nick Cull

First, I would like to thank the Presidency's Directorate of Communications of the Republic of Türkiye for their kind invitation to this wonderful event in this beautiful city. I have many memories from my visit in the 1990s, and it is a great pleasure to be back. My talk will consist of three parts, and I hope to answer your question, "What could be the magical formula?" First, I will talk about nation branding in general. Then, I will discuss EXPOs in detail. Finally, I will talk about the road ahead.

Many states view nation branding as an extra way to make a bit more sales or attract a few more visitors. However, I do not see this topic as something optional for selling something. I believe it is part of the core business of the nation-state. Each framework changes the picture, and if we frame the task of connecting with foreign publics as nation branding, it emphasizes that the state is like a business and its activities are goods and services.

If we define connecting with foreign publics as public diplomacy, this definition emphasizes that the state is engaged in a specialized professional task, a task which it may hand to other people and other parts of the state. If we frame the task of connecting with foreign publics as soft

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

power, this definition clearly positions the state as trying to create extra influence in the world. According to Professor Nye's definition, power is about coordinating with others. In my view, power inherently has the potential to subordinate others. The inherent irony of soft power is exploiting the advantages of being attractive. One of the things we learn from soap operas, Turkish soap operas, and even life, is that if you are the type of person who manipulates your attractiveness, it is actually quite repulsive. I value all these frameworks, but I think none of them fully show us the picture. I felt this way for a long time.

In the early 2000s, as an academic, I wasn't quite sure what to do. I would go to seminars, sit, listen, and say yes, but... I think public diplomacy always starts with listening. Therefore, I continued to listen to diplomats and other officials worldwide as they shared their experiences and dilemmas. During an interview with a diplomat at EXPO 2017 in Kazakhstan, the pieces finally fell into place. He was talking about hosting the EXPO not to put his country ahead of others but out of a desire to stay safe. He thought if people knew and understood Kazakhstan, it might prevent a neighbor from coming and taking land from the country. I said to him, "Then you are talking about reputation security." He said, "Yes."

Currently, reputation security is my preferred framework. Reputation security is the theme in the conclusion of my latest book and the book I am currently working on. I define reputation security as all the benefits that come from being well-regarded in the world. One of the reasons I like this term as a framework is that it also considers the vulnerability arising from having real flaws and mistakes out in the open. EXPOs are part of reputation security. I was interested in Jose, Gustavo, James and other speakers talking about how the countries with the strongest reputations also have a great history of being hosts and participants in EXPOs. This was Germany's story a century ago, Japan and Canada's story in the mid-century, and it is South Korea's story now. Three things have impressed me about reputation security. First, building a reputation takes a very long time. Second, once built, it is very hard to change. Third, global publics are not foolish. Reputation exists for a reason, and publics need to be listened to.

Now, let's move on to the second part. I will talk about EXPOs. As a historian, I have approached EXPOs in various ways. I have examined them as diplomatic tools used on the road to World War II, as travel EXPOs used by the United States during the Cold War, and as public diplomacy tools used today. Since 2010, I have tried to visit every EXPO and every pavilion. In the 2020 Dubai EXPO, I served as a consultant for the USA Pavilion. I think EXPOs contribute to reputation security in many ways. There are many benefits to hosting or being a participant in an EXPO. At an EXPO, you have the opportunity to use all human senses to convey your message as a host or participant. Studies show that connecting with a person and creating positive memories in their consciousness has a lifelong effect.

Considering its impact, this is not surprising at all, because EXPOs are like designed mini personal visits. When we talk about an EXPO pavilion, we are talking about a very attractive environment. It showcases the architecture from the outside and the design from the inside. For example, I was really impressed by Morocco's use of traditional materials to create a multi-story building at the Dubai EXPO. The best pavilions in Dubai appealed to all the senses. Pavilions that appeal to all these senses, such as sight, smell, and hearing, are the best pavilions. For the first time, designers tried to ensure that the pavilions had a specific smell to create lasting memories for visitors. They made sure that visitors had an experience, such as tasting something or touching something. In my opinion, the best EXPOs are not just travel destinations. They also become a sacred journey where visitors establish an ongoing relationship with the exhibitor. Many of them take advantage of a virtual experience; however, when talking about EXPOs, we should not overlook two real elements: first, meeting people, and second, encountering real objects or even relics from real life. Pavilions can be a secret weapon, answering questions about the country. This was something that America did really well in past EXPOs. I think relics play a very special role in the success of EXPOs. For example, in the past, when England wanted to gain America's support during World War II, they decided to exhibit a historic document called the Magna Carta, which was a legal document that foresaw the elements of the American Constitution, and this made the political con-

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

nection visible for American visitors.

In 2010, Denmark, knowing that the only thing the Chinese knew about them was that it was the hometown of Hans Anderson, decided to move the iconic Little Mermaid statue from Copenhagen to Shanghai for the fair. Spain, instead of sending a copy of the World Cup they won to be exhibited as a sacred object in their pavilion, sent the original. In 2022, at the US pavilion in Dubai, the moon rock and the Quran owned by Thomas Jefferson were exhibited. The Quran, which is sacred to both Americans and the Muslim world, was there. I suggested the Quran, and my colleague Mina Chow suggested the moon rock. My colleague not only said to bring a moon rock but also made sure that people could touch it. Being able to touch the moon rock was something that would make the American pavilion hit the headlines. For an exhibitor, the exhibition is a kind of gift that allows them to connect with the people who go to the EXPO. For a host, an EXPO is an opportunity to welcome, gather, start conversations, set agendas, and maybe even talk about the future. I think all positive discussions about the future are quite important.

As Türkiye knows, there are some risks in proposing an EXPO. Preparing a proposal that will be at the mercy of the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) is a very laborious job. I liked the idea of Izmir 2020. I am sorry it did not win. However, EXPOs are not just about big events. We definitely should not overlook the role of smaller EXPOs. Chinese soft power experts believe that hosting multiple small events is very valuable. They think they can make multiple connections this way.

Historically, the strategy of many small events has been used by Germany, Japan, and South Korea. In this way, they have connected with professional and scientific communities. Some countries still want to host mega events. This could be to show the emergence of a world power. For example, China and the United Arab Emirates chose this path. It could also indicate a change, such as celebrating civil democracy in Spain or the reunification of Germany in Hanover. It could also be about reasserting the leadership of former actors like Italy-Milan and Japan-Osaka.

Now, I want to come to the conclusion. Reputation security requires listening and ensuring that your messages, whether at EXPOs or other settings, answer the questions in the minds of your target audience. Soft power is about highlighting your positive qualities. Reputation security also includes eliminating negative qualities. When I look at the greatest reputations from past to present, I see their efforts to respond to and correct the negative views of the international public despite their flaws. For example, Germany was famous worldwide for cheap and mass production in the early 20th century but later wanted to change this. They transformed German industry into an industry producing high-quality, well-designed goods. America went through a similar process. While the world thought America was a racist country, Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy did not change this image. They changed the reality by addressing the problem of racist laws. As you know, in many parts of the world, policy decisions are made to increase security, and sometimes things like media freedom can be restricted, but reputation security shows that these kinds of restrictions are costly in terms of security. This means that you are less liked when a crisis arises and therefore less competitive and more vulnerable.

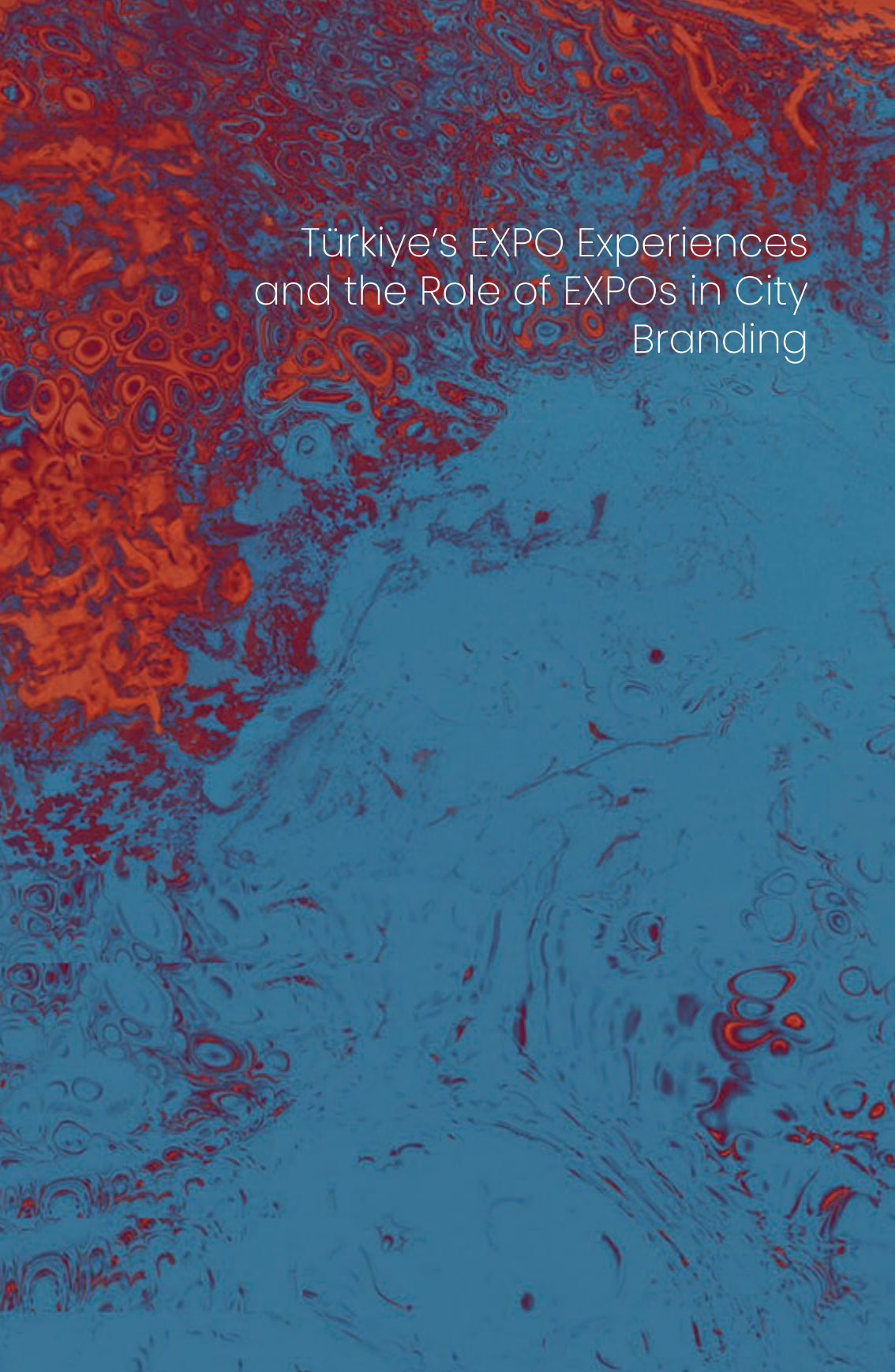
International reputation is based on relevance. There will be no benefit in directing the international audience towards something that does not concern them. The greatest gift EXPOs can give is to connect one person to another, to establish a connection between them. Our world is facing many problems that no single person or country can solve, such as climate change, migration, inequality, and instability. Global solutions require global cooperation, but cooperation also requires trust. Communication, including through EXPOs, is a way to increase mutual knowledge and trust on which cooperation can be built. By cooperation, I mean cooperation between equals, not a student-teacher or master-apprentice relationship. International reputation is based on relevance, and I believe our ultimate relevance with each other will be in our ability to save each other. Thank you very much for listening. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be here today.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Murat Karagöz

Thank you very much, Mr. Nick Cull. It was a very interesting introduction. It was a very nice presentation. That is why I did not want to interrupt you. It was really an eye-opening presentation. We also thank you for introducing us to the term reputation security. Last year, at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum, we said “recoding diplomacy,” but there were some misunderstandings. It was understood as “recording.” It was a wonderful combination of academic knowledge with your real-life experiences. Thank you very much.

Now I want to move on to our second panelist, my dear brother at the ministry, Ambassador Erdoğan Kök. The ambassador is currently a special advisor to EXPO 2023, but he also has a long career in the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The colour of his hair shows that he has a long way to go before retirement. Mine is gray, his is very black. Let us give him a round of applause for this. Maybe he will share his secret with us at the end of the panel. Ambassador Kök has worked in different units at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He has served in the departments of Turks Abroad, International Organizations, and Promotion of Türkiye. He has served as Consul General in Karlsruhe, Germany, and most recently as Ambassador in Sudan and Saudi Arabia. He was also the Commissioner General of EXPO 2016 Antalya. My question to you is this: How would you evaluate Türkiye’s performance in organizing EXPOs in terms of nation branding?



Türkiye's EXPO Experiences
and the Role of EXPOs in City
Branding

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Türkiye's EXPO
Experiences and the
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Murat Karagöz

Ambassador of the Republic of
Türkiye to Portugal | Moderator

PARTICIPANTS



Erdoğan Kök

Ambassador | Special
Advisor to EXPO 2023



03

Erdoğan Kök

I was the Commissioner General of Türkiye's first EXPO, the A1 category Horticultural and Ornamental Plants EXPO 2016 Antalya, and I am currently a special advisor to EXPO 2023 Kahramanmaraş, a B category EXPO. In these capacities, I have visited many EXPO sites worldwide. First and foremost, EXPOs are definitely not international trade fairs. They are not activities where new commercial products are introduced. International Trade Fairs have a different concept, timing, and organization. Therefore, allow me to briefly explain EXPOs.

The first World EXPO was held in London in 1851. International Bureau of Expositions (BIE), established in 1928, currently organizes four types of EXPOs: World (Universal) EXPO, International Specialized EXPO, Horticultural EXPO, and the Triennale Milano. If you look at the BIE's website under the heading "What is an EXPO," one of the explanations is as follows: EXPO is a unique platform for public diplomacy and nation branding.

Expos, which bring together countries from all around the world, offer a rare opportunity to promote multilateral public diplomacy and foster better understanding in global relations. Countries showcase technolog-

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

ical innovations and their national cultures in their pavilions, creating positive and distinctive national identities while engaging with civil society. Expos possess transformative power in shaping perceptions of nations and cultures; they help to form and enhance a nation's image and reputation, raising awareness about the host country and international participants. For the international community, an Expo is a dialogue platform for progress and cooperation, bringing the world together to find solutions to fundamental issues facing humanity. Participants establish exhibition areas or pavilions where they present their experiences and ideas related to the themes and sub-themes that align with the priorities of the international community. For the public, an Expo is a place of education and entertainment, offering a blend of learning experiences and amusement through numerous conferences, symposiums, exhibitions, and shows. The Expo site itself, with its innovative architecture, becomes an attraction (like the Eiffel Tower in Paris). Interactive exhibits, groundbreaking technologies, and the rich cultural program of the Expo provide visitors with an unforgettable experience. For the host country, an Expo serves as a tool for branding and development. It is one of the few events that attract the global attention of world leaders and decision-makers, as well as millions of visitors. It offers the country an opportunity to strengthen its international image and position itself as a key player on the global stage. Expos also effectively promote development, encouraging the expansion of infrastructure, transportation networks, and accommodation capacity. They create employment opportunities and improve the country's global business and investment environment.

For participants, Expos create international contacts and economic opportunities. The host country invites countries, international organizations, NGOs, and companies to be part of the event with their own pavilions or exhibits. This allows participants to present their achievements, ideas, cultures, and innovative products to an international audience, contributing not only to the international image of the countries but also to the development of their international joint activities. Expos also provide a platform for international organizations and NGOs to raise awareness in the fields they work in.

Focusing specifically on Horticultural Expos, in addition to the benefits

mentioned previously for the host city/country, these Expos emphasize green branding in the host city/country. The Expo sites continue to serve the city and the public after the event, becoming centres of international significance for disciplines such as environment, botany, and organic farming. They also add permanent value to the city and country alongside cultural tourism. Horticultural Expos were initiated to stimulate and promote innovations in agriculture, horticulture, and landscaping. Today, horticulture plays a significant role in improving urban life through its contributions to greening cities, creating gardens, parks, and cultural spaces, and providing recreational activities. The A1 Category International Horticultural Exhibition EXPO 2016 Antalya was successfully organized. Horticulture and ornamental plants are a significant sector in Türkiye, and Antalya, leading in this field, was the right choice for this Expo.

As the General Commissioner, I particularly worked on increasing international participation, and the number of participating countries in the Antalya Expo reached a record number of 58. This year, 26 countries participated in the 2022 Floriade Almere Expo held in the Netherlands, the creator of Horticultural Expos. During the Antalya Expo, I used many methods now listed under branding to increase participation and convince countries.

The Turkish Government announced İzmir's candidacy for the 2015 World Expo themed "New Routes for a Better World - Health for All." Our candidacy application was submitted to the International Bureau of Expositions (BIE) on May 3, 2006. Choosing "Health" as the Expo theme aimed to enhance the understanding of scientific and technological advancements by the global public, thus contributing to achieving the UN Millennium Goals in this area.

Milan won the 2015 Expo elections with 86 votes (151 member country delegates voted, and İzmir received 65 votes). Türkiye decided to host the 2020 World Exhibition in İzmir with the same theme as in 2011. Dubai won the 2020 Expo elections (İzmir received 36 votes, Dubai 87 votes).

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Murat Karagöz

Thank you very much for your inspiring and informative presentation. You emphasized the important element of self-confidence for nations. As the Germans say, “Alle guten dinge sind drei;” meaning “all good things come in threes;” we will try İzmir for the third time. Let us say, “Third time’s the charm.” I hope it happens this time. During your presentation, you mentioned some concepts, facts, and figures that underline the element of competition. This leads me to our third speaker, Mr. Eduardo Chaillo, a very important speaker from the western hemisphere. He is the General Manager of Global Events Latin America. He has a wonderful career and is involved in congress tourism. Mr. Chaillo is a former board member of the International Congress and Convention Association. He is still a board member of the Destination Marketing Association International and the Santa Fe Hotel Group and a member of the technical committee of EXPO Guadalajara. He was selected as one of the 15 most influential leaders in Latin America by Mas EXPOs de México Magazine. He owns a company called Global Meetings and Tourism Specialists and continues to serve as a consultant. After a nice introduction, let us hand the floor to you, Mr. Chaillo. What kind of advantages do countries gain from participating in Expos under competitive conditions?

The background of the page is an aerial photograph of a rugged, dark landscape, possibly a volcanic field or a desert. The terrain is covered in dark, jagged rocks and boulders, with numerous small, irregular patches of golden-brown or tan material scattered throughout. The lighting creates strong shadows, emphasizing the uneven surface. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Contributions of
International Events to
Nation Branding

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Contributions of
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Erdoğan Kök
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Nick Cull
Professor at USC Public
Diplomacy Centre



04

Eduardo Chaillo Ortiz

First of all, I would like to thank the Directorate of Communications for the invitation. I am very happy to be in Türkiye. My perspective will be a little different because I will speak from within the industry. I need to mention that at a certain point in my career, I was involved in promoting Mexico and while trying to host an international event, my competitor was often Türkiye. We won some matches and lost some. This is very important for Türkiye because you have a strong tradition of hosting business events.

I believe that business events are very important overall because they serve to enhance a destination's reputation. Face-to-face meetings have become more important after the COVID-19 pandemic. This is interesting because our industry has gained a more human and strategic dimension while the importance of logistical and commercial activities has diminished. You meet the organizers and see that these people think that by just picking up the speakers from the airport and taking them to the hotel, fulfilling the logistical duties, most of the work is done. They overlook the contribution that the industry can make to other sectors through academic and scientific outputs.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Participating in fairs offers various advantages; they are a very cost-effective tool for raising awareness. This is because everything is gathered in one place; your target audience is there. It is the best way to establish personal connections. We will also touch upon the importance of technology and hybrid meetings, but they are never the same as face-to-face meetings. We are social animals. I believe this is an important dimension of networking. You also get many campaign ideas, as you have the opportunity to test many things. You have the opportunity to evaluate the competitive environment. Another important question is who should participate in an event where you promote a nation or a destination? I believe it is essential to ensure representation of all stakeholders and parts of society. Participation of the private sector and social organizations is crucial. As Gustavo mentioned this morning, all these brands that make up the parts of a nation contribute to the nation brand. You need to include all these products, services, and works of art. Another crucial element, of course, is culture. Culture becomes tangible over time, and you integrate with its reality using your five senses. This needs to be sustained with a certain design, and in my opinion, this part has become very important in our industry. Designing the participant experience from start to finish in terms of behavioural sciences and showing that this can be a transition point between cultures and generations is crucial. I see many young people here today, and this makes me very happy.

A New Reality

Adaptation to market and society trends

- Storytelling that connects digital and physical
- Co-creation of a nation brand in a space
- Delightful surprises (Serendipity)
 - Expos as playgrounds of creativity
 - Communication with agility
 - Nation branding for global communality

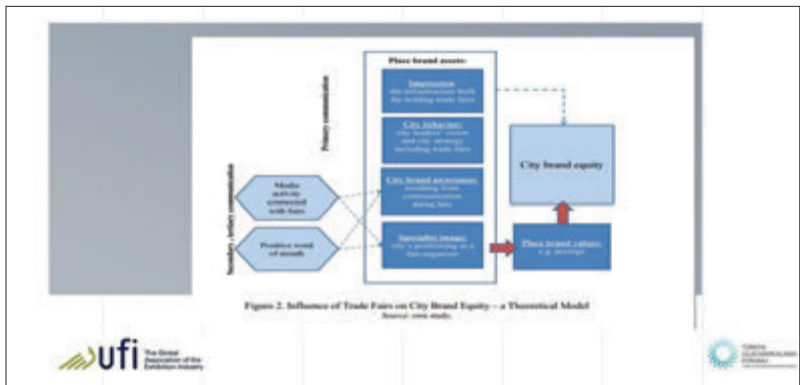
Maritz Global Events

Ministry of Culture, Tourism and European Affairs

You can even establish a transition point between ideologies, which is very important in such a divided world. While being in the same space, you can engage in discussions and even change something related to the destination you are in. Therefore, the transformative power of organizations is something we should be proud of, and leaving a legacy is also very important. Combining the participant experience with the quality of life of the local residents is another aspect to consider. You go to a place, there is an event, you take the metro, and you interact with local traditions and lifestyles. I believe this is a powerful way to connect the experience with the quality of life.

Of course, we live in a new reality today. Everyone is adapting to a new society. The concept of working from home is a significant indicator that everything has changed, and we need to adapt quickly. We need to adapt to the narrative and bring together the physical and the digital because people who do not have the opportunity to participate may prefer to join digitally. At the same time, we need to design some surprises, unexpected things. These will function as part of the culture you want to express. You need to be creative and communicate swiftly as a playground.

Now, I want to touch on the other part of the formula. By this, I mean not just going to a place and promoting your country and brand at an Expo but also striving to bring an Expo or another type of event to your country.



NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

The result you achieve is obtaining a very powerful weapon to represent your reputation. This is because you bring together many people in the same venue who speak about your city, your tradition, your infrastructure, and the economic sectors you promote. And now, with social media, you move beyond just ten, fifteen, or twenty journalists covering your event to an environment where all your participants become journalists. They take selfies, tweet, and if they have a good experience, you gain a very powerful weapon to enhance your reputation. Your event, regardless of the sector, happens in that field, or it could be a specifically themed EXPO where you can promote your brands within the context of that event. For instance, this could happen at World Congresses, which are also events where Türkiye competes in the business sector. There is another powerful weapon, which is the embassy programs. In these programs, you meet leaders from various fields such as science, business, and medicine. These leaders sit at a managerial table of the organization and become an extension of your promotional tools. When you participate in such an event, you also promote your brand and enhance your reputation.

Finally, I want to mention a few other types of events. These are incentive programs, incentive events, and company organizations traveling to specific destinations. These have the power to influence investment, motivate the workforce, and create social interaction. Additionally, very importantly, they care about the well-being of all participants and the residents of the location. By well-being, I mean in five areas: social, environmental, physical, and mental health and welfare. These are very important. You are in a specific destination, you participate in an event, and as a result, you become a better person.

In this case, it is proven that the event has become a transformative process for you, which I think is very important. Lastly, I want to highlight the two values mentioned here. I was delighted to see that sustainability and corporate social responsibility were emphasized in the presentation by Turkish Airlines. I believe nowadays every congress and EXPO incorporates corporate social responsibility programs wherever they go. They want to leave something behind for the destination they visit. If these people are doctors, they want to perform free surgeries for the poor; if they are environmentalists, they want to do afforestation. Thus, I think it

is always possible to leave a footprint, a legacy, for events, and I think this is very important.

Murat Karagöz

Thank you for the comprehensive presentation, Mr. Chaillo. What particularly caught my attention was the bridging role of the World EXPOs you summarized at the beginning. Personally, I am very curious if the program invites diplomatic envoys or envoys in general. We have about 15-16 minutes left. If you wish, let us do a second round with quick answers.

Let us start with Nick Cull. I will ask him for his recommendations. What would you suggest for countries to make better use of international fairs in nation branding in the future? You can also talk a bit about the budget issue because you are making an investment here. Are we getting a full return on it? Let us give a few minutes.



NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Nick Cull

First, I think the reputation security framework would be beneficial because one of the problems of finding funds for public diplomacy and nation branding is that it is not taken seriously by the Treasury. If you explain that this is part of keeping the state secure, I think the debate about funding would be better placed. I believe it brings good value monetarily. We can say that events like EXPO attract attention and bring innovation. Actually, if you look at how the world's great inventions were learned, many were first seen at fairs. For the future, there is great hope in the sharing of both EXPOs and other mega-events. I think it is wonderful that the next World Cup will be shared between Mexico, Canada, and the USA. It is about bringing countries together rather than elevating one country above the other. What I really enjoyed about Dubai was that so many countries could come together in one place and learn about each other. Therefore, I think more emphasis should be placed on this in future plans. How can we use EXPOs to come together and work together? For example, jointly hosting an EXPO in a place like Tijuana on the California-Mexico border could be transnational. Or a city like Istanbul. This is what I want to see. It is no longer an abstract concept due to the necessity of learning and working together. If we want to overcome our generation's problems, we need to work together.

Murat Karagöz

Thank you very much. Now, let us turn to Mr. Ambassador. Let us continue along the same lines. What would be your recommendations for nations in organizing EXPOs in the future? Maybe you can look from the media and promotion perspective based on your experiences.

Erdoğan Kök

The main events that attract the attention of the world are the Olympics, the World Cup, and the World EXPO. Therefore, there is great competition among countries to host these events. Countries that have previously hosted these events are vying to take on these important events and enter that great competition to win them. I think it would be fair to support/

provide countries/cities/regions that have not previously hosted these events.

I want to emphasize once again that World Expos create positive impacts for the host city, region, and country; bringing countries together, contributing to knowledge sharing for a better world, setting new goals, and socio-cultural development. Therefore, EXPOs, especially World EXPOs, significantly contribute to nation branding. Iconic structures and buildings left from the World EXPOs, engraved in the memory of the world public, still contribute to the tourism and economy of those countries today. The Eiffel Tower in Paris (1889 Paris EXPO), Atomium (1958 Brussels EXPO), Geodesic Dome (Montreal 1967 EXPO), and the incubator (Omaha 1898 EXPO) are just a few examples.

Such events also give the organizing countries the confidence of successfully hosting such a large event. If a country hosts one of these events, you think that the country is a developed and powerful country. Even a small glitch can ruin everything you have done, all the money you have spent. Therefore, these organizations give great confidence to countries and allow for the development of strong social, economic, and cultural ties with the world. Consequently, every country should host a World EXPO, World Cup, or the Olympics at least once, and Türkiye should consistently strive to win at least one of them. It is also gratifying to see city branding becoming popular. Of course, İstanbul is known by everyone. However, we also have very developed cities in Anatolia. For instance, Kahramanmaraş is one of them. These other cities of our country should also gain international recognition. The city of Kahramanmaraş has a very ambitious project in this regard. The Kahramanmaraş EXPO 2023 project was established on a 78-hectare land. It is a very large and meaningful investment for the city. B Category Horticulture EXPOs will be held in İzmir in 2026 and Malatya in 2028. The interest of our cities is gratifying. Of course, our government supports these kinds of activities.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Murat Karagöz

Thank you very much. Now, I would like to turn back to Mr. Eduardo Chaillo. We know that digitization is the key term of our era. It is gaining more and more validity in life. How can virtual fairs add value to nation branding? Or let me put it this way: Do you think digitization poses a threat to face-to-face communication and especially to EXPOs?

Eduardo Chaillo Ortiz

I now think that we have all become baby zoomers because we constantly had to rely on technology to conduct our work, especially with the pandemic. If there was a sector affected by the pandemic, unfortunately, it was ours. Whenever people asked me which sector I worked in and heard the answer ‘meetings and congresses,’ I could see the sad expression on their faces. Because it was a difficult time, and there was no way for us to come together. However, I believe that technology is not our enemy but an ally if we use it correctly. We are now in a better place, learning that some things can be handled with technology, and there is no problem with that. For instance, it is possible to make events easier to visit and review, which is a great thing. You can use your phone, for example. Or if you want to bring a significant speaker to your event, but they do not have the time, you can ensure their participation through technology. Additionally, when I attend events, I now see that everyone is very focused on health, nutrition, and exercise. Our phones count the steps we take, for instance; this is now a thing. You can see the distance you have covered during your walks through technology, and you can do things that make your exercises more enjoyable with the goals offered by the applications. We can ensure people’s participation in events, which is an important thing. I believe hybrid meetings will continue to be part of our lives, and this is a good thing because it allows you to bring the world closer to yourself.

Murat Karagöz

Thank you. I mentioned football during my introduction and now I will do the same for conclusion. There is a famous saying by a Dutch football

player, Johan Cruyff: “Football is a simple game. The hard part is playing it simply.” I would like to make the analogy that winning the EXPO is good but not easy. It requires great energy, resources, planning, strategic thinking, reputation security, good storytelling, and bridge-building efforts. With these words, I conclude our panel, and I want to applaud our panelists together.





**TWELFTH
SESSION**

The Türkiye Brand in Cooperation and Development Projects: The TIKA Experience



Dr. Rahman Nurdun
Vice President of the Turkish Cooperation and
Coordination Agency (TIKA)

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**The Türkiye Brand
in Cooperation and
Development Projects:
The TİKA Experience**

PARTICIPANTS :



Dr. Rahman Nurdun
Vice President of the Turkish Cooperation and
Coordination Agency (TIKA)



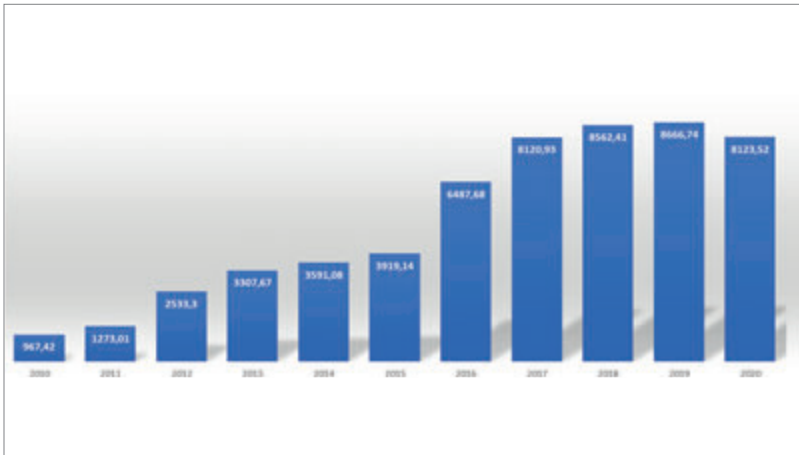
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First and foremost, I would like to extend my gratitude to the Directorate of Communications. I also want to express my sincere thanks to the officials of the institution who invited me here today and provided me with the opportunity to make a presentation on the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA). As our esteemed Ambassador was concluding the session a little while ago, he used a wonderful expression: “Soccer is simple, but it is difficult to play simple.” Today, I will try to introduce TIKA to you comprehensively.

TIKA is an institution with 30 years of experience. It was established in 1992 by a decree under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a result of an initiative started by the then-President, the late Turgut Özal. It became affiliated with the Prime Ministry in 1999, and since 2018, it has been operating under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism by a presidential decree. As I mentioned earlier, TIKA has a 30-year history. When we look at its past, we can see that TIKA’s expansion is akin to the growth of Turkish Airlines (THY). Since 2002, TIKA has significantly increased the number of its offices worldwide with a serious move. Allow me to explain the reason behind TIKA’s establishment. In the early 1990s, with the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, there emerged a need to assist the newly established coun-

In 2005, a Prime Ministry Circular assigned TİKA the responsibility of collecting and reporting Türkiye's development aid. Since then, TİKA has been reporting the entire inventory of foreign aid provided by Türkiye through its official institutions, NGOs, and universities. As Türkiye's official development agency, TİKA delivers aid to various parts of the world. Besides TİKA, various ministries, such as the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of National Education, as well as institutions like the Turkish Red Crescent Society and AFAD (Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency), also provide assistance.

Türkiye is a member of the OECD and, as an observer in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD, TİKA participates in the committee's work on behalf of our country. Every year, TİKA regularly presents Türkiye's foreign development aid data to the DAC. Before the AK Party came to power, Türkiye's development aid was around 60 million USD. However, as shown in Table I, our official development aid exceeded 8 billion USD in 2020 alone.

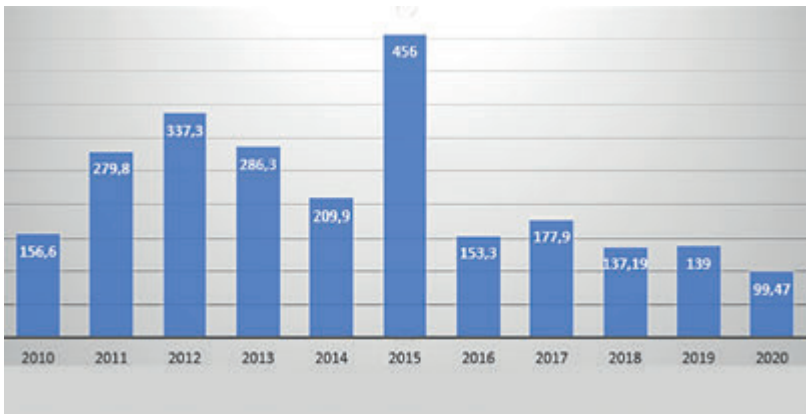


Türkiye's emergency humanitarian aid amounted to 7.27 billion USD in 2020. The distribution of aid to the least developed countries (LDCs) over the years can be seen in Table II. A significant detail here is that during

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries held in Istanbul in 2011, our President pledged an annual aid of 200 million USD for five years.

You can see that Türkiye extends foreign assistance to various crucial areas. TİKA's projects are focused on areas where Türkiye has a comparative advantage, including health, agriculture, and vocational training. For instance, in 2021 alone, 35 hospitals and healthcare facilities were renovated and equipped, providing treatment to 1,384,000 patients. Through TİKA's projects and activities, 775 patients underwent surgical procedures, and 938 disabled individuals received equipment support. In the sphere of vocational training, 136 education personnel, 642 doctors/healthcare professionals, 664 agricultural and industrial personnel, 417 security force members, 330 public employees, and 9,949 personnel were trained in various branches.



Türkiye's development model, as repeatedly emphasised by our President, is "human-centred." We have no hidden agenda. Wherever there is a person in need, we are there. Our President has always expressed this sentiment. Unlike some developed countries, we do not impose any hidden agendas. On the contrary, we provide demand-based assistance. Therefore, we are well aware that some developed countries often overlook

the aid provided by Türkiye. In the morning session today, a distinguished professor emphasised that we should first explain ourselves to our people as part of Türkiye's branding efforts. I wholeheartedly agree with this comment. Although Türkiye is well recognised abroad, due to people's daily concerns and preoccupations within the country, they may not be aware of Türkiye's branding efforts in many areas. Travelling citizens from Türkiye see how well-known their country is. Surely, TİKA is among Türkiye's most prominent brands.

Anyone who has visited the Balkans would tell you they are proud of TİKA's restoration activities. You will feel TİKA's presence more intensely when you visit Africa. Therefore, my personal opinion on the branding process is that the people living in Türkiye must first be aware of these valuable brands. In other words, this awareness needs to be further expanded. Hence, I would like to once again thank the Directorate of Communications for initiating this important activity. I would like to share another example of the Turkish Development Model. In 2011, Somalia faced a severe drought, leading to deaths, increased security issues, and a persistent climate of conflict. While the rest of the world remained a spectator, our President, who was then the Prime Minister, said, "Enough!" and, risking his own and his family's safety, flew to Somalia. Subsequently, Türkiye's aid to Somalia began. Türkiye's gain is nothing more than friendship, humanity, and effort for Allah's blessing. TİKA, Turkish Red Crescent Society, AFAD, and the Ministry of Health have completed many projects in Somalia and continue their activities. Roads were built across Somalia; hospitals were opened, an agricultural school was constructed, and military training continued. The Parliament building was constructed, and many other services were delivered. While most foreign countries accredited their embassies to Kenya, they are now gradually establishing foreign missions in Somalia. These actions had to be undertaken by a country, and fortunately, it was Türkiye that took on the task. The aid provided to Somalia is one of the finest examples of the Turkish Development Model. We do this without any expectations, purely for the sake of humanity, friendship, good neighbourliness, and developing close relationships.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

When I attended the OECD meetings in Paris, I witnessed many representatives from Western countries and highly developed countries asking the same question for years: “How can we provide unconditional aid?” Because the aid they provided until now has been conditional. They imposed the condition that their goods must be purchased within the project scope of the aid they offered. They are providing assistance for their commercial development. It is evident that their agenda is different. Therefore, they have never been able to provide truly unconditional aid. In 2005, the Paris Agreement was signed and announced. The agreement mentions five principles concerning the effectiveness of foreign aid. One of them is the “Country System,” which entails mutual responsibility by the donor and recipient countries. However, you will notice that very few countries implement this principle properly. As TİKA, we conduct our activities within this framework. Education is highly important in foreign aid. Vocational training is crucial for the future employability of young people. Health is another critical area. Access to clean water is vitally important in countries in need. There is a severe drought in Africa, as you know. Therefore, activities such as drilling water wells and establishing irrigation facilities are among the important projects. One of the major projects completed by TİKA is the construction of a friendship school in Niger. We encounter questions like, “What are we doing in Colombia?” We not only help developing countries but also sometimes provide assistance to countries with mid-to-upper-level economies like Colombia.

Sometimes, we provide aid based on their requests. Our colleagues travelled for two days in the mountains, on treacherous routes, through areas with no passes, to reach a town called Orejon in Colombia. May Allah bless our engineers working there; they reached the area under very challenging conditions. A school was constructed in Orejon within 4-5 months, transforming an area that previously lacked any educational facilities. I saw a building built by the European Union there. It was barely better than a prefabricated structure. However, we built a proper service building made of cement and durable materials that could fully function as a school. “Why was this school built?” Because the then-president of Colombia, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, asked our President, “Can you

build us an exemplary school as a mediator country?” It was thought impossible to build a school there. However, we went and did it. The school was constructed for the sake of building domestic peace in Colombia. All Colombian officials thanked us, saying, “From now on, the minimum standard for schools in the region should be this.” Schools, nurseries, and educational units were built in Kyrgyzstan, Jordan, Mongolia, Moldova, Mexico, Algeria, Kosovo, and many other countries. The health sector is another important area that needs development and support in developing countries. We are aware of the significant gap in healthcare, especially in Africa and other regions. Some countries have been experiencing severe medication shortages for a while. There are patients who need treatment, but it is not possible for countries to meet this on their own. Even throughout the peak of the pandemic, there was no major problem with Türkiye’s healthcare services. This indicates that Türkiye has significant healthcare capabilities. That is why we have many projects in the field of health—for example, Nyala region, Darfur. Darfur is a region where conflicts take place.

We built a hospital there for the needs of the people. Our Ministry of Health runs this hospital. Hospitals and health facilities were built in many countries, such as Moldova, Niger, Gaza, Mexico and Georgia. The Kyrgyz-Turkish Friendship Hospital, the largest hospital in Kyrgyzstan, was constructed by Türkiye. Many projects were also completed on a voluntary basis. In cooperation with many NGOs, such as Doctors Worldwide, medical aid was provided in Africa, Central Asia and the Balkans. Certainly, there are cultural projects and restoration projects; I do not need to count them individually. The restoration of the Ahmet Yesevi Complex, the restoration of the house where Atatürk was born, and the restoration of the Tonyukuk Monument in Mongolia... Ahmet Yesevi is the most important restoration project carried out by our Presidency in Kazakhstan. Important cultural heritages were renovated, such as the restoration of the Tomb of Ahmad Sanjar in Turkmenistan, the renovation of the Tomb of Gül Baba in Hungary, and the restoration of Damat Ali Pasha Tomb in Serbia. For example, Zeki Efendi was a citizen of Jewish origin living in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The tombstone of Moshe Rafaela Athias, who was a

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

very important figure for the Jewish community in Bosnia-Herzegovina and was called Zeki Efendi because he adopted the Ottoman clothing style, was restored by TİKA. We are making efforts to restore the heritage of all communities with whom we have a common past, regardless of religion and race. Some of our restoration projects are the House Museum of Sultan Ali Dinar in Sudan, the mausoleum of King Necashi in Ethiopia, the memorial house for Ali Rıza Efendi and Monastir Military High School in Macedonia, Ram Fortress in Serbia, Keçiova Mosque in Algeria, Nuri Pasha Museum in Azerbaijan, the Bridge on the Drina in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In Myanmar, the martyrs' cemetery of our soldiers captured during World War I was renovated in collaboration with TİKA, the Ministry of Family and Social Services, and the Ministry of Defence. In Italy, the restoration of the Turkish martyrs' cemetery was completed. Our presidency completed the restoration of Bang Uthit Mosque in Thailand. This is one of the mosques where a khutbah was delivered in honour of Sultan Abdulhamid II. It is of high spiritual value.

TİKA constructed 320 dwellings in Gaza to be delivered to underprivileged Gazan households that lost their houses during the 2014 Gaza War.

TİKA distributed hot meals every day for two years to nearly 700,000 refugees who took refuge in Bangladesh after the crisis in Myanmar's Rakhine State. This is a very important achievement with emotional resonance. Our sister organisations, such as AFAD, Turkish Red Crescent Society and Turkish NGOs, set up field hospitals and provided them with the necessary aid. We have international projects implemented in cooperation with multilateral aid organisations such as UNDP, UNIDO, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, Organisation for Economic Cooperation, and bilateral aid organisations such as JICA. During the pandemic, while many countries were saying, "What are we going to do?" we even sent medical supplies to China. We organised an online capacity-building seminar on combating the pandemic; we made efforts to establish mask production facilities in countries in need. Our offices abroad worked at full capacity during this period. In other words, as TİKA, we demonstrated great per-

formance during the pandemic. “Everything is for a smile” is TIKA’s motto. In conclusion, we can say that TIKA is an exemplary branding institution in the international arena with its Turkish Type Development Model.



**THIRTEENTH
SESSION**

TÜRKİYE'S CULINARY POWER: GASTRODIPLOMACY



Pelin Çift

TV Producer / TV Presenter | Moderator



Somer Sivrioğlu
Chef



Mehmet Yalçınkaya
Chef



Ömür Akkor
Chef

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Türkiye's
Culinary Power:
Gastrodiplomacy**



Pelin Çift
TV Producer / TV Presenter
Moderator

PARTICIPANTS:



Mehmet Yalçinkaya
Chef



Somer Sivrioğlu
Chef



Ömür Akkor
Chef



01

Pelin Çift

I am very pleased to be here today at the first nation branding forum in our country. Our nation's brand is well established. We are aware of this. However, it is still very important to consider how to improve its effectiveness and plan relevant events. So I am pleased to be a part of it. Today, we will discuss Turkish cuisine. Our chefs have made it to the stage. We will talk about Turkish cuisine. Turkish cuisine is already valuable, but it is not at the level we desire. In today's world, cuisines are also considered when choosing a country as a destination. Therefore, the remarks of our country's culinary brand ambassadors become much more valuable when they are widely recognised and admired. I would like to conclude my words here and turn to our chefs. I love all three of them very much. I admire them for valuing and enriching their profession while also working so hard at it. I will now invite them one by one and ask for your applause: Somer Sivrioğlu, Ömür Akkor, and Mehmet Yalçinkaya. I wish Chef Danilo could have come to provide an outsider's perspective. We can now start our panel. I would like to discuss strengthening the Türkiye brand. How can Turkish cuisine contribute to this? Most importantly, what are "we"? How do we appear from the outside? What should we do inside? How can we contribute to the branding process? I would like to start with Ömür Akkor, if I may. Because here and abroad, you have been to both luxuriant establish-

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

ments and modest establishments. You were able to observe and analyse. Now, I have seen that, statistically speaking, Türkiye is not at the rank we want. We are making mistakes somewhere, but there is a huge potential. As you emphasise the necessity of biodiversity, could you begin by giving us an account to form the backbone of this conversation? What is Türkiye in essence?

Ömür Akkor



We are actually looking at it purely mathematically. Anatolia is the most important geographic region in the world. Since the formation of the Earth, Anatolia has experienced 52 cold and 52 hot periods. It is the Earth's first region to freeze and heat up. What does this mean? The Earth starts to cool down from the north or from the south and enters a climate. It changes to a cold climate, then to an ice age, and then again to flourishing with green. On average, ice ages last 110 to 130 thousand years. In temperate climates, it lasts 20 thousand years. Therefore, when the Earth stays in ice for 130 thousand years and then thaws out, it almost always starts in Anatolia, and vice versa. Considering the migration of all of the plants, animals, and people, it is an incredible "refugee area." Whenever the Earth starts to cool down, all the plants from Europe, Africa, and Asia start running towards Anatolia along with the human beings. And this gives Anatolia an incredi-

ble biodiversity. In Türkiye, there are currently 12 thousand plant species that we know and share. We have reduced this to 3,600. What does this mean? 3,600 plant species grow only in Anatolia. Let us take a quick look at other regions. In Europe, the number of endemic plant species in Belgium is 1. Switzerland is a place of mountains, gardens, lakes, and rivers, so it is a slice of heaven. But this number is 8 in Switzerland and 5 in Germany. So, when you think about it, this number is far above the European endemicity, and there is no place like Anatolia in the world. The surrounding seas, mountains, plateaus, and over 3,600 plants show the abundance of diversity here. Let us view this from another lens. Assuming that you take those plants and start cooking, manage life, build a house, and settle in a village, we have an average of 5 thousand years of uninterrupted life in the world. When you go to Europe, you will notice that there has been culinary activity for five thousand years. When we consider Göbeklitepe, or, in another sense, Anatolia, we see a 14 thousand-year-old settlement and human activity with rituals and feasts. The incessant history of our land commences at Aşık Höyük, or, in other words, in the vicinity of Aksaray. It starts a little bit more around Central Anatolia. From here on, we have been involved in food for 10,500 years without interruption. What is more interesting is that the first angular house shape that we have seen in the world belongs to Aşık Höyük. Kasap Höyük is not far from there. It is unprecedented in the world. There is a village engaged in butchery and a butcher that provides food to all of the surrounding villages. The slaughtered animals are 85% likely to be the original Anatolian cattle. They practiced butchery, and they also fed themselves. The idea of eating together, eating inside the house, and, thus, the idea of constructing a kitchen and a separate room inside the house belongs to the people of Aşıklı Höyük. In the meantime, Switzerland was most likely submerged in a glacier 12 to 16 kilometres deep. When the glacier melted, and the first villages were being established there, Hattusa was already built. When did this take place? Five thousand years before our time. What was in Hattusa? There were sidewalks, streets, pools, royal palaces, temples, and commercial activity. Around 10,500 years ago, there was an obsidian deposit near Aşık Höyük. Obsidian has had a significant impact on the history of humankind. Now, this deposit is called Göllü Dağ. We have found that this obsidian was used in an exchange in Egypt nine thousand years ago. The obsidian used at Karahantepe dates back 14 thousand years. I worked on something significant in Karahantepe this year. I am on the

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

excavation team at Karahantepe and Göbeklitepe. The geologist that I worked with at Karahantepe showed us two pieces of obsidian. One originates from Bingöl, which is green, and the other one is grey. I immediately recognised the latter as the Göllü Dağ obsidian, which was also there 14 thousand years ago. There is a trade, an exchange, and a mutual language among people. During the excavations this year, we have discovered statues the size of my hand or half the size of this glass, dating back 12–13 thousand years. The same kind of findings in the next generation or in the world belong to 7,000 years later. So craftsmanship in Anatolia dates further back in time. When Hattusa was built five thousand years earlier, village life in Switzerland, Germany, or elsewhere had only begun. The term “sustainability” has been thrown around and discussed broadly in the last five years. For instance, the Zero Waste Project. We know what it means, but the West, the USA, and Europe keep forwarding it to us. I would like to state this: For 10,500 to 14,000 years, we have uninterruptedly sustained in Anatolia what Europe has been unable to sustain for 3,000 years. I was born in a village called Merdanlı in Kilis. My grandfather originates from there. Each one of us originates from a village. Then, I would like to ask everyone. In your villages, for example, have you ever seen garbage leisurely thrown in the streets? Have you seen garbage bags in front of the exterior doors? No. Because there is no such concept. Because, as Anatolians, we value sustainability. However, all of the conversations about it advise us to go ahead and do it. We are already doing it. They are the ones who should come here and see what we do for sustainability and the maintenance of biodiversity. How did we preserve this culture for so long?

Pelin Çift

You actually have a good point. These are values that exist in our tradition and our essence. It is a tradition we have kept alive over the years, but somewhere something is missing or has been interrupted. What you said goes beyond the culinary culture. For example, in architecture. Do you understand what I mean? What are we missing? What are we doing wrong? What have we forgotten?

Ömür Akkor

I have been taking geography courses at the PhD level for 3–4 years. There is the year 1950 in geography. That year is called the end of the Holocene Epoch. The Holocene Epoch, in this context, covers the timeframe from

11,700 years ago to 1950. Why is 1950 so significant? It is the date when humankind irreversibly left its mark on the world. Until 1950, we could not clearly see humans' presence in the world, but with the detonation of the atomic bomb that year, humans solidified their mark on the planet. When industrialization and other human developments are considered, we now live in periods of 10–20 years. You have mentioned architecture. You can see this architecture from the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. It is all around us, with skyscrapers and tall buildings. These are all things that interrupt our cultural continuity. This is what everyone wants: Forget all of this and let a new world order emerge. This is absurd. Back then, when you asked a person to walk into the wilderness and find plants, they would know around 120 distinct species of plants. For instance, that person might collect acorns. Why would he collect acorns? In times of famine in Anatolia, acorns were used to make flour. Does that make sense? They were able to tell apart pennyroyal (wild mint), mint, thyme, and so on. They were able to tell apart different species of trees. What is the number of plants one person can tell apart today? In 1950, it was 120. We used to know 120 plants per person. How many now?

It is 0 to 2. If five of you were to go into this garden, could you even recognise a single tree? We had the Life Studies class at school. My favourite activity was pressing leaves between drawing notebooks. I know all the plants out there, as I am taking forestry classes. As I walk through the forest, I take note of every plant, tree, and mushroom that I come across. You also remember the Cincile Burek and other traditional dishes that the man at Bolu made for us. Why? He was an endemic man. There is only one difference. Today, humans form relationships only with humans. If you want to preserve your culture, protect your brand, and inform others about it, you should not focus solely on humans. You need to connect with nature, plateaus, plants, animals, and so forth. Anatolian cattle are endemic. Wheat, rice, and grapes are also endemic to Anatolia. For the past three years, we have collaborated with all excavation institutions in Türkiye to demonstrate to UNESCO that olive oil and olives are Anatolian heritage cultures. We are currently engaged in an extraordinary project. Our only concern is: Why is Turkish olive oil not currently recognised by the global community? The most expensive olive oil in Europe and America at the moment is Turkish olive oil. That is because of the high tax bracket. It is significantly higher than that of Italy, Greece, and Spain, and we are unable to enter the market. However, at the

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

conclusion of this three-year endeavour, we will hopefully be able to affix a “heritage” title to it. This year, we are scheduled to present to UNESCO. If we succeed, the tax will be abolished, and Anatolia will be acknowledged as the site of the endemic. Whatever plant we talk about, it is endemic to our region. You do not need to struggle to lay the groundwork. In reality, you should not take any additional steps to establish it as a brand. You should only allow it to unfold naturally, embrace the past, and implement it. Chef Mehmet works in artisan establishments, while Chef Somer works on the opposite side of the globe. For instance, Chef Somer uses my plates. This year, using a small porcelain plate of ours led to being on the cover of a magazine. I was so happy when you told me, Somer. These things are crucial to us, and we need more people working on them. For instance, First Lady Emine Erdoğan’s book on Turkish Cuisine. The year of Turkish cuisine should be celebrated, regardless of public opinion, and the state should be involved in this matter. First of all, let me tell you this: You become successful when you involve the state language. When you incorporate taxation and SSI (Social Security Institution) into this, you come out successful. Individuals from other countries are interested in coming here for an internship under me. But the SSI said I could not take them. When our students want to participate in an internship at Noma, they need to spend 1,000 euros only on accommodation they will be paying one thousand euros for accommodation. They will be working from 7 in the morning till 12 at midnight. I had several interns of mine working there. They get to eat only once a day. They do not receive a grant for paying rent. They are not getting paid. Nobody addresses them; the SSI does not inquire why they are subjecting them to such a workload. But we cannot have them work here. You can culturally pressure them; you can make Turkish cuisine... but you cannot do any of this; it is the SSI. Initially, it is necessary to organise all of this in a state language.

Pelin Çift

Now, as I previously stated, I am an admirer of each of the three names. Given the fact that they could have implemented an action similar to this: For instance, hamburger shops have currently monopolised the industry. Mehmet Chef gets especially angry because of this. He talked about it on the programme. But no. And they brainstorm about it. They are attempting to expand upon what is already in place and are making a concerted effort

to engage in activities beyond their own businesses and enterprises. As I return to Mehmet Chef, I would like to specifically remind him of the documentary on artisans and express my gratitude to him as a mother, a TV journalist, and a viewer. He once again served as a reminder of the significance of artisan restaurants. He did not do this for commercial reasons. He did it out of a debt of loyalty to his profession. If you will excuse me, I had asked for a short introduction, and our friends here have prepared it. Let's watch it briefly; it is also on Exxen. I am following it with great interest. I would recommend you do the same. Now, let's watch. Yes, his first workplace was sometime in the 1980s. He hears something from the trucker's restaurant on the side of the road. We need a dishwasher. Actually, I'm a little confused right now. On this venture, we met a lot of valuable masters of their crafts. Imagine a restaurant. The owner of this restaurant leaves his profits to the people who work in his restaurant one day a week. The restaurant is in Bergama, Izmir and it has been serving breakfast for the past 78 years. I have documented customs that have endured for centuries. This is the first instance of such kind that I have observed in my 35 years of professional experience. Good luck, brother. This particular restaurant has an interesting story. In this venture, I saw people who embraced life despite all the difficulties they had encountered. Chef, this can be considered how you repay your debt of loyalty. They are the veterans who truly preserve Turkish cuisine as masters of their profession. Thank you for your kind reminder. And you make prevalent observations about locations. Regarding Türkiye's branding, what have you observed as the necessary steps to take that must be implemented locally? What can you tell us?

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

In reality, there is something like this. Ömür made an excellent summary. I mean, he summarised so much from the past to the present. Now what we need to do is sustain it. We already have the groundwork. Now only the last step is left to take. However, the age ratio in these artisan establishments stood out to me during our visit. I visited approximately thirty artisan restaurants in various provinces. Twelve to thirteen of them were used in the production of documentaries. In these restaurants, the age average was higher than 65. I mean, the typical age of the individuals running the restaurant was quite high. This fact scared me quite a bit. There is no new blood in the industry. Sure, there were two of them. In fact, Somer was the

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

one who directed me to one of them. The one in Izmir was quite young. I am talking about the kid who worked in Zaim Usta. Then there is the kid here in Istanbul working in NATO. Of course, in all of the restaurants, there were young people working there, but only two of them were ambitious and wanted to keep this industry going. This is such a heartbreaking fact. Only 2 people in 50 locations total. In reality, the approach to branding in this context is as follows: despite the fact that we are aware of all of the issues that Ömür has recently identified, I believe that we are not promoting them adequately. Or we have not researched these issues adequately just yet. Of course, as we always say, school is where it all begins. In other words, the curriculum in the regions where we provide education must encompass a wide range of topics as soon as possible, including endemic flora, traditions, and customs. Let me provide an example from Japan. Most of the children now think that lemons grow in supermarkets. Perhaps if such research were conducted in Türkiye, the results would be similar. The reason is that no one sees gardens anymore. People think of local eateries as simply places to eat. We see that the rituals, gratitude, convictions, and purposes of those people are not well known. This is the state of our local eateries. The question is, what are we supposed to do about this situation? Let me elaborate on the first thing to do. Of course, we do have mass tourism. Nevertheless, we should come up with a new perspective on gastronomy tourism besides this mass tourism. I mean, we are already known for the sea, the sand and the sun here. For example, 10 years ago, I saw a poster from Türkiye at the Berlin ITB tourism fair. That was enough to cheer me up. It featured the sand, the sea, and the sun of Manavgat with all its allure. It also included tea and simit (bagel). On point, indeed. That was not what I really expected, but even that made me happy. Think about it. For the first time, Türkiye added tea and simit to its logos. Other elements, such as our blue sea, should also be promoted, but I was happy to see that Türkiye used tea and simit as its symbols in a fair for the first time. I made four or five workshops for those tourism fairs. By the way, I have a criticism to make because some people should know about it. I have not been there for 5–6 years, but the last time, there were stands of 88 hotels in the hall allocated to Türkiye. There were no attendants to look after the stands in a hall with 88 stands, while there was literally a restaurant in the Spanish hall. Do we not have a similar practice now? We do, actually. Stuffed meatballs, baklava, etc. are being served, but there is absolutely nothing that tells our traditions and stories. I personally believe that

while gastronomy is being promoted, related stories should also be told. I think that would attract people's attention. What do I mean by that? For instance, we were shooting a television programme in İzmit. Chef Somer was also there. When quince was brought up, I immediately intervened. I told Chef Somer, "The Karamürsel basket is also very important." Then we started talking about it. If we tell the story of the Karamürsel basket, we will be able to convey the story of the basket used to carry the quinces that will be used in the dish as well, which has quite an interesting story. Thus, we need to bring gastronomy and the story together. So we should not restrict it to food recommendations. Furthermore, we must stop the disputes between cities. For example, when we selected Arabasi soup for the television programme, people of Yozgat and Konya raised objections. I think we should stop doing this. Arabasi soup belongs to our geography and our country as a whole. That should be the end of this conversation. Whether it belongs to Yozgat or Konya does not make any difference for us. So one of the things that makes Chef Somer the most angry, by the way he complains about it to me sometimes, is food micronationalism, and he says we should put an end to it. And I would say he is right. I completely agree with him. Another thing is that, for example, not every single city has to come up with a type of meatball. The governor of Bolu invited me years ago. I cannot recall his name. I am sorry about that. He said, "Could you come up with a meatball special for Bolu?" I said I could not. He asked, "Why?" I answered, "Sir, we already have enough meatballs." What I mean is that every city already has its meatball, and we do not need to come up with any more of them. A similar thing applies to Keşkek as well. Each city has its own Keşkek dish. A person may be a Yörük and the other a Manav, so these dishes are already present on our tables. Because they talk about Göbeklitepe and Karahantepe. In other words, everyone is already doing what they find in Göbeklitepe and Karahantepe in their regions. And people tell about the butchers there. Therefore, we need to leave aside this food micronationalism and approach matters from a more regional perspective, then present them to the people in a much better way. I would like to give another example. When I went to Urfa as a tourist, I liked the ritual of producing plain butter more. Looking from a tourist's point of view, I believe it would draw a lot of people's attention. By the way, I have a project in mind related to this. We start separating the plain butter before sunrise for two reasons: first, to avoid tempting neighbors who may not be able to afford it, and second, to protect it from the evil eye. I think if we man-

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

age to convey this, only then will we be able to explain plain butter. France has Elle Vire butter, but is it as high-quality as plain butter? It may be even higher-quality, but the thing is that they also tell its story. What I am trying to say is that we should explain the dish with its story and its features.

Ömür Akkor

The butter there dates back 3 thousand years. Our first dairy farm dates back 9 thousand years, in Bursa. We come across milk cream on the edge of 9 thousand-year-old earthenware jars found in the excavations conducted here, and there are hundreds of them on the site. What realised that we were looking at one of the earliest examples of dairy production discovered. For instance, we are familiar with the many dairy companies of Bursa. But which one of them is aware of this story? Does that make sense? That is what you should make a brand element. Do you understand what I mean? It should be emphasised that we have been doing this for 9,000 years. But now some people import butter from France to use in croissants. I think Chef Mehmet is right about it. They have a nice ritual. Do not let the smell reach your neighbours, do not let them crave it. Do it before the morning call to prayer, before anyone is up. If you can sell this story, you can sell success.

Pelin Çift

As Ömür said when I had him as a guest a few times in the programmes, we are not even aware of the name of our own asset to begin with. For example, you told us about the white paste. What do we call white paste? We call it bechamel sauce. And it is bechamel sauce that becomes what we end up buying. Are you going to continue, chef? I wanted to recap from here.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

I'll recap the topic. I just want to say a few things. Because the thing is, it was like this again, for the first two years or so. I had to tell Somer a lot of things. This kind of nationalism, in my opinion, best promotes this nation, Türkiye, abroad. For example, when I brought visitors from abroad, I always faced their complaints. Actually, what they voiced was not complaint. It was sadness. I brought people. I took them to Gaziantep, I took them to the chicken wing shops, I took them to various places. But where should I take them next? Then, from village-to-village, he started looking for places

where he could take people. Because we did not have any routes in our office at that time. He started dealing with it himself. We did not know where to direct people. There are gastronomy routes to take now, but these did not exist 5 years ago. This is something about a tourism office and so on... There is also something like this. In other words, we've been working on this issue recently, particularly last year, when the First Lady declared Turkish Cuisine Week. The fact that the First Lady wrote a book struck us like a lightning bolt. We were a bit like that, forgotten on the sidelines. When the time comes, you would naturally have proposals for this, but I was very disappointed that a friend of ours, who has been promoting Turkish cuisine abroad for years, would come and look for routes in Türkiye or even have difficulty explaining his country to the people he brought here. I have suggestions about this. I'm very troubled on this issue.



Pelin Çift

You are troubled... Thank you very much for your trouble. Somer chef has also lived and worked abroad. He is an important brand owner in Australia and contributes significantly to the concept of Turkish cuisine. For one thing, he has put a lot of effort into the gastro table that you mentioned, and the world's most important Michelin-starred chefs have visited Türkiye recently, thanks to him. He is a figure who has also worked on these congresses. I am very curious about how you look from the outside. Probably

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

you are particularly attentive when it comes to Türkiye, naturally. Both in terms of your nationalist spirit and your profession. The chef just told me that he was happy to see the simit and tea. Probably, the Turkish delight is also widely known already. And maybe doner, but what else? Even lahmacun is referred to as Turkish pizza. Is it pizza? No, it is not pizza? It is lahmacun. Chef, how do we look from there?

Somer Sivrioğlu

The brand is everything. If you market lahmacun as Turkish Pizza, you eliminate the possibility of it becoming a global brand in any way. Therefore, lahmacun needs to be marketed as lahmacun. First and foremost, I want to continue from where my friends began. Because it is a very tangible example. Ömür talked about clotted cream and butter from Bursa. From tens of thousands of years ago. Four years ago, a man named Matt Preston came to Türkiye. One of the world's most important gastronomy writers. He came and we gave him a tour. We sent him to some places that we knew. He was mostly in Istanbul. He wrote several articles on Istanbul. They were great articles. Later, at an international conference, he said that the most mind-blowing meal he had that year, the one that drove him insane, was clotted cream in Beşiktaş. This guy goes to like 60 countries a year. So there is no Michelin restaurant he hasn't visited. There is no street food he has not tasted. He says that the best thing he ate that year, his gastronomic experience, was the clotted cream he had at Uncle Pando's shop in Beşiktaş. Where's Uncle Pando now? What is the cost of this?

Pelin Çift

Hasn't he already passed away?

Somer Sivrioğlu

Imagine the consequences of such a man saying this at a gastronomy congress around the world, or at least in our environment, and being unable to keep Uncle Pando's shop open... What was the cost of this shop that we couldn't keep open? Italy doesn't do that. France doesn't do that. Even Mexico doesn't do that anymore. Peru doesn't do that, and they have a certain number of products. Without doing these things... Because that's what people look for. So there is a very small segment of the population that will take this, spread it and make it popular. I stated this in order to wrap up the topic we were discussing. Uncle Pando's shop has closed in the coun-

try where butter was originally made 10,000 years ago. It should not be closed. It has to start from here.

Pelin Çift

So, are we not aware of this? Are we not aware of this value?

Somer Sivrioğlu



Of course we are not. For a very long time we were not aware of it. We are more aware now. In the last five years, I have become much more optimistic about Turkish cuisine, its development, the appropriateness of the decisions made, and the fact that such conferences are organised and that we are invited to them. I think we are moving forward, but we have to be realistic. I mean, I was severely battered over this topic three or four years ago. Because I said that Turkish cuisine does not rank among the world's top three cuisines. We were severely targeted for claiming that it was not in the top ten, let alone the top three, and the person who was thrashed went on to operate Australia's first Turkish restaurant 15 years ago. He gave this restaurant the name Efendi. He opened the second one. He named it Anason. He opened the third one. He named it Maydanoz. Why did he give these names? In a place where there are so many other English names? It would have generated a lot more revenue, and if I had opened a pizzeria, I would have made much more, so why did I do these things? Because I said

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

that if foreign brands come to Türkiye and build brands under their own names, and they are unable to translate it into Turkish, why should I open a restaurant serving Turkish food under a foreign name? I said I would not use an English name. That is why I used these names when I opened restaurants in Australia. And I will continue to open it this way. Wherever we open a restaurant in the world, I have one rule regarding brand issue: It will have a Turkish name. So much so that nationalism is more than simply adhering to certain dogmas. What's really important is this. This is the way I will discuss our own value.

Thank you. And now we are finally opening a döner kebab place named Tombik, which will be a unique döner concept. Tombik, yes, it has opened, but there are still many problems. When I go, I'll have to push it again. It's not quite what I wanted yet. I need to be there for this project. We will get it back on track when we return in February, but after all we are launching our fourth brand in Australia under the Turkish name Tombik. What about the brand value of Turkish cuisine? Where are we at? Am I running this? Although I'm not very good at these. If we look at it from the outside, I attend a lot of seminars abroad. Not as much as before, unfortunately. Masterchef requires 6-7 months to 8 months of our time. But where are we at? First of all, it is said that Turkish cuisine is one of the top three cuisines in the world. It is not true. Let me tell you clearly what I found. I mean, I could not do much academic research, but last night I sat down and looked up the most important cuisines in the world, and I discovered that our best position is seventh in US News. Among the best cuisines of the world, according to CNN Travel, which I think is one of the most important indicators, we are not in the top ten. When you search Google for the best cuisines in the world, Turkish cuisine does not appear in the top ten. Taste Atlas. This has been talked about a lot this year. That Turkish Cuisine, Türkiye ranked 17th. It is not a very important data for me. I mean, 17th, it does not mean anything. There's no one behind Taste Atlas. I think CNN Travel and Google are much more important. Ranker is significant. Because it examines the numbers. We also ranked 17th there. On Toptens, a popular website, we ranked 18th. Michelin has become the buzz of the town this year. It's something we have been trying to explain for years. Why are there no Michelin stars in Türkiye? Why are there no Michelin-starred chefs from Türkiye? So I try to explain it in a very simple way. Michelin is an organisation. You make a

deal, and you bring it to the country. And when it arrives, certain people visit and inspect the place. They award the stars that they deem appropriate. We have not done this before. I think, speaking as a restaurant owner and chef, one of the best things that the Ministry of Culture and Tourism did this year was to initially invite Michelin to Istanbul. We hope that this will spread all over Türkiye. There is a significant cost to this. This has been criticised, but I believe it is a very sound marketing decision. If you look at Michelin-starred restaurants, there are 758 in France. I'm not counting 1-2-3. There are 758 Michelin-starred restaurants in total. While Türkiye, of course because it is limited to Istanbul at the moment, but let's be realistic. In Türkiye, maybe it would be twice as much. Currently there are 5 starred restaurants in Istanbul. There are 5 restaurants with stars, and we are 26th in the world. So these things need to be addressed. I think good steps are being taken. We are not doing terribly, but we remain far behind. What I am trying to say is always this: Yes, we are not in the top 10, but we need to be in the top 3. This is what I believe. Because I know myself, my cuisine. Although I look at it from a nationalist perspective because it is my own cuisine, I believe I can also look at it realistically. Product diversity, biodiversity, the cultural heritage that Ömür is an expert on and knows very well, the fact that we live in a society where food has been cooked for 10,000 years, the number of endemic plants, the continuing culture, our continuing cultures, our multiculturalism. When we consider all these, we should really be in the top three. But let us start with the top ten, and I am hoping we can work our way up to the top three together. When you consider the many top Turkish restaurants in the world that have made it to the Best 50, received a Michelin star, or made it to Goe Nue in the United States, I can count...

Pelin Çift

I'm sorry, what's on the menu in these restaurants? Do they have dried beans, pilaf or stuffed eggplant, for example?

Somer Sivrioğlu

That is not all that they serve, no. I'm talking more about chef restaurants. There are some restaurants that serve dry beans and rice and do a decent job, but I am talking about restaurants where you can dine with a reservation. I'm not talking about cafes or döner restaurant chains, which we refer to as fast food. I am talking about Turkish restaurants with Turkish identity, where you reserve a table to dine. They may as well serve olive oil dishes

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

and kebabs. They could be chef-restaurants. By my count, there are seven of them in America. We have six of them in the UK, five of which are in London. They have made a significant breakthrough. Such as Yek restaurant, Yeni restaurant, and Esra Muslu's Zahter restaurant have achieved notable success. Over the past 3-4 years, we have made considerable progress in the UK. Especially in London. There are four such restaurants in Germany. It is funny that there are four in Germany, considering there are 2,000,000 Turks living there. There should be many more of these restaurants. There are five such restaurants in other European countries. In the Middle East, I see only Rüya Restaurant as a restaurant with a Turkish identity. We should discuss this if you believe I may be wrong. There might be restaurants unknown to me. And we should talk about them as well. I am talking about the ones I know and have been following lately. In Asia, there is only one place opened by a Turkish citizen in China. In Australia, there are five. I mean, why are there five? Three of them belong to us anyway. I do not take one of those into account. But why are there five? Others who opened these restaurants are either our friends who left us to start their own or people who were inspired by us to open their establishments. I, too, was inspired by others. These are establishments inspired by us that display and maintain this identity. Why are there so few of them in America? Unfortunately, there is a strong lobby against Turkish restaurants, especially in San Francisco and Los Angeles, where most of these establishments are located. Many of them, as I've learned through frequent conversations, are compelled to open under the name of Mediterranean restaurants. Their owners are Turkish. Their dishes are Turkish. They serve fine food, but they cannot open their restaurants under that identity. Because there is strong pressure from the diaspora not to open under the name of Turkish restaurants. Here, we need to be a little more supportive and show this courage.

Pelin Çift

In fact, the issue should also be assessed in political terms.

Somer Sivrioğlu

Absolutely, and there needs to be support. The lobbies I am talking about are not as big as we think they are. This is actually 3-5 people who go there and make propaganda saying, "Oh, it's a Turkish restaurant. Do not go there." I think these problems can be overcome pretty easily. For instance, Tulum is one of my top few favourite restaurants. It is a place a friend of ours opened

in Melbourne. This restaurant was voted the best restaurant in Melbourne. Not just the best Turkish restaurant in Melbourne, it was voted Melbourne's best restaurant. I think Melbourne is one of the best restaurant cities in the world. The restaurant we opened is Anason Restaurant. There are many in Sydney. The unique feature of Maydonoz, which opened this year, is that it is a completely vegetarian restaurant. It is the first Turkish vegetarian restaurant opened abroad that I know of. It focuses on the olive oil dishes we have mentioned and is based on that kind of cuisine. And as Ömür said, we do not have Michelin system this year. We have a hat system. In the magazine that introduced the hat system, it was selected as the best new restaurant of the year, and in the book, it was both selected as the best new restaurant of the year and received its first hat. It is a great success for a newly opened restaurant, and what makes me even happier is that, although I think it is barely visible there, those on the right side are Karaca's beautiful copper sets. All the plates we use feature Seljuk motifs that Ömür works on, and this appears on the cover of a book in Australia. I want to thank Ömür.

Somer Sivrioğlu

And you're the one who did it.

Pelin Çift

Is it Mr. İbrahim's work again?

Ömür Akkor

No. Karaca's production. İbrahim's are mostly handmade, so their prices are rather high. What we wanted from Karaca was for everyone to be able to buy these products for their homes. Because one has to experience this pleasure. Instead of insisting that it must be the handiwork of a specific person or the most expensive option, it's important to present it in this way as well. Besides, only one factory in the world makes them, and they are made in four colours, which look almost handmade. These are some fine and beautiful plates.

Pelin Çift

When people see these plates, do they ask questions about them? How do you introduce them? For instance, do you mention their history? For example, are people now able to recognise a bird motif and identify it as

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Seljuk style?

Somer Sivrioğlu

Of course, they do ask questions. We study all of these ourselves. We also make an effort to teach them all very well. The distinctive feature of our restaurants is that, due to their locations, they cater to more than 90% non-Turkish guests. I say non-Turkish because it would be funny to refer to them as foreign since they are the locals and we are the foreigners in that country. Since the restaurant is located in the city centre, we frequently host some Turkish guests as well, naturally. They bring their guests; let me say that they are restaurants that primarily appeal to foreigners, specifically Australians. For example, I think the new restaurant is Rüya, the one that Civaner opened in Soho, London. Isn't it? Rüya. Yes, Rüya is a marvellous restaurant. It is a fantastic concept. It is one of my favourite restaurants. So, what are our strengths? I will briefly go over them. I won't waste my friends' time by listing them all, but among our most outstanding strengths required to make Turkish cuisine a brand are our unique cultural heritage, exceptionally fertile lands, the capacity to experience four seasons at a time, local products and food varieties, and our young and dynamic population. I am talking about a genuine hospitality. A sincere one. Not for the brand value. Geographical location. It is a country that is accessible from anywhere in the world and home to the airline with the most passengers and connections worldwide. One might therefore easily travel to Türkiye from everywhere. We have already discussed gastronomic richness. Recognition in key markets. By the way, we also have some items that we identified from the budget commissions on tourism and gastronomy we had this weekend. I did not do this alone. I got it from them.

Pelin Çift

By the way, as we have been chatting about recognition in key markets, it turns out that MasterChef is also widely viewed overseas. This is actually your contribution to Turkish cuisine.

Somer Sivrioğlu

Certainly. Economic appeal. It particularly, yet regrettably, reflects positively on tourism. Tourism benefits whenever the economic value of our currency decreases. In terms of weaknesses, our culinary education still

remains poor. It has been very poor since its inception. It embodies serious problems in terms of both quantity and quality. We are still trying to teach Turkish cuisine with French equipment, French techniques, and French curriculum. That is why we are at a disadvantage from the start. Schools, for sure. I think one of the most important issues is the gastro- and micro-nationalism that Mehmet has mentioned. In other words, regional nationalism. Likewise, the issue of qualified personnel is related to education. Regrettably, the infrastructure is insufficient. There are too many bureaucratic hurdles. It goes without saying that foreign language instruction is inadequate. It is one of our biggest troubles. Seasonal demand fluctuations. Türkiye still generates more than 70% of its annual tourism revenue in 3 months. We should be able to distribute it across the other months. We still have supply problems in agriculture. We have numerous communication deficiencies in management, legislation and planning. Some cities have urban planning issues. Issue of tourism awareness among local communities. There are places where individuals hold conservative views that could potentially be more welcoming to tourists. This is not the case in general, but in some places. Looking at the opportunities... Turkish immigrants abroad. I take it quite seriously. It is not only because I am an immigrant from Türkiye living abroad. I would like to illustrate this with a very simple example. In Australia, 4,000 customers visit my restaurants every week. 3500 of them are Australians, both tourists and residents. In Sydney, Australia, a Turkish promotion office has opened. I asked, "How many people a week visit?" They said 400. Now I don't cost the state anything. Neither do I have any demands. I mean, I don't make demands like, "Help me, do this and that for me." Promoting such restaurants is one of the best ways to support them. That means supporting them in a very simple way, such as using already existing resources, conducting trainings both in-person and online, and promoting Türkiye. You know, the main question I receive and therefore the first thing I provide to everyone who visits my restaurant before my book is the names of restaurants I plan to visit if I am to travel to İstanbul in Türkiye. Or another question could be, "Where would you go if you visit Antep?" I offer catalogues that contain these. What I am saying is quite simple. I understand that, but I believe our lack of recognition stems from our tendency to overlook minor details. We can make much better use of Turkish migrants abroad. Because the majority of us work in the restaurant industry. I cannot feel anger towards my

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

friends. I mean, I'm especially talking about the second-generation Turks in Australia. In Germany, the third generation is on its way. It is quite expensive in their country. So they all come to Türkiye anyway. We will actually have amazing power abroad if we put in place a system that boosts their morale and rewards them for their efforts. Stated differently, we are among the nations with the strongest diaspora around the globe. We are all spread out everywhere. I think we can use it much better. As for the vegetarian cuisine in Türkiye, it is the best and most natural in the world; people don't just eat it to be vegetarian or to follow a trend. We have a cuisine that is ideal for vegetarians and those following different diets. I believe Türkiye managed the post-pandemic period well. It was among the countries that sustained the least amount of damage. We are now close to reaching 2020 levels, the levels of the year before the pandemic. This was achieved by four countries around the world. One of them is the Dominican Republic. I am not sure why, but it is the best. Maybe it was because no one had ever been there before. Or maybe Survivor was popular at the time. It must have been something like that. Our young population represent an incredible opportunity. We have already mentioned our geographical location. We can make better use of our natural wealth. We have already used our gastronomy and cultural diversity, and we are taking significant leaps in innovation and digitalisation, which we can achieve at a lower cost than our global competitors. I think we can use these as well. Besides, we have crisis management experience. Nations may, after all, encounter any kind of crisis. Türkiye has crisis management experience that other countries don't currently have. And that puts us incredibly far ahead of the curve when the issue is taken care of. Our lows seem to be very dramatic, but let's also take a look at our highs. We can bounce back very quickly. Australia has only made it back to 40% of what it was before the pandemic. We are almost back to 100%. We have incredible crisis management experience. Now, this can be used as an opportunity. And as for the dangers... let me go over them very quickly. Globalism has an impact. We have very serious problems in the agro-industry. It's above my pay grade to talk about these issues, but there are some serious problems. We need to take more care of our cultural values. Global warming is an issue for the whole world. Economic instability is, of course, a serious problem for investments. There are diplomatic issues from time to time, just like in every other country. Sometimes, we do not use raw re-

sources in a balanced manner. Terrorism... Not as prominent now, but still a problem. Regional instability is also one of the dangers. Environmental pollution, overpopulation. Unfortunately, we have a refugee problem. And the lack of appreciation for tourism by top policymakers. I think it should be even more valuable. We will discuss the recommendations in their own section, but I wanted to draw a picture of how it looked from abroad. Thank you. This is easy to point out, but hard to provide a solution for.

Ömür Akkor

Identifying the problem is a great observation in itself.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

This is actually exactly what we need. And this is how: We are already working inside. At least, we are doing the best we can. You can see it in the statistics shown before. How are we perceived from the outside? I believe, it has been a tremendously beneficial presentation for us. We always love ourselves a bit too much. So that's why I think the picture turned out great.

Pelin Çift

We love ourselves, but we also beat ourselves up very well too. For example, you know there are those who have some complexes. Those who say, "We don't have those kinds of things here". Ömür's reminders at the beginning are important. Chef Somer's emphases are important as well. It's important to say, "We can fall, but we get up very quickly."

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

We do scrutinise ourselves. We do this in gastronomy as well. I will talk about this when it is my turn.

Pelin Çift

Let's continue as such.

Somer Sivrioğlu

I will only briefly praise ourselves right now, but we have made a little contribution to it. Ömür has been contributing for many years, but what we did was bring things to another platform. I mean, with the popularity of the programme. Now, when you talk about Turkish cuisine, people are more aware of our value.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

Certainly. I only have observations when it comes to this. I mention this wherever I go. Many people might even be bored of it by now. I have many examples in my life, but these are the ones that have had the greatest impact. In addition to being part of the education process, it is all about our own cuisine. The other day, I was dividing the interns. I was thinking about who to send where. Since Chef Somer interprets Turkish cuisine, five volunteers stand up. I say I'll send them to Ömür; five others get up. It was beautiful. 5 years ago, I couldn't send even one kid to an internship when they heard the word Turkish cuisine. What you say is quite true. Now Ömür, Somer, and Fatih Tutak, all of the chefs that are currently at the forefront of the industry, are already interpreting Turkish cuisine.

Pelin Çift

Fatih Tutak, the chef you mentioned, is a Michelin-starred chef.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

He is presenting our traditional products in a modern and more minimalist style. Consequently, the others follow suit. I am talking about all of the restaurants with a Michelin star... We have pulled ourselves together in these 5 years, but people were under the notion that working with Turkish cuisine was quite backwards. Making risotto seemed like a much cooler thing to do. However, that notion actually started to dissolve with our TV program. Of course, I extend my thanks to Somer for this. I really do. It wouldn't be enough if we shouted from the rooftops. This picture drawn by a man who has been living abroad for 25–30 years, is amazing.

Somer Sivrioğlu

What do you mean, Mehmet? We are on the same program. Am I more popular? Is that what you mean? You are on the right; I am on the left.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

What I am saying is that it is important. And here is why: You know how it is around here. All that aside, there is also this: For example, I have a concern about one of the things you mentioned previously. We are purchasing tonnes of materials from the villages. Kindly help us if there are any authorities present. We are having issues with accounting. We are not

able to purchase materials for the shops since the villagers do not issue invoices. We have to carry the materials in bus trunks because our villagers do not have a receipt in their hands. For example, when we were making an agreement with a villager from Tokat, they were not able to issue an invoice. Then, accountants talked our heads off for buying materials without invoices. We have to resolve this issue. At least in Somer's presentation, this is one of the areas we deal with daily. Because we support the locals, we buy materials from cooperatives and villagers, and all three of us are the kind of people who shop as such for restaurants. That's issue number one. Now, before I come to the solutions, the solutions I have in mind, I would like to talk a little bit about our programme. I want to talk about the impact. Before Masterchef Türkiye began, Somer stated that it was primarily about Turkish cuisine, and one of the things we emphasised was that it read Masterchef and Türkiye underneath, so there would be more Turkish food in this programme. I wrote a book about tradesman's restaurants and tradesmen because a 15-year-old boy asked me what Ekşili Köfte (Sour Meatballs) was, and I got passionate and wrote a book. Even that book has his influence.

Pelin Çift

By the way, an ambitious kid in the kitchen said that. Right?

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

No, no, one of the young ones. So even his mother doesn't make it. As sad as that is. Moms should make ekşili köfte, right, Mrs. Pelin? It's just ekşili köfte. You roll the meatball. You put the mint in the yayla soup (yoghurt soup). And boil some potatoes. Now, it's ekşili köfte. It's nothing special.

Somer Sivrioğlu

We have provided the recipe too.

Ömür Akkor

Pelin cooks really well. She smashed an onion on the programme.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

Yes, I am the only person in Türkiye who made Pelin Çift smash onions. But that also had an impact. Of course, they said if Pelin Çift smashes onions.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Ömür Akkor

We can do it too.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

No, no. Not that we can do it. The host of a history show on TV reminded our culture of smashing onions.

Pelin Çift

I couldn't smash it, though. Away it went.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

But we ended up on Tiktok. I received some reaction because people said you made Türkiye's most important TV show host, who created such a historically significant and high-quality programme, smash onions. We visited 15 provinces, two of which were abroad, and when our transformation programme was first published, I can honestly say that the restaurants in those cities were completely booked the next day and over the weekend, but there was a problem. We don't have the food... No, no food. They ask us about local products on our programme and request that we broadcast these local products. People who go there can only find döner and lahmacun. I am not saying these things because they are bad. The meals we put on the show are not available in the province where they originated. From this point to the provinces...

Pelin Çift

Of course, you actually go from city to city. You explore the products, culture, and conversation of each city... Great concept.

Ömür Akkor

So you instill great self-confidence. It's amazing to see yourself on the screen and to see yourself as valuable. That's why they are doing such a great job. We don't usually recognise what we do because we have so many things, but I believe they suddenly realise how valuable these things are and want us to protect them.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

As a result, we showcase 30-40, and occasionally 20 dishes in these provinces. That's why city branding is important, but it would be great if it went

hand in hand with gastronomy. This is what we want there. Whenever foreign tourists, delegations, or groups of visitors arrive in any city, I suggest specific restaurants in that city where they can dine and experience all the local food. Most of them have it. In Antep, for example.

Pelin Çift

Indeed, Antep.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

Exactly. I know 3 or 5 other cities that have city restaurants. Yes, there are some in Konya. Not in Bolu. I'm not lying, Ömür, no city restaurants. We will open them.

Ömür Akkor

We are waiting for you to open them, chef.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

It's like you are telling me to take care of my hometown.

Pelin Çift

There are in Kilis, right?

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

Not in Kilis. Antep has them. In this sense, Somer has just mentioned refugees and recognition. We are watched everywhere where Turkish is known. I mean Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. A friend from Azerbaijan told me. If you had a people meter for the program in Azerbaijan, you would consistently secure the top position every evening. For example, can I tell you something very beautiful? For example, someone wrote to me. He said there was an aunt who was 70 years old. She only spoke Kurdish. She had her grandson sit next to her and translate our programme from Turkish. What could be more beautiful than that? What more can we do? That's what I think. That made me very happy. Imagine, you know, she would scold the contestants and stuff like that. She was scolding me. I said, don't translate that. Don't tell me that. Gastronomy ambassadors are our topic. So the number of gastronomy ambassadors is already low. It's already in Somer's recommendations. So, we consistently emphasise the necessity of increasing the number of voluntary gastronomy ambassadors. It has just come up. A brother told me. He stated that the most effective country lobbying

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

is conducted during dinner and at the dinner table. So the importance of food is everywhere. It is very important even in international conventions. On the other hand, the audience interested in our programme includes the Balkans, Iraq, Iran, Azerbaijan, and Uzbekistan. We hear that they come to the provinces we promote and eat the food. In this regard, we have a lot more about the programme; however, in other words, city branding, particularly country branding, is a regional phenomenon, as evidenced by the Balkans and the Middle East. I think we have made a significant contribution here as well. And I believe it would be wonderful if we were provided with some facilities so that we could go there and better explain ourselves to the people there. I will save the recommendations for later.

Pelin Çift

Now I would like to proceed slowly with the recommendations. The next session will likely begin after ours. However, it's been a lot of fun. Wouldn't it be an immense hit if this talk were to air on television? I have listened to you with great admiration.

Ömür Akkor

We will run a quadruple programme like this.

Pelin Çift

Okay, that'd be great.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

I will be there anyway. We are on the same TV channel together. Please tell Ömür. We will leave our studio and head inside yours. We will come in with our costumes right away.

Pelin Çift

Yes, I would love to. That would be great. Ömür, in a talk with you, you mentioned that we really need to combat this together. I mean, you mentioned a war, and it's not just for those who ponder about it and profit from it. Now we have to start somewhere. Chef Somer has prepared an excellent list... The potential is enormous. But when you look at where the shortcomings and difficulties are, you feel overwhelmed. I mean, where will we start, how will we maintain it, and how will we ensure coordination? What are your thoughts?

Ömür Akkor

I mean, I truly enjoyed Somer's presentation. Let's assume that I have now transcribed what Somer has just done on a single sheet of paper. I have transcribed it on a large A4 sheet, about 2 metres long. I have written them all down there. Then I have written state institutions and voluntary organisations next to them. And I have written down the names of the officials from these institutions. For instance, Ömür is interested in archaeological sites. He can provide us with five more men like himself. Let's see what data comes out of this. We have already been on TV together, but he's also abroad. Who else are also abroad? We will work with Ahmet Dede and Serkan Güzelçoban with a Michelin star in Germany, but we will also connect them to foreign tourism offices, as you mentioned. Now, we all go to most of the events at embassies abroad, and there are large things like books that we can present to them, but we genuinely need small things, booklets, and more sympathetic things. And who can we get them organised with? Probably with the Ministry of Culture. I'm putting stuff on that map right now. Who will go there for this, and then where will I connect it to? The point is that there may be a Deputy Minister in charge of Gastronomy within the Ministry of Culture. This matter is just as significant as hotels, other tourism-related elements, funds expended by the Ministry of Tourism, and, if necessary, it can be directly affiliated with the Presidency. It's not likely to be a difficult endeavour. For example, I think the most important outcome of today's discussion is that that list is written in a completely flowing state, indicating who will be matched with whom and who will continue to behave as they do. So, he made a simple yet brilliant observation. Alright, so while I am speaking in this manner, I am speaking about the data that I am working with, but it is action time now, so this is a total war. If necessary, I always say that if Mr. President took a loaf of bread made from Iza wheat, dipped it in olive oil, and ate it, then there wouldn't be anyone left to argue against him. Because Iza wheat, which originated in Anatolia, is the oldest type of wheat in the world. Anatolia is the home of olive oil, and there are so many tricks in this sector... Or, as I have just stated, I will repeat it. I told you about the lobbies in Los Angeles; I'm not sure if Hüseyin is with us right now or if he is watching. Hüseyin's company in the United States is called Turkana. They have to pull down their signboards when those lobbies get out of control, and they have to cover the trucks again, or there will be a problem, you know. As a government, we should discuss all of this and

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

form an effective committee since there is no gain for you or me.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

I have never made a penny in my life by running a diner.

Ömür Akkor

That is what I am saying... Also, there are three areas in which Turks are world champions. When you look at the culture, all the ingredients that we want, and the cuisine of the Turks, they are the world champions. Let's discuss carpets; weaving dates back 9,000 to 10,500 years. Whatever you touch is copper, including why copper exists, why copper has infiltrated the kitchen, copper production, and copper mining. When you add them all up, you are the one who is constantly processing all of this culture, yet, for example, the French come and talk about wine, and you assume that the French wine is very good. Oak barrels cost 3 thousand in France and 9 thousand in our country. There are 29 oak species, 25 of which are endemic to Anatolia. The best oak in the world is the Kasnak oak, which is the most fragrant and flexible one and grows in Anatolia. We are the owners of all this valuable material. We also need to tell people about it one by one. We have this material, and it is endemic in our region, so we need to work on it. We need to lay out the framework and elaborate on it. This can be easily settled in a 3-day congress or workshop. As the other panellists have also experienced... For example, we participate in gastronomy conferences all over Türkiye and the world, but again, the audience is our colleagues, and Chef Mehmet would be the one watching me on stage. But where are the local administrators? Why do all these municipalities and governorates not have tourism offices? Why do they not participate in these conferences? Why does everyone leave right after the opening speech? What I am trying to say is that I attend these conferences for you, to give these speeches to all of you. However, no one is listening to us except my colleagues Mehmet, Somer, Gökmen, Selman, and you. This year, there are events everywhere, such as the Gastronomy Festival. And all I want is for them to have an outcome. When I present at a conference, I mention that Antalya is home to 900 endemic plants. It is the number one in Türkiye. There are 24 levels of endemism in Türkiye. And if you walk 12 kilometres in any direction in Antalya, you stumble upon 22 of them. But nobody is interested in hearing these facts. It is mostly Somer who listens. So, where are these tourism offices and agencies? Where are the travel agencies? For

20 years, you have let the tourists leave without tasting piyaz (white bean salad with tahini), although Manavgat's sesame is the number one in the world. In the best sushi restaurants in Japan, people eat Manavgat's sesame because we export all of it to Japan. You have offered German buffets to these tourists for 20 years. Do you understand what I mean? Maybe we should lock the authorities in a conference room and not let them leave until we kindly explain all this to them.

Pelin Çift

Actually, this Türkiye's Nation Branding Forum covers the topic of gastronomy, and you were invited as panellists with the aim of brainstorming on what should be done. It is being recorded to be shared online afterwards, right? At least we can say that the necessary work has started somewhere.

Ömür Akkor

We need regular workshops to be held every 6 months.

Pelin Çift

But I realised that... Of course, there is a publicity or popular culture aspect, as well as the kitchen and professionalism aspect. However, the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Ministry of Trade, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry must be involved in the process; in other words, this is an all-out war, as you mentioned.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

It has been 5 years since I spoke out about my insistent projects regarding the appointment of a deputy minister for gastronomy to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The position of deputy minister did not exist at the time, but it could have been an undersecretary. Surely, our First Lady works harder than anyone on the topic of gastronomy. We were together at Turkish Cuisine Week, and next week, we will be at the Zero Waste event. She also authored a book on Turkish Cuisine. I would like to extend my gratitude to the First Lady here. I would like to point out that while all these people are not making the required efforts, it seems like it is solely the concern of the First Lady, and it bothers me. We restaurateurs, including myself, make a living out of this sector. And it is very odd that people come to the opening ceremonies, speeches are delivered, and ribbons are cut. However, the individuals who must listen to the speeches are not staying in the conference hall.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

Pelin Çift

I am told it is time to wrap things up, so I would appreciate your final thoughts on what should be done.

Somer Sivrioğlu

First of all, you have just stated kindly that I took part in gastronomy organisations, but we should hand it to Gökmen Sözen. He was the one who invited me there, and I simply attended and made my speeches. We should truly give credit to Gökmen Sözen. I know this because I have been involved since its commencement. He turned Gastromasa from a small-scale gastronomy conference into one of the four most important international gastronomy conferences in the world. 52 chefs participated in the gastronomy conference this year; 10 of them work in the world's top 50 restaurants, and there are 80–90 Michelin stars in total. Let us not mention who was the highest representative on the state level...

Ömür Akkor

I will say that it was a deputy mayor of a neighbouring city. The world's biggest conference was held one week after the Taksim explosion, at the centre of İstanbul, 1 kilometre away from Taksim. 4 out of 180 participants did not attend, and I followed the rest of the 176 participants. However, they only posted photos from Taksim Square, Turkish flags, and mosques, but, similar to the residents of İstanbul not attending this conference...

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

Why should we not say it? A deputy mayor from Bursa attended. The state is here as well as the authorities. A deputy mayor from Bursa attended the opening ceremony.

Ömür Akkor

Indeed, he can come for the opening, but...

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

By the way, I would like to thank him very much. I believe his attendance was valuable. If he had not come, there would have been an absence in that position.

Somer Sivriođlu

Let us turn ourselves back to solutions instead of being pessimistic.

Ömür Akkor

We all were saddened during the opening, watching him come on stage with tears in his eyes and not a sliver of support for the man.

Somer Sivriođlu

In this case, I would like to request a round of applause for Gökmen. I am confident it will reach him. I have a few final slides before I wrap up my presentation. I would be happy if we could continue from the previous one where we left off. This is Anatolian cuisine that we talk about a lot, discussing what it is and is not. In 2015, we had an incredible opportunity to follow the trend of Nordic cuisine. As in every other business, like fashion, television, and cinema, cuisine is also a trend. Some nations gain popularity in the world at certain times. Our time to rise into a trend came in 2015. Following the Nordic cuisine trend, it was time for the new Anatolian cuisine, the all-embracing cuisine that is expert in its domain, to shine. Perhaps it is redundant to say that the new Anatolian cuisine embraces all people, beginning with the Hittites and Assyrians and continuing to the present day. What is the new Anatolian cuisine? It is built on the principles of learning from and respecting tradition while keeping an open door for innovation. To put it simply, this is the simplest guideline for our cuisine to follow. We must learn our traditions thoroughly and with complete respect while also allowing for innovation and change as we carry them forward to our day and age. We missed out on this opportunity in 2015 because everything that could have happened to our country came at once, affecting tourism, which is a sector that is affected by everything. A gust of wind in Japan creates a storm here. However, I believe that we must revitalise the new Anatolian cuisine together with all the stakeholders. Who should do what? There is something we can all do to contribute to our gastronomy policy. What the state should do is what we all agreed on: the appointment of a deputy minister for gastronomy. We need an authority to consult with. There is amazing work being done. In the meantime, the Turkish Tourism Promotion and Development Agency (TGA) has done incredible work this year and continues to do so. However, we should have an authority, as in the appointment of a deputy minister of gastronomy, who understands

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

and knows gastronomy, so that we can discuss and consult with them. This deputy minister needs to make 5 or 10 year plans. Regional plans and incentives are something that I like the most. Ömür was with us for the Mesopotamia project, for example. The Mesopotamia brand is a project that is very well-known around the world. The whole world knows Mesopotamia and its religious connotations as well. It is called Fertile Crescent, a place where all the holy books were sent, which is why it is mentioned in the holy books. Most importantly, the world also knows it as a region. Mesopotamia is the birthplace of agriculture in the world, so the fact that Gaziantep, Mardin, Diyarbakır, Kilis, and Urfa are within its borders is very valuable. Why is it valuable? Gaziantep is a very important destination, but from the perspective of tourists and foreign writers, once you delight yourself with a kebab, then baklava in the evening, then eat Cartlak Kebab later the next day, you may ask, what else now? This is when you continue your journey at Mardin, then Urfa, then to excavation sites, because I enjoy that, too. For this reason, I take the Mesopotamia project very seriously. I take it very seriously as a brand, which is also strongly perceived abroad, so thank you very much to those who contributed to it. The state should attach importance to gastronomy investments. An inventory list should be made for Turkish culinary products. One of the sources that I value the most is the Türkiye Gastronomy Atlas prepared by Ömür, which is what we currently have. And we need a more detailed and comprehensive version for culinary products. National and international organisations should be categorised, and incentives should be given to people for their exceptional work. In this case, the incentives do not mean grants, money, or anything else but a simple recognition of the people who do good work. Believe me, there are many people in this field who genuinely care for their country. A simple “well done” in the form of a plaque or a “thank you” is enough. We do not want anything else. This motivates us and shows us that our work is recognised. Some of the authorities should go and tell Ahmet Dede, “Congratulations, Ahmet. Good job.” That is it. There is nothing more he expects. Making Adana kebab, he has received a Michelin Star, and there are people lining up for reservations months in advance. What is even stranger is that he works in Dublin, actually about 3 hours away from Dublin. We have NGOs, such as TÜRES. And I cannot stop myself from saying this: We only have two federations, where one is catered towards restaurants that are alcohol-free and the other is for alcohol-serving. Is that the only aspect that

distinguishes a restaurant? Should not there be a more diverse categorisation? Alcohol-serving and alcohol-free restaurants is not a category. It cannot be. That is not what the sector needs. You should approach it from a more horizontal, more precise perspective. For instance, you might classify diners and fast-food restaurants in one category and luxury restaurants in another. We have to establish distinction correctly so that we can walk towards the correct goal and segmentation together. Chef Mehmet knows about these Federations the best, as it is his expertise. Only he knows what he suffered, what he has gone through. These are mostly regional federations. How many cook federations do we have, Chef Mehmet?

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

Well, as far as I know, there are five now.

Somer Sivrioğlu

And those are the umbrella organisations. All of these federations need to be brought under a main category. Of course, education, gastronomy schools, local food training and food programmes like ours should support all of these. I have pondered on this issue for a long time myself. Thank you.

Mehmet Yalçinkaya

Well, Chef Somer already talked about most of the current issues; now, if you don't mind, I would also like to share something that bothers me. The first medal I have ever won was in the 2008 Olympics, on behalf of Germany. Do you know why? Because, I could not find any sponsors. Imagine that I went to the Olympics to represent Türkiye, but I could not find anyone to sponsor me. This is because our gastronomy is not under the supervision of any institution. The profession of Chef is legally seen as a service unit under the Ministry of Health, in fact, legally, we can not even call it a profession in Türkiye. We have these federations, yes, but they are focusing on other subjects. Why couldn't I find a sponsor? I was forced to compete on behalf of Germany and won a bronze medal for them. Of course, those days are behind us now, and we are cared more nowadays. The works are of better quality, and I would appreciate it if someone calculated Türkiye's gastronomy income. How much of the 52 billion in tourism income is from food sales? I believe 20% is from food sales. Now we are finally being seen, and we are very happy that we are. Right now, we are invited to an

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

event organized by our government, and we are giving a speech, which is very important if you ask me. This is an important day. In the past, we were only invited as jury members for pickle or rice competitions here and there. Please don't laugh, this is a very heartbreaking thing. I go there from my country and take 18 kids who have never had a passport to a once-in-a-century event like the Olympics. When I say I competed on behalf of Germany, the Turks there supported me, but since I could not register on behalf of Türkiye, you might imagine the pain of a nationalist man like me in that situation. Of course, I proudly went back there the following year through my own means as a representative of Türkiye, won the silver medal and waved the Turkish flag. Still, today, I wanted to tell you about this bitter experience I went through in the past. Do you know why I told this story? Because of insignificance. It's a sector that includes chefs, food, retail, etc. In fact, during the 2000s, families would not even allow their daughters to marry a chef, but I am not going to get into it right now. But today, it is very valuable and important for us to talk about this here, and I would like to offer my thanks to the organizers of this event for this.

Pelin Çift

We are here today thanks to the Türkiye Brand Office and, of course, the Directorate of Communications, so once again, thank you.

Mehmet Yalçınkaya

The things we spoke of here—the suggestions, the advice, the recommendations, etc.—were discussed in a serious manner without anything frivolous by our colleagues, and I believe it was a productive discussion. Therefore, as Ömür said, these issues should be taken care of as soon as possible, including the ones Chef Somer pointed out. In fact, the basic things have already been said, so what I am going to add now is that I think we need to discuss things such as city branding, gastronomy restaurants, etc., to lay the foundations for what we talked about. After all, our government is already aware of us and listening to our opinions, and there are more or less 20–25 points discussed here, but I still think we should lay the foundations now. We request that a representative from our government look into the money Catalans in Spain make through global gastronomy tourism because we have the potential to make a lot of money from this endeavour. I have already checked, but I do not want to quote anything wrong because it is really an incredible figure. That's why, I would like to thank you for inviting

us to this event. We are making a television programme, the most popular television programme in Türkiye. We already talk about what we want to say in it, but it is still a really valuable opportunity for us to be invited to such events and, as Ömür previously mentioned, explain our problems to someone working for our government. If Chef Somer and I spend 4 hours backstage, 3 and a half hours of it are spent on discussing issues like these, but what's the use of it? We try to think of solutions as much as we can... but at the end of the day, the discussion is only between the two of us. He builds upon what I say, and I build on what he says, but finally... we can commercialise these. We can contribute to our country, educate our children, and change the curriculum, but most of all, I am happy that we were given the right to speak for the first time. Thank you.

Pelin Çift

Maybe not everything that needs to be said has been said, but I think it is very valuable that 3 beloved figures who are so popular and respected have voiced the most basic points here. I would like to extend my thanks to everyone who made this happen, and I would like to thank you for listening to us as well. I hope it will be beneficial for the future, and I also hope that next year, or the year after that, we will be here again and say, "Thankfully, all of these are accomplished."



**FOURTEENTH
SESSION**

Cultural Heritage in Nation Branding: Türkiye Experience



Dr. Şule Ürün

Assistant Secretary-General, Turkish
National Commission for UNESCO

**NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE
AND THE WORLD**

**Cultural Heritage in
Nation Branding: Türkiye
Experience**

PARTICIPANTS



Dr. Şule Ürün

Assistant Secretary-General, Turkish National
Commission for UNESCO



01

Distinguished guests, esteemed colleagues, and honoured participants, On behalf of the UNESCO National Commission of Türkiye, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Presidency's Directorate of Communications and the Türkiye Brand Office, represented by Mrs. Nur Özkan Erbay, for their kind invitation to the Türkiye Nation Branding Forum. Today, I would like to share insights on the role of cultural heritage in nation branding, drawing from Türkiye's experiences.

UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, was established in 1945, following the Second World War, with the aim of building peace in the minds of people. The UNESCO National Commission of Türkiye, headquartered in Ankara, serves as the official representative of UNESCO in Türkiye, operating with a dedicated team of 16 full-time staff, guided by a General Assembly, Executive Board, Audit Committee, and specialised committees. Established in 1971, the Turkish Permanent Delegation to UNESCO is based in Paris, making our National Commission, one of the oldest among UNESCO's founding 20 member states.

Our Commission undertakes its activities through specialised committees and monitoring groups, focusing on UNESCO's sectors and global

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

priorities. The primary role of our National Commission is to advise the government on matters related to education, science, culture, and communication, as per UNESCO's mission. Additionally, UNESCO plays a pivotal role in setting international standards across various fields, including education, bioethics, and artificial intelligence.

To briefly outline UNESCO's sectors and areas of operation, they include education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture, and information and communication. Among its global priorities are Africa and gender equality. Additionally, the challenges faced by Small Island Developing States (SIDS), such as climate change, soil erosion, and rising sea levels, are of critical concern to UNESCO. Addressing the vulnerability of these regions is essential, as some may face existential threats post-2050. Engaging youth in decision-making processes remains one of UNESCO's paramount priorities.

UNESCO facilitates its work through various international programs, lists, conventions, and networks. Notably, the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage significantly contributes to nation branding for member states. Furthermore, UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Lists, the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, and the Memory of the World Programme—encompassing significant records like Piri Reis's map—are crucial elements of UNESCO's initiatives.

Among our celebratory and commemorative programs, we honour significant figures, such as the centenary of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's birth, which aligns with UNESCO's mission of fostering international peace. UNESCO also marks significant days, weeks, months, and years. For example, at the 41st General Conference of UNESCO, November 3 was declared Biosphere Reserves Day, and October 6th, with the support of Türkiye, was declared International Geodiversity Day.

UNESCO programs are accessible to universities, with initiatives like UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks fostering academic engagement in relevant fields. These units work scientifically within the scope of UNESCO's areas of study and priorities. There are 18 UNESCO Chairs/UNITWIN Networks in universities across Türkiye. Within the education sector,

ASPnet schools, which are part of the sister schools network, operate particularly in primary, middle, and high schools. Additionally, there are UNESCO Clubs that engage in various UNESCO-related activities.

Programs such as the World Book Capital, the Global Network of Learning Cities, and the UNESCO Creative Cities Network engage local governments, enhancing cities' affiliation with UNESCO. In the Creative Cities Network, cities can submit applications in various categories within seven different themes, with gastronomy being one of the main categories.

UNESCO, the only UN institution that embraces science, has significant experience in the preservation of natural heritage and natural resources. In this context, the areas registered through the Ramsar Convention are wetlands that serve as habitats for water birds. Fourteen of these wetlands, which are particularly visited by migratory birds, are located in our country. Another UNESCO Program is the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme, with our country's Kula-Salihli Global Geopark located in Manisa. While the candidacy processes for other areas are ongoing, significant efforts are being undertaken by the National Commission to plan and increase the number of these candidate areas. Another natural area initiative within the scope of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, which evaluates the relationship between humans and nature on a scientific basis, is biosphere reserves. Our Camili Biosphere Reserve in Artvin is recorded as our country's only MAB site.

One of our fundamental responsibilities is to provide advisory services to the government on UNESCO matters. This involves extensive collaboration with approximately 200 experts integrated into our specialised committees. We also collaborate with NGOs.

NGOs can also be accredited by UNESCO if they meet the necessary conditions. One such NGO is MCEP (Mother-Child Education Program), which is an internationally accredited UNESCO organisation. In our Specialized Committees, we work with scientists and experts who have academic expertise in various fields. In addition to these efforts, we assign our experts to UNESCO's committees, advisory bodies, and councils to ensure they can contribute to global efforts. Our partnerships extend to the private sector, exemplified by our collaboration with L'Oréal Türkiye, which

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

has supported the UNESCO-L'Oréal For Women in Science Program for over a decade. This initiative has provided scholarships to young female scientists, with national awardees often nominated for international recognition.

These awards have significant prestige, particularly as they are also presented to prominent women scientists who have been honoured with the Nobel Prize. The research areas are not related to cosmetic studies but focus entirely on life sciences, environmental sciences, and physical sciences. One of the world's largest cosmetic companies, which has substantial brand value, is an official partner of the UNESCO. By supporting this project for social responsibility, the company contributes to the development of role-model women in science through UNESCO.

We work with local governments, particularly in the Creative Cities and Learning Cities programs. Regarding branding, it is important to note that UNESCO's primary motivation is never branding or tourism. There is a term known as "UNESCO Designated Sites," which refers to areas officially recognised by UNESCO.

Through UNESCO-designated areas, UNESCO's motivation is to use these sites as learning environments, contributing to sustainable development, intercultural dialogue, and the establishment of peace. Intangible cultural heritage sites, geoparks, Ramsar sites, and similar designations are represented by different UNESCO logos. Achieving these designations and obtaining the respective logos involves significant effort, adherence to specific criteria and standards, and navigating challenging processes. Files are prepared by coordinating and collaborating with numerous institutions, ensuring the integration of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals into these processes. In other words, participating in these programs requires proficiency in UNESCO's jargon and language.

As of now, our country has 19 heritage sites on the World Heritage List, which was established in 1972. The list also includes two mixed (cultural and natural) sites. While in the past it was possible to present more sites, now only one site can be submitted per year. The Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity was created following its acceptance at the General Conference in 2003. After the convention

was adopted, Türkiye's intangible heritage was expanded to include 25 elements. Most recently, following the meeting in Morocco this year, four more elements have been added to the Intangible Cultural Heritage List. The design screen in the background of the meeting room shows "Ebru" (Turkish art of marbling), which is one of the elements listed on Türkiye's Intangible Heritage List. This year, the Culture of Çay (tea), Sericulture and traditional production of silk for weaving, the Telling tradition of Nasreddin Hodja, and the Traditional Ahlat stonework, which requires urgent safeguarding, have been added to the list.

Preparing and submitting these elements for acceptance involves multi-stakeholder processes. Interest in the Creative Cities Network has been growing in recent years. For example, applications are open every two years within a quota for this program in seven categories, including literature, film, music, crafts, design, gastronomy, or media arts.

The Learning Cities program aims to effectively use resources across all sectors to sustain lifelong learning experiences in cities and promote inclusive education from basic education to higher education. Applications received by our National Commission are evaluated, and nominations are sent to UNESCO after consultation with our board of directors. For example, Bursa, Sakarya, and Yozgat were cities included in this network in 2022.

Briefly addressing Sustainable Development Goal 11, preserving heritage and building sustainable cities and communities are crucial issues today. Given that the majority of the population lives in cities, it is necessary to build sustainable cities for the preservation and transmission of our heritage. Heritage is a significant element we must protect and pass on from the past to the future. In these areas, UNESCO prioritises protection over tourism or branding. When states sustainably protect these areas, an important brand is created. One of UNESCO's top priorities is sustainable development. UNESCO's resources also state that the primary motivation for heritage sites is sustainable protection, not tourism.

Good practice examples in heritage sites are important and are shared at meetings and various platforms to inspire other sites. There are exemplary practices in our country's sites as well. Sustainable development

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

refers to the sustainability of local products produced in UNESCO sites and their impact on the local economy. A negative example is the sale of products not produced by local communities but brought from other countries or cities. There are travellers like those in the World Heritage Travelers Association who aim to visit and experience heritage sites. Today, many domestic and foreign tourists visit UNESCO sites to explore and experience them. These areas generate not only tourism revenue but also brand value in their regions. We view these UNESCO-designated sites as learning environments that include environmental, economic, and social dimensions. UNESCO sees these sites as laboratories for learning. Questions like how to better protect these areas, how to pass on our heritage correctly to future generations, and how to promote intercultural dialogue are explored. By drawing inspiration from good practice examples in other areas, the goal is to establish a culture of coexistence and peace. As expressed in UNESCO's founding idea, it is possible to build peace in people's minds through these learning environments.

UNESCO has four major cultural conventions. After states become parties to these conventions, they are implemented under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. On the other hand, there are programs that are not governed by a convention but are executed as programs. These programs are also mostly managed through our National Commission.

Cultural conventions are crucial for transmitting heritage to future generations and ensuring its sustainable protection. Fundamental goals of cultural conventions include integrating heritage protection, benefiting local development, ensuring local community involvement in processes, using culture as a driver of development, and promoting intercultural dialogue.

The relationship between branding and heritage is a delicate one that requires careful planning. This relationship can be illustrated with an example in the context of intangible cultural heritage. When you transform a harvest festival, celebrated for generations, into a tourist event, there is a risk of losing the ritual's meaning and context. Tourism pressures can also result in damage to the environment and nature where the ritual takes place. Argan oil and its related rituals from Morocco are elements

listed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List. It has been reported that argan trees have been damaged due to tourism pressure in areas where argan oil production continues, highlighting the need for balanced and well-planned production. This is why we refer to UNESCO-designated areas as learning environments. The Camili Biosphere Reserve is an important forest and high mountain ecosystem located in Artvin's Hopa district. The reserve area, which is a significant plant and natural area, was registered in UNESCO's Biosphere Reserves Network in 2005.

In 2010, an organic product certification project was carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (formerly the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs) and our National Commission. One of the most important features of the biosphere reserve designation process is its biodiversity and the presence of the local Caucasian bee breed. This led to the production of organic honey and the creation of a good practice example that contributes to the sustainable development of the local community with an organically certified product. The relevant ministry obtained the patent for this product, and the usage rights were transferred to the unit responsible for managing the Camili Village Union. This non-profit application aims to contribute to local development and can be similarly applied to other areas. Such site-specific applications also create brand value.

NATION BRANDING IN TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD



EXPERIENCE SHARES



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NATION BRANDING EXPERIENCES FROM TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD



NATION BRANDING EXPERIENCES FROM TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD

December 16 - 17, 2022 - İstanbul

The Presidency's Directorate of Communications has compiled the book 'NATION BRANDING EXPERIENCES FROM TÜRKİYE AND THE WORLD' under the theme 'Meet Türkiye's True Colors'. The book aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the brand of Türkiye, international branding efforts and various country examples in detail.

This book features 8 panels and 6 presentations from the 'Türkiye Nation Branding Forum'. The forum took place in İstanbul, a city with a brand value for Türkiye, and welcomed both local and foreign participants. The book explores the Türkiye brand, nation branding strategy of Türkiye from history to today, Turkish TV series, Turkish cuisine, brand cities, soft power elements, and branding activities in the international arena.

The Forum aims to serve as an initial stage in the development of a holistic strategy for nation branding.

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