

Tourism Arrivals in Turkey Dropped Drastically



Turkey lost approximately \$16.85 million in 2006 as numbers of tourists dropped drastically by 7.2%. By tourists, we mean Turkish nationals as well as foreigners. Indeed, the decrease in the number of Turks travelling around their own country was not that significant, but numbers of foreigners were down by a disappointing 9.9%.

Firstly, there was the outbreak of bird flu in January 2006, which killed 4 people. As a new world drama, it was always certain to put people off visiting Turkey. The most vital factor in the sudden change however was the political unrest the country experienced last year. There were strings of bombings by Kurdish rebels and this together with the nearby Lebanon/Israel conflict gave Turkey a reputation of being unsafe. These events have prompted the government to make the word 'peace' the centre of all 2007 advertising campaigns.

On a more positive note, let's not forget that 2005 brought in approximately 21 million arrivals and became a record year. Therefore, 2006 seemed bad only in comparison with 2005, whereas the results were quite average. It is worth mentioning that the Turks who continue enjoying travelling around their own country spend more money than foreigners whilst on trips. Perhaps the country's officials set their targets a little too high. Thirdly, the world was treated to the 2006 World Cup in Germany as football fans from all over the world flocked to Germany rather than considering or repeating trips to Turkey.

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