[Template:Other uses](/wiki/Template:Other_uses" \o "Template:Other uses) [Template:Use dmy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_dmy_dates) [Template:Use American English](/wiki/Template:Use_American_English) [Template:Infobox settlement](/wiki/Template:Infobox_settlement)

**Istanbul** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en) or [Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en);[[1]](#cite_note-1)[[2]](#cite_note-2) [Template:Lang-tr](/wiki/Template:Lang-tr) [Template:IPA-tr](/wiki/Template:IPA-tr)), historically also known as [**Constantinople**](/wiki/Constantinople) and [**Byzantium**](/wiki/Byzantium), is the most populous city in [Turkey](/wiki/Turkey) and the country's economic, cultural, and historic center. Istanbul is a transcontinental city in [Eurasia](/wiki/Eurasia), straddling the [Bosphorus](/wiki/Bosphorus) [strait](/wiki/Strait) (which separates [Europe](/wiki/Europe) and [Asia](/wiki/Asia)) between the [Sea of Marmara](/wiki/Sea_of_Marmara) and the [Black Sea](/wiki/Black_Sea). Its commercial and historical center lies on the [European side](/wiki/Continental_Europe) and about a third of its population lives on the [Asian side](/wiki/Anatolia).[[3]](#cite_note-3)The city is the administrative center of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality ([coterminous](/wiki/Wikt:conterminous) with [Istanbul Province](/wiki/Istanbul_Province)), both hosting a population of around 14 million residents.<ref name=citypolution.de/> Istanbul is one of the [world's most populous cities](/wiki/World's_largest_cities) and ranks as the world's 7th-[largest city proper](/wiki/List_of_cities_proper_by_population) and the [largest European city](/wiki/List_of_European_cities_by_population).

Founded under the name of *Byzantium* on the [Sarayburnu](/wiki/Sarayburnu) promontory around 660 BCE, the city developed to become one of the most significant in history. After its reestablishment as *Constantinople* in 330 CE, it served as an imperial capital for almost 16 centuries, during the [Roman](/wiki/Roman_Empire) and [Byzantine](/wiki/Byzantine_Empire) (330–1204 and 1261–1453), the [Latin](/wiki/Latin_Empire) (1204–1261), and the [Ottoman](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) (1453–1922) [empires](/wiki/Empire).[[4]](#cite_note-4) It was instrumental in the advancement of [Christianity](/wiki/Christianity) during Roman and Byzantine times, before the Ottomans [conquered the city](/wiki/Fall_of_Constantinople) in 1453 and transformed it into an Islamic stronghold and the seat of the [Ottoman Caliphate](/wiki/Ottoman_Caliphate).[[5]](#cite_note-5) Istanbul's strategic position on the historic [Silk Road](/wiki/Silk_Road),[[6]](#cite_note-6) rail networks to Europe and the Middle East, and the only sea route between the Black Sea and the [Mediterranean](/wiki/Mediterranean_Sea) have produced a cosmopolitan populace, although less so since the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923. Overlooked for the new capital [Ankara](/wiki/Ankara) during the [interwar period](/wiki/Interwar_period), the city has since regained much of its prominence. The population of the city has increased tenfold since the 1950s, as migrants from across [Anatolia](/wiki/Anatolia) have moved in and city limits have expanded to accommodate them.[[7]](#cite_note-7)[[8]](#cite_note-8) Arts, music, film, and cultural festivals were established at the end of the 20th century and continue to be hosted by the city today. Infrastructure improvements have produced a complex transportation network.

Approximately [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) foreign visitors arrived in Istanbul in 2015, five years after it was named a [European Capital of Culture](/wiki/European_Capital_of_Culture), making the city the world's fifth most popular tourist destination.<ref name=Mastercard>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The city's biggest attraction is its historic center, partially listed as a UNESCO [World Heritage Site](/wiki/World_Heritage_Site), and its cultural and entertainment hub can be found across the city's natural harbor, the [Golden Horn](/wiki/Golden_Horn), in the [Beyoğlu](/wiki/Beyoğlu) district. Considered a [global city](/wiki/Global_city),[[9]](#cite_note-9) Istanbul has one of the fastest-growing metropolitan economies in the world.[[10]](#cite_note-10) It hosts the headquarters of many Turkish companies and media outlets and accounts for more than a quarter of the country's [gross domestic product](/wiki/Gross_domestic_product).[[11]](#cite_note-11) Hoping to capitalize on its revitalization and rapid expansion, Istanbul has bid for the [Summer Olympics](/wiki/Summer_Olympic_Games) five times in twenty years.[[12]](#cite_note-12)

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## Toponymy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [left|thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Rome-Capitole-StatueConstantin.jpg)[Constantine I](/wiki/Constantine_I) The first known name of the city is *Byzantium* ([Template:Lang-el](/wiki/Template:Lang-el), *Byzántion*), the name given to it at its foundation by [Megarean](/wiki/Megara) colonists around 660 BCE.[[13]](#cite_note-13) The name is thought to be derived from a personal name, [Byzas](/wiki/Byzas). Ancient Greek tradition refers to a legendary king of that name as the leader of the Greek colonists. Modern scholars have also hypothesized that the name of Byzas was of local Thracian or Illyrian origin and hence predated the Megarean settlement.[[14]](#cite_note-14) After [Constantine the Great](/wiki/Constantine_the_Great) made it the new eastern capital of the [Roman Empire](/wiki/Roman_Empire) in 330 CE, the city became widely known as "Constantinopolis" ([Constantinople](/wiki/Constantinople)), which, as the Latinized form of "[Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang)" (*Konstantinoúpolis*), means the "City of Constantine".[[13]](#cite_note-13) He also attempted to promote the name "Nova Roma" and its Greek version "Νέα Ῥώμη" *Nea Romē* ([New Rome](/wiki/New_Rome)), but this did not enter widespread usage.[[15]](#cite_note-15) *Constantinople* remained the most common name for the city in the West until the establishment of the Turkish Republic, and *Kostantiniyye* ([Ottoman Turkish](/wiki/Ottoman_Turkish_language) [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang)) and *Be Makam-e Qonstantiniyyah al-Mahmiyyah* (meaning "the Protected Location of Constantinople") and *İstanbul* were the names used alternatively by the Ottomans during their rule.[[16]](#cite_note-16) The use of *Constantinople* to refer to the city during the Ottoman period (from the mid-15th century) is now considered politically incorrect, even if not historically inaccurate, by Turks.[[17]](#cite_note-17) By the 19th century, the city had acquired other names used by either foreigners or Turks. Europeans used *Constantinople* to refer to the whole of the city, but used the name [*Stamboul*](/wiki/Stamboul)—as the Turks also did—to describe the walled peninsula between the [Golden Horn](/wiki/Golden_Horn) and the Sea of Marmara.[[17]](#cite_note-17) *Pera* (from the Greek word for "across") was used to describe the area between the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus, but Turks also used the name [*Beyoğlu*](/wiki/Beyoğlu) (today the official name for one of the city's [constituent districts](/wiki/List_of_districts_of_Istanbul)).[[18]](#cite_note-18) *Islambol* (meaning either "City of Islam" or "Full of Islam") was sometimes colloquially used to refer to the city, and was even engraved on some Ottoman coins,[[19]](#cite_note-19) but the belief that it was the precursor to the present name, *İstanbul*, is belied by the fact that the latter existed well before the former and even predates the [Ottoman conquest of the city](/wiki/Fall_of_Constantinople).[[13]](#cite_note-13) The name *İstanbul* ([Template:IPA-tr](/wiki/Template:IPA-tr), colloquially [Template:IPA-tr](/wiki/Template:IPA-tr)) is commonly held to derive from the [Medieval Greek](/wiki/Medieval_Greek) phrase [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang) (pronounced [Template:IPA-el](/wiki/Template:IPA-el)), which means "to the city"[[20]](#cite_note-20) and is how Constantinople was referred to by the local Greeks. This reflected its status as the only major city in the vicinity. The importance of Constantinople in the Ottoman world was also reflected by its Ottoman name 'Der Saadet' meaning the 'gate to Prosperity' in Ottoman. An alternative view is that the name evolved directly from the name *Constantinople*, with the first and third syllables dropped.[[13]](#cite_note-13) A Turkish folk etymology traces the name to Islam bol "plenty of Islam"[[21]](#cite_note-21) because the city was called *Islambol* ("plenty of Islam") or *Islambul* ("find Islam") as the capital of the Islamic Ottoman Empire. It is first attested shortly after the conquest, and its invention was ascribed by some contemporary writers to Sultan [Mehmed II](/wiki/Mehmed_II) himself.[[22]](#cite_note-22) Some Ottoman sources of the 17th century, such as [Evliya Çelebi](/wiki/Evliya_Çelebi), describe it as the common Turkish name of the time; between the late 17th and late 18th centuries, it was also in official use. The first use of the word "Islambol" on coinage was in 1703 (1115 AH) during the reign of Sultan [Ahmed III](/wiki/Ahmed_III). Nevertheless, the use of the name *Constantinople* remained common in English into the 20th century, *Istanbul* became common only after Turkey adapted the Latin alphabet in 1928 and urged other countries to use the city's Turkish name.[[23]](#cite_note-23)[[24]](#cite_note-24) In modern [Turkish](/wiki/Turkish_language), the name is written as *İstanbul*, with a dotted İ, as the [Turkish alphabet](/wiki/Turkish_alphabet) distinguishes between a [dotted and dotless I](/wiki/Dotted_and_dotless_I). In English the stress is on the last syllable (*bul*), but in Turkish it is on the second syllable (*tan*).[[25]](#cite_note-25) A person from the city is an *İstanbullu* (plural: *İstanbullular*), although *Istanbulite* is used in English.[[26]](#cite_note-26)

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|Remains of a Byzantine column found at](/wiki/File:Second_Court_Topkapi_2007_80.JPG) [Byzantium's](/wiki/Byzantium) [acropolis](/wiki/Acropolis), located today within the [Topkapı Palace](/wiki/Topkapı_Palace) complex.|alt=A stout cylindrical column in a courtyard in front of palatial arches of Islamic style [Neolithic](/wiki/Neolithic) artifacts, uncovered by archeologists at the beginning of the 21st century, indicate that Istanbul's historic peninsula was settled as far back as the 7th millennium BCE.[[27]](#cite_note-27) That early settlement, important in the spread of the [Neolithic Revolution](/wiki/Neolithic_Revolution) from the Near East to Europe, lasted for almost a millennium before being inundated by rising water levels.[[28]](#cite_note-28)[[29]](#cite_note-29)[[30]](#cite_note-30)[[31]](#cite_note-31) The first human settlement on the Asian side, the Fikirtepe mound, is from the [Copper Age](/wiki/Copper_Age) period, with artifacts dating from 5500 to 3500 BCE,[[32]](#cite_note-32) On the European side, near the point of the peninsula ([Sarayburnu](/wiki/Sarayburnu)), there was a Thracian settlement during the early 1st millennium BCE. Modern authors have linked it to the Thracian toponym *Lygos*,[[33]](#cite_note-33) mentioned by [Pliny the Elder](/wiki/Pliny_the_Elder) as an earlier name for the site of Byzantium.[[34]](#cite_note-34) The history of the city proper begins around 660 BCE,[[35]](#cite_note-35)[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) when Greek settlers from [Megara](/wiki/Megara) established [Byzantium](/wiki/Byzantium) on the European side of the Bosphorus. The settlers built an [acropolis](/wiki/Acropolis) adjacent to the Golden Horn on the site of the early Thracian settlements, fueling the nascent city's economy.[[36]](#cite_note-36) The city experienced a brief period of [Persian](/wiki/Achaemenid_Empire) rule at the turn of the 5th century BCE, but the Greeks recaptured it during the [Greco-Persian Wars](/wiki/Greco-Persian_Wars).[[37]](#cite_note-37) Byzantium then continued as part of the [Athenian League](/wiki/Delian_League) and its successor, the [Second Athenian Empire](/wiki/Second_Athenian_Empire), before gaining independence in 355 BCE.[[38]](#cite_note-38) Long allied with the Romans, Byzantium officially became a part of the [Roman Empire](/wiki/Roman_Empire) in 73 CE.[[39]](#cite_note-39) Byzantium's decision to side with the [Roman usurper](/wiki/Roman_usurper) [Pescennius Niger](/wiki/Pescennius_Niger) against Emperor [Septimius Severus](/wiki/Septimius_Severus) cost it dearly; by the time it surrendered at the end of 195 CE, two years of siege had left the city devastated.[[40]](#cite_note-40) Five years later, Severus began to rebuild Byzantium, and the city regained—and, by some accounts, surpassed—its previous prosperity.[[41]](#cite_note-41)

### Rise and fall of Constantinople[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [left|upright|thumb|Created in 1422 by](/wiki/File:Map_of_Constantinople_(1422)_by_Florentine_cartographer_Cristoforo_Buondelmonte.jpg) [Cristoforo Buondelmonti](/wiki/Cristoforo_Buondelmonti), this is the oldest surviving map of Constantinople.|alt=A crudely drawn map depicting a walled city on a peninsula with a park, a network of roads, and a scattering of buildings

[Constantine the Great](/wiki/Constantine_the_Great) effectively became the emperor of the whole of the Roman Empire in September 324.[[42]](#cite_note-42) Two months later, he laid out the plans for a new, Christian city to replace Byzantium. As the eastern capital of the empire, the city was named [*Nea Roma*](/wiki/New_Rome); most called it Constantinople, a name that persisted into the 20th century.[[43]](#cite_note-43) On 11 May 330, Constantinople was proclaimed the capital of an empire that became known as the [Byzantine Empire](/wiki/Byzantine_Empire) or Eastern Roman Empire.[[44]](#cite_note-44) The establishment of Constantinople served as one of Constantine's most lasting accomplishments, shifting Roman power eastward as the city became a center of Greek culture and Christianity.[[44]](#cite_note-44)[[45]](#cite_note-45) Numerous churches were built across the city, including the [Hagia Sophia](/wiki/Hagia_Sophia) which was built during the reign of [Justinian the Great](/wiki/Justinian_I) and remained the world's largest cathedral for a thousand years.[[46]](#cite_note-46) Constantine also undertook a major renovation and expansion of the [Hippodrome of Constantinople](/wiki/Hippodrome_of_Constantinople); accommodating tens of thousands of spectators, the hippodrome became central to civic life and, in the 5th and 6th centuries, the epicenter of episodes of unrest, including the [Nika riots](/wiki/Nika_riots).[[47]](#cite_note-47)[[48]](#cite_note-48) Constantinople's location also ensured its existence would stand the test of time; for many centuries, its walls and seafront protected Europe against invaders from the east and the advance of Islam.[[45]](#cite_note-45) During most of the [Middle Ages](/wiki/Middle_Ages), the latter part of the Byzantine era, Constantinople was the largest and wealthiest city on the European continent and at times the largest in the world.[[49]](#cite_note-49)[[50]](#cite_note-50) Constantinople began to decline continuously after the end of the reign of Basil II in 1025. The final blow was given by the conquest of Villardouin and Enrico Dandolo in 1204 during the [Fourth Crusade](/wiki/Fourth_Crusade), where the City was sacked and pillaged.[[51]](#cite_note-51) The city subsequently became the center of the [Latin Empire](/wiki/Latin_Empire), created by Catholic crusaders to replace the Orthodox Byzantine Empire.[[52]](#cite_note-52) Aghia Sophia was converted to a catholic church in 1204. Byzantine Empire was restored, albeit weakened, in 1261.[[53]](#cite_note-53) Constantinople's churches, defenses, and basic services were in disrepair,[[54]](#cite_note-54) and its population had dwindled to a hundred thousand from half a million during the 8th century.[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) After the reconquest of 1261, however some of the City's monuments were restored, like the 2 Deisis mosaics in Aghia Sofia and Kariye were created.

Various economic and military policies instituted by [Andronikos II](/wiki/Andronikos_II_Palaiologos), such as the reduction of military forces, weakened the empire and left it vulnerable to attack.[[55]](#cite_note-55) In the mid-14th-century, the [Ottoman Turks](/wiki/Ottoman_Turks) began a strategy of gradually taking smaller towns and cities, cutting off Constantinople's supply routes and strangling it slowly.[[56]](#cite_note-56) On 29 May 1453, after an eight-week siege (during which the last Roman emperor, [Constantine XI](/wiki/Constantine_XI_Palaiologos), was killed), [Sultan](/wiki/Sultan) [Mehmed II](/wiki/Mehmed_II) "the Conqueror" [captured Constantinople](/wiki/Fall_of_Constantinople) and declared it the new capital of the [Ottoman Empire](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire). Hours later, the sultan rode to the Hagia Sophia and summoned an imam to proclaim the [Islamic creed](/wiki/Shahada), converting the grand cathedral into an imperial mosque due to the city's refusal to surrender peacefully.[[57]](#cite_note-57) Mehmed declared himself as the new "Kaysar-i Rûm" (the [Ottoman Turkish](/wiki/Ottoman_Turkish_language) equivalent of [Caesar](/wiki/Caesar_(title)) of Rome) and the Ottoman state was reorganized into an empire.[[58]](#cite_note-58)

### Ottoman and Turkish era[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Multiple image](/wiki/Template:Multiple_image)

Following the conquest of Constantinople, Mehmed II immediately set out to revitalize the city, by then also known as Istanbul. He urged the return of those who had fled the city during the siege, and resettled Muslims, Jews, and Christians from other parts of Anatolia. He demanded that five thousand households needed to be transferred to Constantinople by September.[[59]](#cite_note-59) From all over the Islamic empire, prisoners of war and deported people were sent to the city: these people were called "Sürgün" in Turkish ([Template:Lang-gr](/wiki/Template:Lang-gr)).[[60]](#cite_note-60) However, many people escaped again from the city, and there were several outbreaks of plague, so that in 1459 Mehmet allowed the deported Greeks to come back to the city.[[61]](#cite_note-61) He also invited people from all over Europe to his capital, creating a cosmopolitan society that persisted through much of the Ottoman period.[[62]](#cite_note-62) Plague continued, however, to be essentially endemic in Istanbul for the rest of the century, as it had been from 1520, with a few years of respite between 1529 and 1533, 1549 and 1552, and from 1567 to 1570; epidemics originating in the West and in the Hejaz and southern Russia.[[63]](#cite_note-63) Population growth in Anatolia, however, allowed Istanbul to replace its losses and maintain its population of around 500,000 inhabitants down to 1800. Mehmed II also repaired the city's damaged infrastructure, including the whole [water system](/wiki/Valens_Aqueduct#Ottoman_period), began to build the [Grand Bazaar](/wiki/Grand_Bazaar,_Istanbul), and constructed [Topkapı Palace](/wiki/Topkapı_Palace), the sultan's official residence.[[64]](#cite_note-64) With the transfer of the capital from [Edirne](/wiki/Edirne) (formerly Adrianople) to Constantinople, the new state was declared as the successor and continuation of the Roman Empire.[[65]](#cite_note-65) [thumb|left|A painting of Ottoman era Istanbul by](/wiki/File:Allom_-_Constantinople.jpg) [Thomas Allom](/wiki/Thomas_Allom) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Galata_Bridge_in_19th_Century.jpg)[Galata Bridge](/wiki/Galata_Bridge) in the 19th century

The Ottomans quickly transformed the city from a bastion of Christianity to a symbol of [Islamic culture](/wiki/Islamic_culture). [Religious foundations](/wiki/Waqf) were established to fund the construction of ornate [imperial mosques](/wiki/Mosques_commissioned_by_the_Ottoman_dynasty), often adjoined by schools, hospitals, and public baths.[[64]](#cite_note-64) The [Ottoman Dynasty](/wiki/Ottoman_Dynasty) claimed the status of [caliphate](/wiki/Caliphate) in 1517, with Istanbul remaining the capital of this [last caliphate](/wiki/Ottoman_Caliphate) for four centuries.[[5]](#cite_note-5) [Suleiman the Magnificent's](/wiki/Suleiman_the_Magnificent) reign from 1520 to 1566 was a period of especially great artistic and architectural achievement; chief architect [Mimar Sinan](/wiki/Mimar_Sinan) designed several iconic buildings in the city, while Ottoman arts of [ceramics](/wiki/İznik_pottery), [stained glass](/wiki/Stained_glass), [calligraphy](/wiki/Islamic_calligraphy), and [miniature](/wiki/Ottoman_miniature) flourished.[[66]](#cite_note-66) The population of Istanbul was 570,000 by the end of the 18th century.[[67]](#cite_note-67) A period of rebellion at the start of the 19th century led to the rise of the progressive Sultan [Mahmud II](/wiki/Mahmud_II) and eventually to the [*Tanzimat*](/wiki/Tanzimat) period, which produced political reforms and allowed new technology to be introduced to the city.[[68]](#cite_note-68) Bridges across the [Golden Horn](/wiki/Golden_Horn) were constructed during this period,[[69]](#cite_note-69) and Istanbul was connected to the rest of the European railway network in the 1880s.[[70]](#cite_note-70) Modern facilities, such as a water supply network, electricity, telephones, and trams, were gradually introduced to Istanbul over the following decades, although later than to other European cities.[[71]](#cite_note-71) The modernization efforts were not enough to forestall the [decline of the Ottoman Empire](/wiki/Decline_of_the_Ottoman_Empire).

In the early 20th century, the [Young Turk Revolution](/wiki/Young_Turk_Revolution) deposed Sultan [Abdul Hamid II](/wiki/Abdul_Hamid_II) and a series of wars plagued the ailing empire's capital.[[72]](#cite_note-72) The last of these, [World War I](/wiki/World_War_I), resulted in the British, French, and Italian [occupation of Constantinople](/wiki/Occupation_of_Constantinople). The [Armenian](/wiki/Armenians) population of the city was also affected by the [deportation of Armenian intellectuals on 24 April 1915](/wiki/Deportation_of_Armenian_intellectuals_on_24_April_1915), in which leaders of the Armenian community were arrested and mostly killed as part of the [Armenian Genocide](/wiki/Armenian_Genocide). To commemorate the victims of the Armenian Genocide, 24 April has now become the day of remembrance.[[73]](#cite_note-73) The final Ottoman sultan, [Mehmed VI](/wiki/Mehmed_VI), was exiled in November 1922; the following year, the occupation of Constantinople ended with the signing of the [Treaty of Lausanne](/wiki/Treaty_of_Lausanne) and the recognition of the Republic of Turkey, declared by [Mustafa Kemal Atatürk](/wiki/Mustafa_Kemal_Atatürk).[[74]](#cite_note-74) In the early years of the republic, Istanbul was overlooked in favor of [Ankara](/wiki/Ankara), selected as Turkey's capital to distance the new, secular country from its Ottoman history.[[75]](#cite_note-75) From the late 1940s and early 1950s, Istanbul underwent great structural change, as new public squares, boulevards, and avenues were constructed throughout the city, sometimes at the expense of historical buildings.[[76]](#cite_note-76) The population of Istanbul began to rapidly increase in the 1970s, as people from Anatolia migrated to the city to find employment in the many new factories that were built on the outskirts of the sprawling metropolis. This sudden, sharp rise in the city's population caused a large demand for housing, and many previously outlying villages and forests became engulfed into the [metropolitan area](/wiki/Metropolitan_area) of Istanbul.[[77]](#cite_note-77) [Template:Wide image](/wiki/Template:Wide_image)

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further)

[thumb|left|](/wiki/File:West-turkey-plates-cropped.gif)[Faults](/wiki/Fault_(geology)) in western Turkey are concentrated just southwest of Istanbul, passing under the [Sea of Marmara](/wiki/Sea_of_Marmara) and the [Aegean Sea](/wiki/Aegean_Sea).|alt=A high concentration of fault lines in northwestern Turkey, where the Eurasian and African plates meet; a few faults and ridges also appear under the Mediterranean [thumb|right|Satellite view of Istanbul and the](/wiki/File:Istambul_and_Bosporus_big.jpg) [Bosphorus](/wiki/Bosphorus) [strait](/wiki/Strait)|alt=Satellite image showing a thin piece of land, densely populated on the south, bisected by a waterway [thumb|right|Topography of Istanbul](/wiki/File:Istanbul_topographic_map.jpg)

Istanbul is located in north-western [Turkey](/wiki/Turkey) within the [Marmara Region](/wiki/Marmara_Region) on a total area of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) The [Bosphorus](/wiki/Bosphorus), which connects the [Sea of Marmara](/wiki/Sea_of_Marmara) to the [Black Sea](/wiki/Black_Sea), divides the city into a European, [Thracian](/wiki/Thrace) side—comprising the historic and economic centers—and an Asian, [Anatolian](/wiki/Anatolia) side. The city is further divided by the [Golden Horn](/wiki/Golden_Horn), a natural harbor bounding the peninsula where the former Byzantium and Constantinople were founded. The confluence of the Sea of Marmara, the Bosphorus, and the Golden Horn at the heart of present-day Istanbul has deterred attacking forces for thousands of years and remains a prominent feature of the city's landscape.[[45]](#cite_note-45) Following [the model of Rome](/wiki/Seven_hills_of_Rome), the historic peninsula is said to be characterized by [seven hills](/wiki/Seven_hills_of_Istanbul), each topped by imperial mosques. The easternmost of these hills is the site of Topkapı Palace on the [Sarayburnu](/wiki/Sarayburnu).[[78]](#cite_note-78) Rising from the opposite side of the Golden Horn is another, conical hill, where the modern Beyoğlu district is situated. Because of the topography, buildings in Beyoğlu were once constructed with the help of terraced retaining walls, and roads were laid out in the form of steps.[[79]](#cite_note-79) [Üsküdar](/wiki/Üsküdar) on the Asian side exhibits similarly hilly characteristics, with the terrain gradually extending down to the Bosphorus coast, but the landscape in Şemsipaşa and Ayazma is more abrupt, akin to a [promontory](/wiki/Promontory). The highest point in Istanbul is [Çamlıca Hill](/wiki/Camlica_Hill), with an altitude of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[[79]](#cite_note-79) The northern half of Istanbul has a higher mean elevation compared to the south coast, with locations surpassing [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), and some coasts with steep cliffs resembling [fjords](/wiki/Fjord), especially around the northern end of the Bosporus, where it opens up to the Black Sea.

Istanbul is situated near the [North Anatolian Fault](/wiki/North_Anatolian_Fault), close to the boundary between the [African](/wiki/African_Plate) and [Eurasian](/wiki/Eurasian_Plate) Plates. This fault zone, which runs from northern Anatolia to the Sea of Marmara, has been responsible for several deadly earthquakes throughout the city's history. Among the most devastating of these seismic events was the [1509 earthquake](/wiki/1509_Istanbul_earthquake), which caused a tsunami that broke over the walls of the city and killed more than 10,000 people. More recently, in 1999, [an earthquake](/wiki/1999_İzmit_earthquake) with its epicenter in nearby [İzmit](/wiki/İzmit) left 18,000 people dead, including 1,000 people in Istanbul's suburbs. The people of Istanbul remain concerned that an even more catastrophic seismic event may be in the city's near future, as thousands of structures recently built to accommodate Istanbul's rapidly increasing population may not have been constructed properly.[[80]](#cite_note-80) Seismologists say the risk of a 7.6-[magnitude](/wiki/Moment_magnitude_scale) or greater earthquake striking Istanbul by 2030 is more than [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap).[[81]](#cite_note-81)[[82]](#cite_note-82)

### Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[thumb|left|Fog, seen here shrouding](/wiki/File:Fog-over-istanbul-skyscrapers.jpg) [Levent](/wiki/Levent), frequently forms in the morning.|alt=Skyscrapers, both near and far, soar above a dense layer of fog that keeps the ground hidden from view. [thumb|right|Contrasting annual](/wiki/File:Istanbul-precipitation.png) [precipitation](/wiki/Precipitation) differences in Istanbul, creating multiple microclimates. [thumb|right|Microclimates of Istanbul according to](/wiki/File:Istanbul_Koppen_Map.png) [Köppen–Geiger classification system](/wiki/Köppen_climate_classification) In the [Köppen–Geiger classification system](/wiki/Köppen_climate_classification), Istanbul has a borderline [Mediterranean climate](/wiki/Mediterranean_climate) (*Csa*), [humid subtropical climate](/wiki/Humid_subtropical_climate) (*Cfa*) and [oceanic climate](/wiki/Oceanic_climate) (*Cfb*), due to its location in a transitional climatic zone. Since precipitation in summer months, ranges from [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), depending on location, the city cannot be classified as solely Mediterranean or humid subtropical.[[83]](#cite_note-83)[[84]](#cite_note-84)[[85]](#cite_note-85) Due to its size, diverse topography, maritime location and most importantly having a coastline to two different bodies of water to the north and south, Istanbul exhibits [microclimates](/wiki/Microclimate). The northern half of the city, as well as the Bosporus coastline, express characteristics of [oceanic](/wiki/Oceanic_climate) and [humid subtropical climates](/wiki/Humid_subtropical_climate), because of humidity from the Black Sea and the relatively high concentration of vegetation. The climate in the populated areas of the city to the south, located on the Sea of Marmara, is warmer, drier and less affected by humidity.[[86]](#cite_note-86) The annual precipitation in the northern half can be twice as much (Bahçeköy, 1166.6 mm), than it is in the southern, Marmara coast (Florya 635.0 mm).[[87]](#cite_note-87) There is a significant difference between annual mean temperatures on the north and south coasts as well, Bahçeköy [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), Kartal [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[[88]](#cite_note-88) Parts of the province, that are away from both seas exhibit considerable continental influences, with much more pronounced night-day and summer-winter temperature differences. In winter some parts of the province average freezing or below at night.

Istanbul's persistently high [humidity](/wiki/Humidity) reaches [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) most mornings.[[89]](#cite_note-89) Because of this, fog is very common, although more so in northern parts of the city and away from the city center.[[86]](#cite_note-86) Dense fog disrupts transportation in the region, including on the Bosphorus, and is common during the autumn and winter months when the humidity remains high into the afternoon.[[90]](#cite_note-90)[[91]](#cite_note-91)[[92]](#cite_note-92) The humid conditions and the fog tend to dissipate by midday during the summer months, but the lingering humidity exacerbates the moderately high summer temperatures.[[89]](#cite_note-89)[[93]](#cite_note-93) During these summer months, high temperatures average around [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) and rainfall is uncommon; there are only about fifteen days with measurable precipitation between June and August.[[94]](#cite_note-94) The summer months also have the highest concentration of thunderstorms.[[95]](#cite_note-95) Winter is colder in Istanbul than in most other cities around the [Mediterranean Basin](/wiki/Mediterranean_Basin), with low temperatures averaging [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[[94]](#cite_note-94) [Lake-effect snow](/wiki/Lake-effect_snow) from the Black Sea is common, although difficult to forecast, with the potential to be heavy and—as with the fog—disruptive to the city's infrastructure.[[96]](#cite_note-96) Spring and autumn are mild, but often wet and unpredictable; chilly winds from the northwest and warm gusts from the south—sometimes in the same day—tend to cause fluctuations in temperature.[[93]](#cite_note-93)[[97]](#cite_note-97) Overall, Istanbul has an annual average of [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) with significant precipitation, which amounts to [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) per year.[[94]](#cite_note-94)[[98]](#cite_note-98) The highest and lowest temperatures ever recorded in the city center on the Marmara coast are [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) and [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). The greatest rainfall recorded in a day is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), and the highest recorded snow cover is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[[99]](#cite_note-99)[[100]](#cite_note-100) [Template:Weather box](/wiki/Template:Weather_box)

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[Template:Weather box](/wiki/Template:Weather_box)

## Cityscape[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

[Template:Infobox World Heritage Site](/wiki/Template:Infobox_World_Heritage_Site)

The [Fatih](/wiki/Fatih) district corresponds to what was, until the Ottoman conquest, the whole of the city, across from the [Genoese](/wiki/Republic_of_Genoa) citadel of [Galata](/wiki/Galata). Those Genoese fortifications were largely demolished in the 19th century, leaving only the [Galata Tower](/wiki/Galata_Tower), to make way for northward expansion of the city.[[101]](#cite_note-101) Galata is now part of the [Beyoğlu](/wiki/Beyoğlu) district, which forms Istanbul's commercial and entertainment center on [Taksim Square](/wiki/Taksim_Square).[[102]](#cite_note-102) [Dolmabahçe Palace](/wiki/Dolmabahçe_Palace), the seat of government during the late Ottoman period, is located in [Beşiktaş](/wiki/Beşiktaş), just south of Beyoğlu, across from [BJK İnönü Stadium](/wiki/BJK_İnönü_Stadium), home to [Turkey's oldest sports club](/wiki/Beşiktaş_J.K.). The main administration building of the Ottoman Empire was the "[Sublime Porte](/wiki/Sublime_Porte)" or BaabiAli a huge building in the old City.[[103]](#cite_note-103) The former village of [Ortaköy](/wiki/Ortaköy) is situated within Beşiktaş and gives its name to the [Ortaköy Mosque](/wiki/Ortaköy_Mosque), along the Bosphorus near the First Bosphorus Bridge. Lining the shores of the Bosphorus north of there are [*yalıs*](/wiki/Yalı), luxurious chalet mansions originally built by 19th-century aristocrats and elites as summer homes.[[104]](#cite_note-104) Farther inland, outside the city's inner ring road, are [Levent](/wiki/Levent) and [Maslak](/wiki/Maslak), Istanbul's primary economic centers.[[105]](#cite_note-105) [thumb|left|Originally outside the city,](/wiki/File:Yağlıkçı_Hacı_Reşit_Bey_and_Prenses_Rukiye_Yalısı_on_the_Bosphorus,_Istanbul,_Turkey_001.jpg) [*yalı*](/wiki/Yalı) residences along the Bosphorus are now homes in some of Istanbul's elite neighborhoods.|alt=Two- and three-story colored houses with docks and balconies, built directly on the edge of the water During the Ottoman period, [Üsküdar](/wiki/Üsküdar) and [Kadıköy](/wiki/Kadıköy) were outside the scope of urban Istanbul, serving as tranquil outposts with seaside *yalıs* and gardens. During the second half of the 20th century, the Asian side experienced major urban growth; the late development of this part of the city led to better infrastructure and tidier urban planning when compared with most other residential areas in the city.[[3]](#cite_note-3) Much of the Asian side of the Bosphorus functions as a suburb of the economic and commercial centers in European Istanbul, accounting for a third of the city's population but only a quarter of its employment.[[3]](#cite_note-3) As a result of Istanbul's exponential growth during the 20th century, a significant portion of the city is composed of [*gecekondus*](/wiki/Gecekondu) (literally "built overnight"), referring to illegally constructed squatter buildings.[[106]](#cite_note-106) At present, some *gecekondu* areas are being gradually demolished and replaced by modern mass-housing compounds.[[107]](#cite_note-107) Moreover, large scale [gentrification](/wiki/Gentrification) and [urban renewal](/wiki/Urban_renewal) projects have been taking place,[[108]](#cite_note-108) such as the one in [Tarlabaşı](/wiki/Tarlabaşı);[[109]](#cite_note-109) some of these projects, like the one in [Sulukule](/wiki/Sulukule), have faced criticism.[[110]](#cite_note-110) The Turkish government also has ambitious plans for an expansion of the city west and northwards on the European side in conjunction with plans for a [third airport](/wiki/Istanbul_New_Airport) and the city's [Olympic bid](/wiki/Istanbul_bid_for_the_2020_Summer_Olympics); the new parts of the city will include four different settlements with specified urban functions, housing 1.5 million people.[[111]](#cite_note-111) Istanbul does not have a primary urban park, but it does have several green areas. [Gülhane Park](/wiki/Gülhane_Park) and [Yıldız Park](/wiki/Yıldız_Park) were originally included within the grounds of two of Istanbul's palaces—Topkapı Palace and Yıldız Palace—but they were repurposed as public parks in the early decades of the Turkish Republic.[[112]](#cite_note-112) Another park, [Fethi Paşa Korusu](/wiki/Fethi_Paşa_Korusu), is situated on a hillside adjacent to the Bosphorus Bridge in Anatolia, opposite Yıldız Palace. Along the European side, and closer to the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge, is [Emirgan Park](/wiki/Emirgan_Park); originally a private estate belonging to Ottoman leaders, the [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) park is known for its diversity of plants and an annual tulip festival held since 2005.[[113]](#cite_note-113) Popular during the summer among Istanbulites is [Belgrad Forest](/wiki/Belgrad_Forest), spreading across [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) at the northern edge of the city. The forest originally supplied water to the city and remnants of reservoirs used during Byzantine and Ottoman times survive.[[114]](#cite_note-114)[[115]](#cite_note-115) [Template:Wide image](/wiki/Template:Wide_image)

### Architecture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|Originally a church, later a mosque, and today (since 1935) a museum, the 6th century](/wiki/File:Turkey-3019_-_Hagia_Sophia_(2216460729).jpg) [Hagia Sophia](/wiki/Hagia_Sophia) (532–537) in Istanbul ([Constantinople](/wiki/Constantinople)) built by the [Byzantine](/wiki/Byzantine_Empire) emperor [Justinian the Great](/wiki/Justinian_I) was the largest cathedral ever constructed in the world for nearly a thousand years, until the completion of the [Seville Cathedral](/wiki/Seville_Cathedral) (1507) in [Spain](/wiki/Spain).|alt=A reddish building topped by a large dome and surrounded by smaller domes and four towers [Template:Multiple image](/wiki/Template:Multiple_image)

Istanbul is primarily known for its Byzantine and Ottoman architecture, but its buildings reflect the various peoples and empires that have previously ruled the city. Examples of Genoese and Roman architecture remain visible in Istanbul alongside their Ottoman counterparts. Nothing of the [architecture of the classical Greek period](/wiki/Ancient_Greek_architecture) has survived, but [Roman architecture](/wiki/Ancient_Roman_architecture) has proved to be more durable. [The obelisk](/wiki/Obelisk_of_Theodosius) erected by [Theodosius](/wiki/Theodosius_I) in the [Hippodrome of Constantinople](/wiki/Hippodrome_of_Constantinople) is still visible in Sultanahmet Square, and a section of the [Valens Aqueduct](/wiki/Valens_Aqueduct), constructed in the late 4th century, stands relatively intact at the western edge of the Fatih district.[[116]](#cite_note-116) The [Column of Constantine](/wiki/Column_of_Constantine), erected in 330 CE to mark the new Roman capital, stands not far from the Hippodrome.[[116]](#cite_note-116) Early [Byzantine architecture](/wiki/Byzantine_architecture) followed the classical Roman model of domes and arches, but improved upon these elements, as in the [Church of the Saints Sergius and Bacchus](/wiki/Little_Hagia_Sophia). The oldest surviving Byzantine church in Istanbul—albeit in ruins—is the [Monastery of Stoudios](/wiki/Monastery_of_Stoudios) (later converted into the Imrahor Mosque), which was built in 454.[[117]](#cite_note-117) After the recapture of Constantinople in 1261, the Byzantines enlarged two of the most important churches extant, [Chora Church](/wiki/Chora_Church) and [Pammakaristos Church](/wiki/Pammakaristos_Church). The pinnacle of Byzantine architecture, and one of Istanbul's most iconic structures, is the [Hagia Sophia](/wiki/Hagia_Sophia). Topped by a dome [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) in diameter,[[118]](#cite_note-118) the Hagia Sophia stood as the world's largest cathedral for centuries, and was later converted into a mosque and, as it stands now, a museum.[[46]](#cite_note-46) Among the oldest surviving examples of [Ottoman architecture](/wiki/Ottoman_architecture) in Istanbul are the [Anadoluhisarı](/wiki/Anadoluhisarı) and [Rumelihisarı](/wiki/Rumelihisarı) fortresses, which assisted the Ottomans during their siege of the city.[[119]](#cite_note-119) Over the next four centuries, the Ottomans made an indelible impression on the skyline of Istanbul, building towering mosques and ornate palaces. The largest palace, [Topkapı](/wiki/Topkapı_Palace), includes a diverse array of architectural styles, from [Baroque](/wiki/Baroque_architecture) inside the [Harem](/wiki/Imperial_Harem), to its [Neoclassical](/wiki/Neoclassical_architecture) style [Enderûn Library](/wiki/Enderun_School).[[120]](#cite_note-120) The [imperial mosques](/wiki/Mosques_commissioned_by_the_Ottoman_dynasty) include [Fatih Mosque](/wiki/Fatih_Mosque), [Bayezid Mosque](/wiki/Bayezid_Mosque), [Yavuz Selim Mosque](/wiki/Yavuz_Selim_Mosque), [Süleymaniye Mosque](/wiki/Süleymaniye_Mosque), [Sultan Ahmed Mosque](/wiki/Sultan_Ahmed_Mosque) (the Blue Mosque), and [Yeni Mosque](/wiki/New_Mosque_(Istanbul)), all of which were built at the peak of the Ottoman Empire, in the 16th and 17th centuries. In the following centuries, and especially after the [*Tanzimat*](/wiki/Tanzimat) reforms, Ottoman architecture was supplanted by European styles.[[121]](#cite_note-121) An example of which is the imperial [Nuruosmaniye Mosque](/wiki/Nuruosmaniye_Mosque). Areas around [İstiklal Avenue](/wiki/İstiklal_Avenue) were filled with grand European embassies and rows of buildings in Neoclassical, [Renaissance Revival](/wiki/Renaissance_Revival_architecture) and [Art Nouveau](/wiki/Art_Nouveau) styles, which went on to influence the architecture of a variety of structures in Beyoğlu—including churches, stores, and theaters—and official buildings such as [Dolmabahçe Palace](/wiki/Dolmabahçe_Palace).[[122]](#cite_note-122)

## Administration[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [right|thumb|340px|Istanbul's districts extend far from the city center, along the full length of the Bosphorus (with the Black Sea at the top and the Sea of Marmara at the bottom of the map).|alt=A map depicting districts, squeezed between two bodies of water; farther districts are very large compared to those clustered in the center.](/wiki/File:Istanbul_location_districts.svg)

Since 2004, the municipal boundaries of Istanbul have been coincident with the boundaries of its province.[[123]](#cite_note-123) The city, considered capital of [Istanbul Province](/wiki/Istanbul_Province), is administered by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (MMI), which oversees the [39 districts](/wiki/List_of_districts_of_Istanbul) of the city-province.[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn)

The current city structure can be traced back to the *Tanzimat* period of reform in the 19th century, before which [Islamic judges](/wiki/Qadi) and imams led the city under the auspices of the [Grand Vizier](/wiki/Grand_Vizier). Following the model of French cities, this religious system was replaced by a mayor and a citywide council composed of representatives of the confessional groups ([*millet*](/wiki/Millet_(Ottoman_Empire))) across Istanbul. Beyoğlu was the first area of the city to have its own director and council, with members instead being longtime residents of the neighborhood.[[124]](#cite_note-124) Laws enacted after the [Ottoman constitution of 1876](/wiki/Ottoman_constitution_of_1876) aimed to expand this structure across the city, imitating the twenty [arrondissements of Paris](/wiki/Arrondissements_of_Paris), but they were not fully implemented until 1908, when Istanbul was declared a province with nine constituent districts.[[125]](#cite_note-125)[[126]](#cite_note-126) This system continued beyond the founding of the Turkish Republic, with the province renamed a *belediye* (municipality), but the municipality was disbanded in 1957.[[127]](#cite_note-127)[[128]](#cite_note-128) [thumb|left|Statue of](/wiki/File:Adalar_5536.jpg) [Atatürk](/wiki/Mustafa_Kemal_Atatürk) in [Büyükada](/wiki/Büyükada), the largest of the [Prince Islands](/wiki/Prince_Islands) to the southeast of Istanbul, which collectively form the [Adalar (*Isles*)](/wiki/Adalar) district of [Istanbul Province](/wiki/Istanbul_Province).

Small settlements adjacent to major population centers in Turkey, including Istanbul, were merged into their respective primary cities during the early 1980s, resulting in metropolitan municipalities.[[129]](#cite_note-129)[[130]](#cite_note-130) The main decision-making body of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality is the Municipal Council, with members drawn from district councils.

The Municipal Council is responsible for citywide issues, including managing the budget, maintaining civic infrastructure, and overseeing museums and major cultural centers.[[131]](#cite_note-131) Since the government operates under a "powerful mayor, weak council" approach, the council's leader—the metropolitan mayor—has the authority to make swift decisions, often at the expense of transparency.[[132]](#cite_note-132) The Municipal Council is advised by the Metropolitan Executive Committee, although the Committee also has limited power to make decisions of its own.[[133]](#cite_note-133) All representatives on the Committee are appointed by the metropolitan mayor and the Council, with the mayor—or someone of his or her choosing—serving as head.[[133]](#cite_note-133)[[134]](#cite_note-134) [thumb|A view of](/wiki/File:Taksim_Square_2012.jpg) [Taksim Square](/wiki/Taksim_Square) with the [Monument of the Republic](/wiki/Monument_of_the_Republic) which was opened in 1928.

District councils are chiefly responsible for waste management and construction projects within their respective districts. They each maintain their own budgets, although the metropolitan mayor reserves the right to review district decisions. One-fifth of all district council members, including the district mayors, also represent their districts in the Municipal Council.[[131]](#cite_note-131) All members of the district councils and the Municipal Council, including the metropolitan mayor, are elected to five-year terms.[[135]](#cite_note-135) Representing the [Justice and Development Party](/wiki/Justice_and_Development_Party_(Turkey)), [Kadir Topbaş](/wiki/Kadir_Topbaş) has been [Mayor of Istanbul](/wiki/List_of_mayors_of_Istanbul) since March 2004.[[136]](#cite_note-136) With the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and Istanbul Province having equivalent jurisdictions, few responsibilities remain for the provincial government. Similar to the MMI, the Istanbul Special Provincial Administration has a governor, a democratically elected decision-making body—the Provincial Parliament—and an appointed Executive Committee. Mirroring the executive committee at the municipal level, the Provincial Executive Committee includes a secretary-general and leaders of departments that advise the Provincial Parliament.[[134]](#cite_note-134)[[137]](#cite_note-137) The Provincial Administration's duties are largely limited to the building and maintenance of schools, residences, government buildings, and roads, and the promotion of arts, culture, and nature conservation.[[138]](#cite_note-138) Hüseyin Avni Mutlu has been [Governor of Istanbul Province](/wiki/List_of_Governors_of_Istanbul_Province) since May 2010.[[139]](#cite_note-139)

## Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Istiklal_busy_afternoon.JPG)[İstiklal Avenue](/wiki/İstiklal_Avenue) is visited by nearly 3 million people on weekend days.

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| [Template:Resize](/wiki/Template:Resize) | |
| [Template:Historical populations](/wiki/Template:Historical_populations) | [Template:Historical populations](/wiki/Template:Historical_populations) |
| Sources: [Jan Lahmeyer 2004](http://www.populstat.info/Asia/turkeyt.htm),[Template:Harvnb](/wiki/Template:Harvnb), [Template:Harvnb](/wiki/Template:Harvnb),[Template:Harvnb](/wiki/Template:Harvnb)  Pre-Republic figures estimated[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) | |

[thumbnail|300px|Greek population in Istanbul and percentages of the city population (1844–1997). The](/wiki/File:Greeks_in_Istanbul_1844_1997.png) [1923 population exchange between Greece and Turkey](/wiki/Population_exchange_between_Greece_and_Turkey), the [1942 wealth tax](/wiki/Varlık_Vergisi), and the [Istanbul pogrom](/wiki/Istanbul_pogrom) in 1955 contributed to the sharp decrease of the Greek community. [thumb|Two maps comparing the size of urban areas in Istanbul (indicated as the grey zones) in 1975 and 2011.](/wiki/File:IstanbulGrowth1975and2011.png) Throughout most of its history, Istanbul has ranked among the largest cities in the world. By 500 CE, Constantinople had somewhere between 400,000 and 500,000 people, edging out its predecessor, Rome, for [world's largest city](/wiki/List_of_largest_cities_throughout_history).[[140]](#cite_note-140) Constantinople jostled with other major historical cities, such as [Baghdad](/wiki/Baghdad), [Chang'an](/wiki/Chang'an), [Kaifeng](/wiki/Kaifeng) and [Merv](/wiki/Merv) for the position of [world's most populous city](/wiki/List_of_largest_cities_throughout_history) until the 12th century. It never returned to being the world's largest, but remained [Europe's largest city](/wiki/List_of_largest_European_cities_in_history) from 1500 to 1750, when it was surpassed by [London](/wiki/London).[[141]](#cite_note-141) The [Turkish Statistical Institute](/wiki/Turkish_Statistical_Institute) estimates that the population of [Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality](/wiki/Istanbul_Province) was 14,377,019 at the end of 2014, hosting [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) of the country's population.[[142]](#cite_note-142) Other estimate that at the same time the population within city limits was 14,025,646.<ref name=citypolution.de/> Then about 97–98% of the inhabitants of the metropolitan municipality were within city limits, up from 89% in 2007[[143]](#cite_note-143) and 61% in 1980.[[144]](#cite_note-144) 64.7% of the residents live on the [European](/wiki/Europe) side and 35.3% on the [Asian](/wiki/Asia) side.<ref name=ist>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> While the city ranks as world's [7th](/wiki/List_of_cities_proper_by_population)-largest city proper, it drops the rank to the [24th](/wiki/List_of_agglomerations_by_population) place as an urban area and to the [18th](/wiki/List_of_metropolitan_areas_by_population) place as a metro area because the city limits are roughly equivalent to the agglomeration. Today, it forms one of the [largest urban agglomerations in Europe](/wiki/List_of_metropolitan_areas_in_Europe), alongside [Moscow](/wiki/Moscow).[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) The city's annual population growth of [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) ranks as the highest among the seventy-eight largest metropolises in the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](/wiki/Organisation_for_Economic_Co-operation_and_Development). The high population growth mirrors an urbanization trend across the country, as the second and third fastest-growing OECD metropolises are the Turkish cities of [İzmir](/wiki/İzmir) and Ankara.[[11]](#cite_note-11) Istanbul experienced especially rapid growth during the second half of the 20th century, with its population increasing tenfold between 1950 and 2000.[[7]](#cite_note-7) This growth in population comes, in part, from an expansion of city limits—particularly between 1980 and 1985, when the number of Istanbulites nearly doubled.[[127]](#cite_note-127) The remarkable growth was, and still is, largely fueled by migrants from eastern Turkey seeking employment and improved living conditions. The number of residents of Istanbul originating from seven northern and eastern provinces is greater than the populations of their entire respective provinces; [Sivas](/wiki/Sivas_Province) and [Kastamonu](/wiki/Kastamonu_Province) each account for more than half a million residents of Istanbul.[[8]](#cite_note-8) Istanbul's foreign population, by comparison, is very small, 42,228 residents in 2007.[[145]](#cite_note-145) Only [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) of the city's residents are originally from Istanbul.[[146]](#cite_note-146) The most densely populated areas tend to lie to the northwest, west, and southwest of the city center, on the European side; the most densely populated district on the Asian side is [Üsküdar](/wiki/Üsküdar).[[8]](#cite_note-8)

### Religious and ethnic groups[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [left|thumb|The jurisdiction zones of the](/wiki/File:Patrik-Rum.jpg) [Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople](/wiki/Ecumenical_Patriarchate_of_Constantinople) include Istanbul, several Turkish islands, and the parts of Greece which belonged to the [Ottoman Empire](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) until 1912. Istanbul has been a cosmopolitan city throughout much of its history, but it has become more homogenized since the end of the Ottoman Empire. Most of Turkey's religious and ethnic minorities remain concentrated in Istanbul. The vast majority of people across Turkey, and in Istanbul, are [Muslim](/wiki/Muslim), and more specifically members of the [Sunni](/wiki/Sunni_Islam) branch of [Islam](/wiki/Islam). Most Sunnis follow the [Hanafi](/wiki/Hanafi) school of Islamic thought, although approximately [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) of Sunnis follow the [Shafi'i](/wiki/Shafi'i) school. The largest non-Sunni Muslim sect, accounting for [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) Turks, is the [Alevis](/wiki/Alevi); a third of all Alevis in the country live in Istanbul.[[146]](#cite_note-146) Mystic movements, like [Sufism](/wiki/Sufism), were officially banned after the establishment of the Turkish Republic, but they still boast numerous followers.[[147]](#cite_note-147) The [Patriarch of Constantinople](/wiki/Ecumenical_Patriarch_of_Constantinople) has been designated Ecumenical Patriarch since the sixth century, and has subsequently come to be widely regarded as the leader of the world's [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) [Orthodox Christians](/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox_Church).[[148]](#cite_note-148) Since 1601, the Patriarchate has been based in Istanbul's [Church of St. George](/wiki/Church_of_St._George,_Istanbul).[[149]](#cite_note-149) Into the 19th century, the Christians of Istanbul tended to be either [Greek Orthodox](/wiki/Greek_Orthodox_Church) or members of the [Armenian Apostolic Church](/wiki/Armenian_Apostolic_Church).[[150]](#cite_note-150) The headquarters of the [Turkish Orthodox Church](/wiki/Turkish_Orthodox_Church) are located in the city. Because of events during the 20th century—including the [1923 population exchange](/wiki/Population_exchange_between_Greece_and_Turkey) between Greece and Turkey, a [1942 wealth tax](/wiki/Varlık_Vergisi), and the [1955 Istanbul riots](/wiki/Istanbul_riots)—the Greek population, originally centered in [Fener](/wiki/Fener) and [Samatya](/wiki/Samatya), has decreased substantially. At the start of the 21st century, Istanbul's Greek population numbered 3,000 (down from 130,000 in 1923 and 260,000 according to the Ottoman Census of 1910 of 850,000 total).[[151]](#cite_note-151)[[152]](#cite_note-152) There are today between 50,000 and [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) [Armenians in Istanbul](/wiki/Armenians_in_Istanbul), down from 164,000 in 1913 partly due to the [Armenian Genocide](/wiki/Armenian_Genocide).[[153]](#cite_note-153) Christians made up half the population of the city in 1910.[[154]](#cite_note-154)[thumb|left|Completed in 1616, the](/wiki/File:Sultan_Ahmed_Mosque_Istanbul_Turkey_retouched.jpg) [Sultan Ahmed Mosque](/wiki/Sultan_Ahmed_Mosque) is popularly known as the Blue Mosque due to the blue [İznik tiles](/wiki/İznik_tiles) which adorn its interior.<ref name=bluemosque>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

The largest ethnic minority in Istanbul is the [Kurdish](/wiki/Kurdish_people) community, originating from eastern and southeastern Turkey. Although the Kurdish presence in the city dates back to the early Ottoman period,[[155]](#cite_note-155) the influx of Kurds into the city has accelerated since the beginning of the [Kurdish–Turkish conflict](/wiki/Kurdish–Turkish_conflict) with the [Kurdistan Workers' Party](/wiki/Kurdistan_Workers'_Party) (i.e. since the late 1970s).[[156]](#cite_note-156) About two to three million residents of Istanbul are Kurdish, meaning there are more Kurds in Istanbul than in any other city in the world.[[157]](#cite_note-157)<ref name=KONDA2006>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref><ref name=KONDA2008>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref><ref name=Radikal2008>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref>[[158]](#cite_note-158) There are other significant ethnic minorities as well, the [Bosniaks](/wiki/Bosniaks) are the main people of an entire district – [Bayrampaşa](/wiki/Bayrampaşa).[[159]](#cite_note-159) The neighborhood of [Balat](/wiki/Balat_(Istanbul)) used to be home to a sizable [Sephardi Jewish](/wiki/Sephardi_Jews) community, first formed during the period of the [Spanish Inquisition](/wiki/Spanish_Inquisition).[[160]](#cite_note-160) [Romaniotes](/wiki/Romaniotes) and [Ashkenazi Jews](/wiki/Ashkenazi_Jews) resided in Istanbul even before the Sephardim, but their proportion has since dwindled; today, [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) of Istanbul's Jews are Ashkenazi.[[161]](#cite_note-161)[[162]](#cite_note-162) In large part due to emigration to [Israel](/wiki/Israel), the Jewish population nationwide dropped from 100,000 in 1950 to 18,000 in 2005, with the majority of them living in either Istanbul or İzmir.[[163]](#cite_note-163) [Levantines](/wiki/Levantines_(Latin_Christians)), Latin Christians who settled in Galata during the Ottoman period, played a seminal role in shaping the culture and architecture of Istanbul during the 19th and early 20th centuries; their population has dwindled, but they remain in the city in small numbers.[[164]](#cite_note-164) From the increase in mutual cooperation between Turkey and several African States like Somalia and Djibouti, several young students and workers have been migrating to Istanbul in search of better education and employment opportunities. There is also a small Nigerian, Congolese and Cameroonian and North African community present.[[165]](#cite_note-165)

## Politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[Template:Infobox political party](/wiki/Template:Infobox_political_party) [Template:Infobox political party](/wiki/Template:Infobox_political_party) Istanbul has voted for the winning party in general elections since 1995. Since 2002, the right-wing [Justice and Development Party](/wiki/Justice_and_Development_Party_(Turkey)) (AKP) has won pluralities in every general and local election. The city's electorate has also voted for the AKP government's constitutional reforms proposed during the [2007](/wiki/Turkish_constitutional_referendum,_2007) and [2010](/wiki/Turkish_constitutional_referendum,_2010) constitutional referenda. Turkish President and former AKP Prime Minister [Recep Tayyip Erdoğan](/wiki/Recep_Tayyip_Erdoğan) was elected [Mayor of İstanbul](/wiki/List_of_mayors_of_İstanbul) in the [1994 local elections](/wiki/Turkish_local_elections,_1994) as the Islamist [Welfare Party](/wiki/Welfare_Party) candidate with 25.1% of the vote, winning due to a vote split between the mainstream centrist parties. Conservative parties traditionally find support in older districts with high population densities such as [Bağcılar](/wiki/Bağcılar), [Fatih](/wiki/Fatih), [Sultanbeyli](/wiki/Sultanbeyli) and [Esenler](/wiki/Esenler). The opposition [Kemalist](/wiki/Kemalism) center-left [Republican People's Party](/wiki/Republican_People's_Party_(Turkey)) (CHP), currently the second major political force in both İstanbul and the country, gets most of its support from more rural districts such as [Silivri](/wiki/Silivri), [Çatalca](/wiki/Çatalca) and [Sarıyer](/wiki/Sarıyer). Urban districts such as [Beşiktaş](/wiki/Beşiktaş), [Bakırköy](/wiki/Bakırköy), [Şişli](/wiki/Şişli) and [Kadıköy](/wiki/Kadıköy) have returned strong support for the CHP in past elections. The CHP are generally strongest in the west, where newer residential developments are taking place. İstanbul has 39 districts, more than any other [province in Turkey](/wiki/Provinces_of_Turkey). Since İstanbul is Turkey's largest city and has usually voted in the same way as the country as a whole, it is largely perceived in Turkish politics that the winning party of an election is essentially decided by İstanbul's electorate. Political parties thus allocate substantial amounts of electoral campaign funds and to winning control of the İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality. Due to its electoral importance, İstanbul has reported the largest and most serious cases of electoral fraud in recent elections, including the [2014 local elections](/wiki/Turkish_local_elections,_2014).[[166]](#cite_note-166)[[167]](#cite_note-167)[[168]](#cite_note-168)[[169]](#cite_note-169)[[170]](#cite_note-170)[[171]](#cite_note-171) [thumb|left|Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality building in the](/wiki/File:Istanbul_Municipality_City_Hall.jpg) [Fatih](/wiki/Fatih) district

The incumbent mayor of the city is [Kadir Topbaş](/wiki/Kadir_Topbaş) of the AKP, who was first elected in the [2004 local elections](/wiki/Turkish_local_elections,_2004) and succeeded [Ali Müfit Gürtuna](/wiki/Ali_Müfit_Gürtuna) of the closed down Welfare Party. He was re-elected in [2009](/wiki/Turkish_local_elections,_2009) and 2014. The leader of the CHP and parliamentary opposition, [Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu](/wiki/Kemal_Kılıçdaroğlu), ran against Topbaş in the 2009 local elections. He is currently a [Member of Parliament](/wiki/Member_of_Parliament) for İstanbul. Between 2007 and 2014, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was also an MP for İstanbul. For general elections, the city is divided into 3 electoral districts and returns 85 MPs to the [Turkish parliament](/wiki/Grand_National_Assembly). In the [2014 presidential election](/wiki/Turkish_presidential_election,_2014), 49.83% of the city's electorate voted for AKP candidate Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Although Erdoğan won the most votes in İstanbul, his failure to win above 50% was seen as significant. Opposition candidate [Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu](/wiki/Ekmeleddin_İhsanoğlu) came second with 41.08% and the [HDP](/wiki/Peoples'_Democratic_Party_(Turkey)) pro-Kurdish and left-wing candidate [Selahattin Demirtaş](/wiki/Selahattin_Demirtaş) won a substantial 9.09%.[[172]](#cite_note-172) In 2013 and 2014, [large-scale anti-AKP government protests](/wiki/2013–14_protests_in_Turkey) began in İstanbul and spread throughout the nation.

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:Wide image](/wiki/Template:Wide_image)

With a [PPP-adjusted](/wiki/Purchasing_power_parity) [gross domestic product](/wiki/Gross_domestic_product) of [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap), Istanbul [ranked 29th](/wiki/List_of_cities_by_GDP) among the world's urban areas in 2011.[[173]](#cite_note-173) Since the mid-1990s, Istanbul's economy has been one of the fastest-growing among [OECD](/wiki/OECD) metro-regions.[[11]](#cite_note-11) Istanbul is responsible for [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) of Turkey's GDP, with [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) of the country's industrial labor force residing in the city.[[11]](#cite_note-11)[[174]](#cite_note-174) Its GDP per capita and [productivity](/wiki/Productivity) are greater than their national averages by [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) and [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap), respectively, owing in part to the focus on high-[value-added](/wiki/Value_added) activities. With its high population and significant contribution to the Turkish economy, Istanbul is responsible for two-fifths of the nation's tax revenue.[[11]](#cite_note-11) That includes the taxes of 37 [US-dollar](/wiki/United_States_dollar) billionaires based in Istanbul, the fifth-highest number among cities around the world.[[175]](#cite_note-175)[thumb|right|A view of](/wiki/File:İstanbul_view_from_İstanbul_Sapphire_observation_deck_Aug_2014,_p9.JPG) [Levent](/wiki/Levent), one of the main business districts in Istanbul and home to the city's tallest buildings.|alt=Skyline of a portion of the city, including several skyscrapers interspersed among low- and mid-rises, several historic buildings, parks and hilly terrain, and the waterway known as Bosphorus

As expected for a city of its size, Istanbul has a diverse industrial economy, producing commodities as varied as olive oil, tobacco, vehicles, and electronics.[[174]](#cite_note-174) Despite having a focus on high-value-added work, its low-value-added manufacturing sector is substantial, representing just [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) of Istanbul's GDP, but four-fifths of the city's total exports.[[11]](#cite_note-11) In 2005, companies based in Istanbul produced exports worth [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) and received imports totaling [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap); these figures were equivalent to [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) and [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap), respectively, of the national totals.[[176]](#cite_note-176) Istanbul is home to [Borsa Istanbul](/wiki/Borsa_Istanbul), the sole [exchange](/wiki/Exchange_(organized_market)) entity of Turkey, which combined the former Istanbul Stock Exchange, the Istanbul Gold Exchange, and the Derivatives Exchange of Turkey.[[177]](#cite_note-177) The former [Istanbul Stock Exchange](/wiki/Istanbul_Stock_Exchange) was originally established as the Ottoman Stock Exchange in 1866.[[178]](#cite_note-178) During the 19th and early 20th centuries, [Bankalar Caddesi](/wiki/Bankalar_Caddesi) (Banks Street) in Galata was the financial center of the Ottoman Empire, where the Ottoman Stock Exchange was located.[[179]](#cite_note-179) Bankalar Caddesi continued to be Istanbul's main financial district until the 1990s, when most Turkish banks began moving their headquarters to the modern central business districts of [Levent](/wiki/Levent) and [Maslak](/wiki/Maslak). In 1995, the Istanbul Stock Exchange (now Borsa Istanbul) moved to its current building in the [İstinye](/wiki/İstinye) quarter of the [Sarıyer](/wiki/Sarıyer) district.[[180]](#cite_note-180) A new [central business district](/wiki/Central_business_district) is also under construction in [Ataşehir](/wiki/Ataşehir) and will host the headquarters of various Turkish banks and financial institutions upon completion.<ref name=Bloomberg2013>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref>

[thumb|left|As a route to the](/wiki/File:Ships_under_Second_Bosphorus_Bridge_(September_2011).jpg) [Black Sea](/wiki/Black_Sea), the [Bosphorus](/wiki/Bosphorus) is one of the busiest waterways in the world.|alt=A pair of large ships sailing on a waterway, with a suspension bridge and hilly terrain in the background. As the only sea route between the oil-rich Black Sea and the Mediterranean, the Bosphorus is one of the busiest waterways in the world; more than [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) tonnes of oil pass through the strait each year, and the traffic on the Bosphorus is three times that on the [Suez Canal](/wiki/Suez_Canal).[[181]](#cite_note-181) As a result, there have been proposals to build a canal, known as [Canal Istanbul](/wiki/Canal_Istanbul), parallel to the strait, on the European side of the city.[[182]](#cite_note-182) Istanbul has three major shipping ports—the [Port of Haydarpaşa](/wiki/Port_of_Haydarpaşa), the Port of Ambarlı, and the Port of Zeytinburnu—as well as several smaller ports and oil terminals along the Bosphorus and the Sea of Marmara.[[183]](#cite_note-183)[[184]](#cite_note-184) Haydarpaşa, situated at the southeastern end of the Bosphorus, was Istanbul's largest port until the early 2000s. Shifts in operations to Ambarlı since then have left Haydarpaşa running under capacity and with plans to decommission the port.[[185]](#cite_note-185) In 2007, Ambarlı, on the western edge of the urban center, had an annual capacity of [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) [TEUs](/wiki/Twenty-foot_equivalent_unit) (compared to 354,000 TEUs at Haydarpaşa), making it the fourth-largest cargo terminal in the Mediterranean basin.[[186]](#cite_note-186)[[187]](#cite_note-187) The Port of Zeytinburnu is advantaged by its proximity to motorways and [Atatürk International Airport](/wiki/Atatürk_International_Airport),[[188]](#cite_note-188) and long-term plans for the city call for greater connectivity between all terminals and the road and rail networks.[[189]](#cite_note-189) Istanbul is an increasingly popular tourist destination; whereas just [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) foreigners visited the city in 2000, it welcomed [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) foreign tourists in 2015, making it the world's fifth most-visited city.<ref name=Mastercard/>[[190]](#cite_note-190) Istanbul is Turkey's second-largest international gateway, after [Antalya](/wiki/Antalya), receiving a quarter of the nation's foreign tourists. Istanbul's tourist industry is concentrated in the European side, with [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) of the city's hotels located there. Low- and mid-range hotels tend to be located on the [Sarayburnu](/wiki/Sarayburnu); higher-end hotels are primarily located in the entertainment and financial centers north of the Golden Horn. Istanbul's seventy museums, the most visited of which are the Topkapı Palace Museum and the Hagia Sophia, bring in [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) in revenue each year. The city's environmental master plan also notes that there are [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap), [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap), and [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) of historical significance in Istanbul.[[191]](#cite_note-191)

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|right|The](/wiki/File:İstanbul_Arkeoloji_Müzeleri_(ana_bina,_Arkeoloji_Müzesi)_-_Mart_2013.JPG) [Istanbul Archaeology Museums](/wiki/Istanbul_Archaeology_Museums), founded by [Osman Hamdi Bey](/wiki/Osman_Hamdi_Bey) in 1891, form Turkey's oldest modern museum.[[192]](#cite_note-192)|alt=The façade of a masonry building, with four Greek adorning its entrance, under a clear blue sky

Istanbul was historically known as a cultural hub, but its cultural scene stagnated after the Turkish Republic shifted its focus toward [Ankara](/wiki/Ankara).[[193]](#cite_note-193) The new national government established programs that served to orient Turks toward musical traditions, especially those originating in Europe, but musical institutions and visits by foreign classical artists were primarily centered in the new capital.[[194]](#cite_note-194) Much of Turkey's cultural scene had its roots in Istanbul, and by the 1980s and 1990s Istanbul reemerged globally as a city whose cultural significance is not solely based on its past glory.[[195]](#cite_note-195) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Peramuzesi_nighttime.jpg)[Pera Museum](/wiki/Pera_Museum) in [Beyoğlu](/wiki/Beyoğlu)

By the end of the 19th century, Istanbul had established itself as a regional artistic center, with Turkish, European, and Middle Eastern artists flocking to the city. Despite efforts to make Ankara Turkey's cultural heart, Istanbul had the country's primary institution of art until the 1970s.[[196]](#cite_note-196) When additional universities and art journals were founded in Istanbul during the 1980s, artists formerly based in Ankara moved in.[[197]](#cite_note-197) [Beyoğlu](/wiki/Beyoğlu) has been transformed into the artistic center of the city, with young artists and older Turkish artists formerly residing abroad finding footing there. Modern art museums, including [İstanbul Modern](/wiki/İstanbul_Modern), the [Pera Museum](/wiki/Pera_Museum), [Sakıp Sabancı Museum](/wiki/Sakıp_Sabancı_Museum) and [SantralIstanbul](/wiki/SantralIstanbul), opened in the 2000s to complement the exhibition spaces and auction houses that have already contributed to the cosmopolitan nature of the city.[[198]](#cite_note-198) These museums have yet to attain the popularity of older museums on the historic peninsula, including the [Istanbul Archaeology Museums](/wiki/Istanbul_Archaeology_Museums), which ushered in the era of modern museums in Turkey, and the [Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum](/wiki/Turkish_and_Islamic_Arts_Museum).[[191]](#cite_note-191)[[192]](#cite_note-192) The first film screening in Turkey was at [Yıldız Palace](/wiki/Yıldız_Palace) in 1896, a year after the technology publicly debuted in Paris.[[199]](#cite_note-199) Movie theaters rapidly cropped up in Beyoğlu, with the greatest concentration of theaters being along the street now known as [İstiklal Avenue](/wiki/İstiklal_Avenue).[[200]](#cite_note-200) Istanbul also became the heart of [Turkey's nascent film industry](/wiki/Cinema_of_Turkey), although Turkish films were not consistently developed until the 1950s.[[201]](#cite_note-201) Since then, Istanbul has been the most popular location to film Turkish dramas and comedies.[[202]](#cite_note-202) The Turkish film industry ramped up in the second half of the century, and with [*Uzak*](/wiki/Uzak) (2002) and [*My Father and My Son*](/wiki/My_Father_and_My_Son) (2005), both filmed in Istanbul, the nation's movies began to see substantial international success.[[203]](#cite_note-203) Istanbul and its picturesque skyline have also served as a backdrop for several foreign films, including [*Topkapi*](/wiki/Topkapi_(film)) (1964), [*The World Is Not Enough*](/wiki/The_World_Is_Not_Enough) (1999), and [*Mission Istaanbul*](/wiki/Mission_Istaanbul) (2008).[[204]](#cite_note-204) Coinciding with this cultural reemergence was the establishment of the Istanbul Festival, which began showcasing a variety of art from Turkey and around the world in 1973. From this flagship festival came the [International Istanbul Film Festival](/wiki/International_Istanbul_Film_Festival) and the [Istanbul International Jazz Festival](/wiki/Istanbul_International_Jazz_Festival) in the early 1980s. With its focus now solely on music and dance, the Istanbul Festival has been known as the [Istanbul International Music Festival](/wiki/Istanbul_International_Music_Festival) since 1994.[[205]](#cite_note-205) The most prominent of the festivals that evolved from the original Istanbul Festival is the [Istanbul Biennial](/wiki/Istanbul_Biennial), held every two years since 1987. Its early incarnations were aimed at showcasing Turkish visual art, and it has since opened to international artists and risen in prestige to join the elite [biennales](/wiki/Biennale), alongside the [Venice Biennale](/wiki/Venice_Biennale) and the [São Paulo Art Biennial](/wiki/São_Paulo_Art_Biennial).[[206]](#cite_note-206)

### Leisure and entertainment[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[thumb|right|The](/wiki/File:Grand-Bazaar_Shop.jpg) [Grand Bazaar](/wiki/Grand_Bazaar,_Istanbul) is one of the largest covered markets in the world.|alt=Goods overflow out of storefronts, leaving a narrow passageway where shoppers move about. Istanbul has [numerous shopping centers](/wiki/List_of_shopping_malls_in_Istanbul), from the historic to the modern. The [Grand Bazaar](/wiki/Grand_Bazaar,_Istanbul), in operation since 1461, is among the world's oldest and largest covered markets.[[207]](#cite_note-207)[[208]](#cite_note-208) [Mahmutpasha Bazaar](/wiki/Mahmutpasha_Bazaar,_Istanbul) is an open-air market extending between the Grand Bazaar and the [Egyptian Bazaar](/wiki/Spice_Bazaar,_Istanbul), which has been Istanbul's major spice market since 1660. [Galleria Ataköy](/wiki/Galleria_Ataköy) ushered in the age of modern shopping malls in Turkey when it opened in 1987.[[209]](#cite_note-209) Since then, malls have become major shopping centers outside the historic peninsula. [Akmerkez](/wiki/Akmerkez) was awarded the titles of "Europe's best" and "World's best" shopping mall by the [International Council of Shopping Centers](/wiki/International_Council_of_Shopping_Centers) in 1995 and 1996; [Istanbul Cevahir](/wiki/Istanbul_Cevahir) has been one of the continent's largest since opening in 2005; [Kanyon](/wiki/Kanyon_Shopping_Mall,_Istanbul) won the Cityscape Architectural Review Award in the Commercial Built category in 2006.[[208]](#cite_note-208) [İstinye Park](/wiki/İstinye_Park) in [İstinye](/wiki/İstinye) and [Zorlu Center](/wiki/Zorlu_Center) near [Levent](/wiki/Levent) are among the newest malls which include the stores of the world's top fashion brands. [Abdi İpekçi Street](/wiki/Abdi_İpekçi_Street) in [Nişantaşı](/wiki/Nişantaşı) and [Bağdat Avenue](/wiki/Bağdat_Avenue) on the Anatolian side of the city have evolved into high-end shopping districts.[[210]](#cite_note-210)[[211]](#cite_note-211) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Nişantaşı_2010-11_Yılbaşı_Süslemeleri.jpg)[New Year's Eve](/wiki/New_Year's_Eve) decorations in [Nişantaşı](/wiki/Nişantaşı) shopping district|alt=A large tree decorated under the night sky in red and green and surrounded by spotlights, city lights, and mid-rise buildings

Istanbul is famous for its historic [seafood](/wiki/Seafood) restaurants. Many of the city's most popular and upscale seafood restaurants line the shores of the [Bosphorus](/wiki/Bosphorus) (particularly in neighborhoods like [Ortaköy](/wiki/Ortaköy), [Bebek](/wiki/Bebek,_Istanbul), [Arnavutköy](/wiki/Arnavutköy), [Yeniköy](/wiki/Yeniköy,_Istanbul), [Beylerbeyi](/wiki/Beylerbeyi) and [Çengelköy](/wiki/Çengelköy)). [Kumkapı](/wiki/Kumkapı) along the [Sea of Marmara](/wiki/Sea_of_Marmara) has a pedestrian zone that hosts around fifty fish restaurants.[[212]](#cite_note-212) The [Prince Islands](/wiki/Prince_Islands), [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) from the city center, are also popular for their seafood restaurants. Because of their restaurants, historic summer mansions, and tranquil, car-free streets, the Prince Islands are a popular vacation destination among Istanbulites and foreign tourists.[[213]](#cite_note-213) Istanbul is also famous for its sophisticated and elaborately-cooked dishes of the [Ottoman cuisine](/wiki/Ottoman_cuisine). However, following the influx of immigrants from southeastern and eastern Turkey, which began in the 1960s, the foodscape of the city has drastically changed by the end of the century; with influences of Middle Eastern cuisine such as [kebab](/wiki/Kebab) taking an important place in the food scene. Restaurants featuring foreign cuisines are mainly concentrated in the [Beyoğlu](/wiki/Beyoğlu), [Beşiktaş](/wiki/Beşiktaş), [Şişli](/wiki/Şişli) and [Kadıköy](/wiki/Kadıköy) districts.

Istanbul is famous for its [nightlife](/wiki/Nightlife), as well as its historic [taverns](/wiki/Tavern), a signature characteristic of the city for centuries if not millennia. Along the [İstiklal Avenue](/wiki/İstiklal_Avenue) is the [Çiçek Pasajı](/wiki/Çiçek_Pasajı), now home to winehouses (known as *meyhanes*), pubs, and restaurants.[[214]](#cite_note-214) İstiklal Avenue, originally famous for its taverns, has shifted toward shopping, but the nearby Nevizade Street is still lined with winehouses and pubs.[[215]](#cite_note-215)[[216]](#cite_note-216) Some other neighborhoods around İstiklal Avenue have recently been revamped to cater to Beyoğlu's nightlife, with formerly commercial streets now lined with pubs, cafes, and restaurants playing live music.[[217]](#cite_note-217) Other focal points for Istanbul's nightlife include [Nişantaşı](/wiki/Nişantaşı), [Ortaköy](/wiki/Ortaköy), [Bebek](/wiki/Bebek,_Istanbul), and [Kadıköy](/wiki/Kadıköy).[[218]](#cite_note-218)

## Sports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

[Template:Multiple image](/wiki/Template:Multiple_image)

Istanbul has some of Turkey's oldest [sports clubs](/wiki/Sports_club). [Beşiktaş J.K.](/wiki/Beşiktaş_J.K.), established in 1903, is considered the oldest of these sports clubs. Due to its initial status as Turkey's only club, Beşiktaş occasionally represented the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic in international sports competitions, earning the right to place the Turkish flag inside its team logo.[[103]](#cite_note-103) Its football team has seen several periods of dominance in national competition.[[103]](#cite_note-103) [Galatasaray S.K.](/wiki/Galatasaray_S.K.) and [Fenerbahçe S.K.](/wiki/Fenerbahçe_S.K.) have fared better in international competition and share the honor of winning the most [Süper Lig](/wiki/Süper_Lig) championships: 20 and 19 times, respectively.[[219]](#cite_note-219)[[220]](#cite_note-220) Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe have a long-standing rivalry, with Galatasaray based in the European part and Fenerbahçe based in the Anatolian part of the city.[[219]](#cite_note-219) Istanbul has seven basketball teams—[Anadolu Efes](/wiki/Anadolu_Efes_S.K.), [Beşiktaş](/wiki/Beşiktaş_men's_basketball_team), [Darüşşafaka](/wiki/Darüşşafaka_S.K.), [Fenerbahçe](/wiki/Fenerbahçe_Men's_Basketball), [Galatasaray](/wiki/Galatasaray_S.K._(men's_basketball)), [İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyespor](/wiki/İstanbul_Büyükşehir_Belediyespor_(basketball)) and [Büyükçekmece](/wiki/Büyükçekmece_Basketbol)—that play in the premier-level [Turkish Basketball Super League](/wiki/Turkish_Basketball_Super_League).[[221]](#cite_note-221) Many of Istanbul's sports facilities have been built or upgraded since 2000 to bolster the city's bids for the [Summer Olympic Games](/wiki/Summer_Olympic_Games). [Atatürk Olympic Stadium](/wiki/Atatürk_Olympic_Stadium), the largest multi-purpose stadium in Turkey, was completed in 2002 as an [IAAF](/wiki/International_Association_of_Athletics_Federations) first-class venue for [track and field](/wiki/Track_and_field).[[222]](#cite_note-222) The stadium hosted the [2005 UEFA Champions League Final](/wiki/2005_UEFA_Champions_League_Final). [Şükrü Saracoğlu Stadium](/wiki/Şükrü_Saracoğlu_Stadium), Fenerbahçe's home field, hosted the [2009 UEFA Cup Final](/wiki/2009_UEFA_Cup_Final) three years after its completion. [Türk Telekom Arena](/wiki/Türk_Telekom_Arena) opened in 2011 to replace [Ali Sami Yen Stadium](/wiki/Ali_Sami_Yen_Stadium) as Galatasaray's home turf,[[223]](#cite_note-223)[[224]](#cite_note-224) while [Vodafone Arena](/wiki/Vodafone_Arena) opened in 2016 to replace [BJK İnönü Stadium](/wiki/BJK_İnönü_Stadium) as the home turf of Beşiktaş, which won the Süper Lig in the same season. All four stadiums are elite [Category 4](/wiki/UEFA_stadium_categories) (formerly five-star) UEFA stadiums.[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn)

[Template:Multiple image](/wiki/Template:Multiple_image)

The [Sinan Erdem Dome](/wiki/Sinan_Erdem_Dome), among the largest indoor arenas in Europe, hosted the final of the [2010 FIBA World Championship](/wiki/2010_FIBA_World_Championship), the [2012 IAAF World Indoor Championships](/wiki/2012_IAAF_World_Indoor_Championships), and the [2011–12 Euroleague](/wiki/2011–12_Euroleague) Final Four.[[225]](#cite_note-225) Prior to the completion of the Sinan Erdem Dome in 2010, [Abdi İpekçi Arena](/wiki/Abdi_İpekçi_Arena) was Istanbul's primary indoor arena, having hosted the finals of [EuroBasket 2001](/wiki/EuroBasket_2001).[[226]](#cite_note-226) Several other indoor arenas, including the [Beşiktaş Akatlar Arena](/wiki/BJK_Akatlar_Arena), have also been inaugurated since 2000, serving as the home courts of Istanbul's sports clubs. The most recent of these is the 13,800-seat [Ülker Sports Arena](/wiki/Ülker_Sports_Arena), which opened in 2012 as the home court of Fenerbahçe's basketball teams.[[227]](#cite_note-227) Despite the construction boom, five bids for the Summer Olympics—in [2000](/wiki/2000_Summer_Olympics), [2004](/wiki/2004_Summer_Olympics), [2008](/wiki/2008_Summer_Olympics), [2012](/wiki/2012_Summer_Olympics), and [2020](/wiki/2020_Summer_Olympics)—and national bids for [UEFA Euro 2012](/wiki/UEFA_Euro_2012) and [UEFA Euro 2016](/wiki/UEFA_Euro_2016) have ended unsuccessfully.[[228]](#cite_note-228) [Istanbul Park](/wiki/Istanbul_Park) was a stop on the [World Touring Car Championship](/wiki/World_Touring_Car_Championship) circuit and the [European Le Mans Series](/wiki/European_Le_Mans_Series) in 2005 and 2006, but the track has not seen either of these competitions since then.[[229]](#cite_note-229)[[230]](#cite_note-230) Between its opening in 2005 and 2011, [Istanbul Park](/wiki/Istanbul_Park) also hosted the annual [Turkish Grand Prix](/wiki/Turkish_Grand_Prix); its future remains uncertain due to financial troubles.[[231]](#cite_note-231) The Istanbul Sailing Club, established in 1952, hosts races, showcases, and events on the waterways in and around Istanbul each year.[[232]](#cite_note-232)[[233]](#cite_note-233) The Turkish Offshore Racing Club also hosts major races, with its most prestigious being its race for the Marine Forces Trophy.[[234]](#cite_note-234) Istanbul was also an occasional stop on the [F1 Powerboat World Championship](/wiki/F1_Powerboat_World_Championship) circuit, although its last appearance on the Bosphorus was in 2000.[[235]](#cite_note-235)

## Media[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[right|thumb|Established in 1948,](/wiki/File:Istanbul_-Hürriyet-_2000_by_RaBoe_02.jpg) [*Hürriyet*](/wiki/Hürriyet) is one of Turkey's most circulated newspapers.|alt=Entrance to an office building with an overhead sign saying 'Hürriyet' Most state-run radio and television stations are based in Ankara, but Istanbul is the primary hub of Turkish media. The industry has its roots in the former Ottoman capital, where the first Turkish newspaper, *Takvim-i Vekayi* (Calendar of Affairs), was published in 1831. The [Cağaloğlu](/wiki/Cağaloğlu) street on which the newspaper was printed, Bâb-ı Âli Street, rapidly became the center of Turkish print media, alongside Beyoğlu across the Golden Horn.[[236]](#cite_note-236) Today, Istanbul hosts a wide variety of periodicals. Most nationwide newspapers are based in Istanbul, with simultaneous Ankara and İzmir editions.[[237]](#cite_note-237) Istanbul-based [*Zaman*](/wiki/Zaman_(newspaper)), although only founded in 1986, is Turkey's most widely circulated paper, with a weekly distribution of more than one million, twice that of its nearest competitor. [*Posta*](/wiki/Posta_(newspaper)), [*Hürriyet*](/wiki/Hürriyet), and [*Sözcü*](/wiki/Sözcü), which round out the country's top four papers, are all headquartered in Istanbul, boasting more than 300,000 weekly sales each. *Hürriyet****s English-language edition,*** [***The Hürriyet Daily News***](/wiki/Hürriyet_Daily_News)***, has been printed since 1961, but the English-language*** [***Today's Zaman***](/wiki/Today's_Zaman)***, first published by Zaman in 2007, has overtaken it in circulation. Several smaller newspapers, including popular publications like*** [***Habertürk***](/wiki/Habertürk) ***and*** [***Milliyet***](/wiki/Milliyet)***, are also based in Istanbul.***[***[237]***](#cite_note-237)[***[238]***](#cite_note-238) [left|thumb|Headquarters of the state-run TRT's Istanbul radio operations|alt=A four-story, white flat-roofed building with two Turkish flags and a portrait on the exterior](/wiki/File:İstanbul_radio1.JPG) Radio broadcasts in Istanbul date back to 1927, when Turkey's first radio transmission came from atop the Central Post Office in Eminönü. Control of this transmission, and other radio stations established in the following decades, ultimately came under the state-run [Turkish Radio and Television Corporation](/wiki/Turkish_Radio_and_Television_Corporation) (TRT), which held a monopoly on radio and television broadcasts between its founding in 1964 and 1990.[[239]](#cite_note-239) Today, TRT runs four national radio stations; these stations have transmitters across the country so each can reach over [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) of the country's population, but only [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) is based in Istanbul. Offering a range of content from educational programming to coverage of sporting events, [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) is the most popular radio station in Turkey.[[239]](#cite_note-239) Istanbul's airwaves are the busiest in Turkey, primarily featuring either Turkish-language or English-language content. One of the exceptions, offering both, is [Açık Radyo](/wiki/Açık_Radyo) (94.9 FM). Among Turkey's first private stations, and the first featuring foreign popular music, was Istanbul's [Metro FM](/wiki/Metro_FM_(Turkey)) (97.2 FM). The state-run [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap), although based in Ankara, also features English-language popular music, and English-language news programming is provided on NTV Radyo (102.8 FM).[[240]](#cite_note-240) TRT-Children is the only TRT television station based in Istanbul.[[241]](#cite_note-241) Istanbul is home to the headquarters of several Turkish stations and regional headquarters of international media outlets. Istanbul-based [Star TV](/wiki/Star_TV_(Turkey)) was the first private television network to be established following the end of the TRT monopoly; Star TV and [Show TV](/wiki/Show_TV) (also based in Istanbul) remain highly popular throughout the country, airing Turkish and American series.[[242]](#cite_note-242) [Samanyolu TV](/wiki/Samanyolu_TV), [Kanal D](/wiki/Kanal_D), and [ATV](/wiki/Atv_(Turkey)) are other stations in Istanbul that offer a mix of news and series; [NTV](/wiki/NTV_(Turkey)) (partnered with U.S. media outlet [MSNBC](/wiki/MSNBC)) and [Sky Turk](/wiki/Sky_Turk_360)—both based in the city—are mainly just known for their news coverage in Turkish. The [BBC](/wiki/BBC) has a regional office in Istanbul, assisting its Turkish-language news operations, and the American news channel [CNN](/wiki/CNN) established the Turkish-language [CNN Türk](/wiki/CNN_Türk) there in 1999.[[243]](#cite_note-243) The Istanbul-based business and entertainment channel [CNBC-e](/wiki/CNBC-e) began broadcasting in 2000.

## Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

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[thumb|right|upright|Main entrance gate of](/wiki/File:Istanbul_University_cropped.JPG) [Istanbul University](/wiki/Istanbul_University), the city's oldest Turkish institution, established in 1453.|alt=A triumphal arch adjacent to a Turkish flag and in front of an open plaza

[Istanbul University](/wiki/Istanbul_University), founded in 1453, is the oldest Turkish educational institution in the city. Although originally an [Islamic school](/wiki/Madrasah), the university established law, medicine, and science departments in the 19th century and was secularized after the founding of the Turkish Republic.[[244]](#cite_note-244) [Istanbul Technical University](/wiki/Istanbul_Technical_University), founded in 1773, is the world's third-oldest university dedicated entirely to engineering sciences.[[245]](#cite_note-245)[[246]](#cite_note-246) These public universities are two of just eight across the city;[[247]](#cite_note-247) other prominent state universities in Istanbul include the [Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University](/wiki/Mimar_Sinan_Fine_Arts_University), which served as Turkey's primary institution of art until the 1970s,[[196]](#cite_note-196) and [Marmara University](/wiki/Marmara_University), the country's third-largest institution of higher learning.[[248]](#cite_note-248)[thumb|left|Established in 1863,](/wiki/File:RobertCollegeGouldHall1.jpg) [Robert College](/wiki/Robert_College) has been an American boarding school since its higher education section became [Boğaziçi University](/wiki/Boğaziçi_University) in 1971.|alt=An ivy-covered neoclassical building atop a hill, with a greenery-adorned walkway leading to its entrance

Most established universities in Istanbul are backed by the government; the city also has several prominent private institutions. The first modern private university in Istanbul, also the oldest American school in existence in its original location outside the United States, was [Robert College](/wiki/Robert_College), founded by [Christopher Robert](/wiki/Christopher_Robert), an American philanthropist, and [Cyrus Hamlin](/wiki/Cyrus_Hamlin), a missionary devoted to education, in 1863. The tertiary element of its education program became the public [Boğaziçi University](/wiki/Boğaziçi_University) in 1971; the remaining portion in Arnavutköy continues as a boarding high-school under the name Robert College.[[249]](#cite_note-249)[[250]](#cite_note-250) Private universities were officially outlawed in Turkey before the [Constitution of 1982](/wiki/Constitution_of_Turkey), but there were already fifteen private "higher schools", which were effectively universities, in Istanbul by 1970. The first private university established in Istanbul since 1982 was [Koç University](/wiki/Koç_University) (founded in 1992), and another dozen had opened within the following decade.[[249]](#cite_note-249) Today, there are at least 30 private universities in the city, including [Istanbul Commerce University](/wiki/Istanbul_Commerce_University) and [Kadir Has University](/wiki/Kadir_Has_University).[[251]](#cite_note-251) A new [biomedical research](/wiki/Medical_research) and development hub, called Bio Istanbul, is under construction in [Başakşehir](/wiki/Başakşehir), and will host 15,000 residents, 20,000 working commuters, and a university upon completion.<ref name=Hurriyet2013>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref><ref name=AECOM>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)[Template:Dead link](/wiki/Template:Dead_link)</ref>

[thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Kuleli_Military_High_School.jpg)[Kuleli Military High School](/wiki/Kuleli_Military_High_School) (1845)

In 2007, there were about [4,350 schools](/wiki/List_of_schools_in_Istanbul), about half of which were [primary schools](/wiki/Primary_school); on average, each school had 688 students. In recent years, Istanbul's educational system has expanded substantially; from 2000 to 2007, the number of classrooms and teachers nearly doubled and the number of students increased by more than [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap).[[252]](#cite_note-252) [Galatasaray High School](/wiki/Galatasaray_High_School), established in 1481 as the Galata Palace Imperial School, is the oldest high school in Istanbul and the second-oldest educational institution in the city. It was built at the behest of Sultan [Bayezid II](/wiki/Bayezid_II), who sought to bring students with diverse backgrounds together as a means of strengthening his growing empire.[[253]](#cite_note-253) It is one of Turkey's [Anatolian High Schools](/wiki/Anatolian_High_School), elite public high schools that place a stronger emphasis on instruction in foreign languages. Galatasaray, for example, offers instruction in French; other Anatolian High Schools primarily teach in English or German alongside Turkish.[[254]](#cite_note-254)[[255]](#cite_note-255) The city also has foreign high schools, such as [Liceo Italiano](/wiki/Liceo_Italiano), that were established in the 19th century to educate foreigners.[[256]](#cite_note-256) [Kuleli Military High School](/wiki/Kuleli_Military_High_School), along the shores of the Bosphorus in [Çengelköy](/wiki/Çengelköy), and [Turkish Naval High School](/wiki/Turkish_Naval_High_School), located on one of the [Princes' Islands](/wiki/Princes'_Islands), are military high schools, complemented by three [military academies](/wiki/Military_academy)—the [Turkish Air Force](/wiki/Turkish_Air_Force_Academy), [Turkish Military](/wiki/Turkish_Military_Academy), and [Turkish Naval](/wiki/Turkish_Naval_Academy) Academies. [Darüşşafaka High School](/wiki/Darüşşafaka_High_School) provides free education to children across the country missing at least one parent. Darüşşafaka begins instruction with the fourth grade, providing instruction in English and, starting in sixth grade, a second foreign language—German or French.[[257]](#cite_note-257) Other prominent high schools in the city include [Kabataş Erkek Lisesi](/wiki/Kabataş_Erkek_Lisesi) (founded in 1908)[[258]](#cite_note-258) and [Kadıköy Anadolu Lisesi](/wiki/Kadıköy_Anadolu_Lisesi) (founded in 1955).[[259]](#cite_note-259)

## Public services[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

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[thumb|right|The](/wiki/File:Sunset_at_Santral_Istanbul.jpg) [Silahtarağa Power Station](/wiki/Silahtarağa_Power_Station), now the art museum [SantralIstanbul](/wiki/SantralIstanbul), was Istanbul's sole source of power between 1914 and 1952.|alt=A brick factory stands in front of a park, with open green space, a reflecting pool, and benches Istanbul's first [water supply](/wiki/Water_supply) systems date back to the city's early history, when [aqueducts](/wiki/Aqueduct_(watercourse)) (such as the [Valens Aqueduct](/wiki/Valens_Aqueduct)) deposited the water in the city's numerous [cisterns](/wiki/Cistern).<ref name=iskitarihce>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> At the behest of [Suleiman the Magnificent](/wiki/Suleiman_the_Magnificent), the Kırkçeşme water supply network was constructed; by 1563, the network provided [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of water to [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) each day.<ref name=iskitarihce/> In later years, in response to increasing public demand, water from various springs was channeled to public fountains, like the [Fountain of Ahmed III](/wiki/Fountain_of_Ahmed_III), by means of supply lines.[[260]](#cite_note-260) Today, Istanbul has a chlorinated and filtered water supply and a [sewage treatment](/wiki/Sewage_treatment) system managed by the Istanbul Water and Sewerage Administration (İSKİ).[[261]](#cite_note-261) The [Silahtarağa Power Station](/wiki/Silahtarağa_Power_Station), a [coal-fired power plant](/wiki/Fossil-fuel_power_station) along the Golden Horn, was the sole source of Istanbul's electricity between 1914, when its first engine room was completed, and 1952.[[262]](#cite_note-262) Following the founding of the Turkish Republic, the plant underwent renovations to accommodate the city's increasing demand; its capacity grew from [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) in 1923 to a peak of [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) in 1956.[[262]](#cite_note-262)[[263]](#cite_note-263) Capacity declined until the power station reached the end of its economic life and shut down in 1983.[[262]](#cite_note-262) The state-run Turkish Electrical Authority (TEK) briefly—between its founding in 1970 and 1984—held a monopoly on the generation and distribution of electricity, but now the authority—since split between the Turkish Electricity Generation Transmission Company (TEAŞ) and the Turkish Electricity Distribution Company (TEDAŞ)—competes with private [electric utilities](/wiki/Electric_utility).[[263]](#cite_note-263) [left|thumb|Istanbul's current central post office dates back to 1909.](/wiki/File:İstanbul_Sirkeci_Büyük_Postane_1.JPG)[[264]](#cite_note-264)|alt=An arched neoclassical building with hanging banners, with a yellow vehicle parked in front The Ottoman Ministry of Post and Telegraph was established in 1840 and the first post office, the Imperial Post Office, opened near the courtyard of [Yeni Mosque](/wiki/New_Mosque_(Istanbul)). By 1876, the first international mailing network between Istanbul and the lands beyond the Ottoman Empire had been established.[[265]](#cite_note-265) Sultan [Abdülmecid I](/wiki/Abdülmecid_I) issued [Samuel Morse](/wiki/Samuel_Morse) his first official honor for the [telegraph](/wiki/Electrical_telegraph) in 1847, and construction of the first telegraph line—between Istanbul and [Edirne](/wiki/Edirne)—finished in time to announce the end of the [Crimean War](/wiki/Crimean_War) in 1856.[[266]](#cite_note-266) A nascent telephone system began to emerge in Istanbul in 1881 and after the first manual [telephone exchange](/wiki/Telephone_exchange) became operational in Istanbul in 1909, the Ministry of Post and Telegraph became the Ministry of Post, Telegraph, and Telephone.[[265]](#cite_note-265)[[267]](#cite_note-267) [GSM](/wiki/GSM) cellular networks arrived in Turkey in 1994, with Istanbul among the first cities to receive the service.[[268]](#cite_note-268) Today, [mobile](/wiki/Mobile_phone) and [landline](/wiki/Landline) service is provided by private companies, after [Türk Telekom](/wiki/Türk_Telekom), which split from the Ministry of Post, Telegraph, and Telephone in 1995, was privatized in 2005.[[265]](#cite_note-265)[[268]](#cite_note-268) Postal services remain under the purview of what is now the Post and Telegraph Organization (retaining the acronym PTT).[[265]](#cite_note-265) In 2000, Istanbul had [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap), of which 100 were private.[[269]](#cite_note-269) Turkish citizens are entitled to subsidized healthcare in the nation's state-run hospitals.[[237]](#cite_note-237) As public hospitals tend to be overcrowded or otherwise slow, private hospitals are preferable for those who can afford them. Their prevalence has increased significantly over the last decade, as the percentage of outpatients using private hospitals increased from [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) to [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) between 2005 and 2009.[[237]](#cite_note-237)[[270]](#cite_note-270) Many of these private hospitals, as well as some of the public hospitals, are equipped with high-tech equipment, including [MRI](/wiki/Magnetic_resonance_imaging) machines, or associated with medical research centers.[[271]](#cite_note-271) Turkey has more hospitals accredited by the U.S.-based [Joint Commission](/wiki/Joint_Commission) than any other country in the world, with most concentrated in its big cities. The high quality of healthcare, especially in private hospitals, has contributed to a recent upsurge in [medical tourism](/wiki/Medical_tourism) to Turkey (with a [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) increase between 2007 and 2008).[[272]](#cite_note-272) Laser [eye surgery](/wiki/Eye_surgery) is particularly common among medical tourists, as Turkey is known for specializing in the procedure.[[273]](#cite_note-273)

## Transportation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

[thumb|right|The](/wiki/File:Fatih_Sultan_Mehmet_Bridge_panorama.jpg) [Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge](/wiki/Fatih_Sultan_Mehmet_Bridge) is one of two [suspension bridges](/wiki/Suspension_bridge) on the [Bosphorus](/wiki/Bosphorus). The third bridge ([Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge](/wiki/Yavuz_Sultan_Selim_Bridge)) is under construction near the [strait's](/wiki/Strait) northern entrance along the [Black Sea](/wiki/Black_Sea) coast.|alt=A docked sailboat floats in front of a suspension bridge, at twilight. Istanbul's primary motorways are the [O-1](/wiki/Otoyol_1), [O-2](/wiki/Otoyol_2), [O-3](/wiki/Otoyol_3) and [O-4](/wiki/Otoyol_4). The O-1 forms the city's inner [ring road](/wiki/Ring_road), traversing the [Bosphorus Bridge](/wiki/Bosphorus_Bridge), and the O-2 is the city's outer ring road, crossing the [Fatih Sultan Mehmet (Second Bosphorus) Bridge](/wiki/Fatih_Sultan_Mehmet_Bridge). The O-2 continues west to [Edirne](/wiki/Edirne) and the O-4 continues east to Ankara; the O-2, O-3, and O-4 are part of [European route E80](/wiki/European_route_E80) (the Trans-European Motorway) between Portugal and the Turkish–Iranian border.[[274]](#cite_note-274) The two Bosphorus Bridges are currently the only road crossings between the Asian and European sides of Turkey, together carrying [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) each day.[[275]](#cite_note-275) The dual-deck, [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) [Eurasia Tunnel](/wiki/Eurasia_Tunnel) is currently under construction beneath the Bosphorus, between [Fatih](/wiki/Fatih) and [Üsküdar](/wiki/Üsküdar).[[276]](#cite_note-276) A third Bosphorus bridge, first considered in the 1990s, may also finally be coming to fruition, as construction of the [Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge](/wiki/Yavuz_Sultan_Selim_Bridge) was officially launched in 2013.[[277]](#cite_note-277) Both projects may be completed as early as 2015, although environmentalist groups worry that the third bridge will endanger the remaining green areas to the north of Istanbul.[[276]](#cite_note-276)[[277]](#cite_note-277) [Template:Multiple image](/wiki/Template:Multiple_image) Istanbul's local public transportation system is a complex network of [trams](/wiki/Tram), [funiculars](/wiki/Funicular), [metro](/wiki/Metro_(rapid_transit)) lines, buses, [bus rapid transit](/wiki/Bus_rapid_transit), and ferries. Fares across modes are integrated, using the [contactless](/wiki/Contactless_smart_card) [Istanbulkart](/wiki/Istanbulkart), introduced in 2009, or the older [Akbil](/wiki/Akbil_(smart_ticket)) electronic ticket device.[[278]](#cite_note-278) [Trams in Istanbul](/wiki/Trams_in_Istanbul) date back to 1872, when they were horse-drawn, but even the first electrified trams were decommissioned in the 1960s.[[279]](#cite_note-279) Operated by Istanbul Electricity, Tramway, and Tunnel General Management (İETT), trams slowly returned to the city in the 1990s with the introduction of [a nostalgic route](/wiki/Istanbul_nostalgic_tram) and a faster [modern tram line](/wiki/Istanbul_modern_tram), which now carries [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) each day.[[279]](#cite_note-279)[[280]](#cite_note-280) The [Tünel](/wiki/Tünel) opened in 1875 as the world's second-oldest subterranean rail line (after London's [Metropolitan Railway](/wiki/Metropolitan_Railway)).[[279]](#cite_note-279) It still carries passengers between [Karaköy](/wiki/Karaköy) and İstiklal Avenue along a steep [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) track; a more modern funicular between Taksim Square and [Kabataş](/wiki/Kabataş,_Istanbul) began running in 2006.[[281]](#cite_note-281)[[282]](#cite_note-282) [thumb|](/wiki/File:İstanbul_metrosu00020.JPG)[Levent](/wiki/Levent) station of the [Istanbul Metro](/wiki/Istanbul_Metro)

The [Istanbul Metro](/wiki/Istanbul_Metro) comprises three lines (the [M1](/wiki/M1_(Istanbul)) and [M2](/wiki/M2_(Istanbul_Metro)) on the European side, and the [M4](/wiki/M4_(Istanbul_Metro)) on the Asian side) with several other lines (such as the [M3](/wiki/M3_(Istanbul_Metro)), [M5](/wiki/M5_(Istanbul_Metro)), [M7](/wiki/M7_(Istanbul_Metro)), and [M6 Mini-Metro](/wiki/M6_(Istanbul_Metro))) and extensions under construction.[[283]](#cite_note-283)[[284]](#cite_note-284) The two sides of Istanbul's metro are connected under the Bosphorus by the [Marmaray](/wiki/Marmaray) tunnel, inaugurated in 2013 as the first rail connection between Thrace and Anatolia.[[285]](#cite_note-285) With the Marmaray's completion, rail use in the city is expected to increase to [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) (from [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap)), behind only [Tokyo](/wiki/Tokyo) and [New York City](/wiki/New_York_City).[[286]](#cite_note-286) Until then, buses provide transportation within and between the two halves of the city, accommodating [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) passenger trips each day.[[287]](#cite_note-287) The [Metrobus](/wiki/Metrobus_(Istanbul)), a form of bus rapid transit, crosses the Bosphorus Bridge, with dedicated lanes leading to its termini.[[288]](#cite_note-288) [İDO](/wiki/İDO) (Istanbul Seabuses) runs a combination of all-passenger ferries and car-and-passenger ferries to ports on both sides of the Bosphorus, as far north as the Black Sea.[[289]](#cite_note-289)[[290]](#cite_note-290) With additional destinations around the Sea of Marmara, İDO runs the largest municipal ferry operation in the world.[[291]](#cite_note-291) The city's main cruise ship terminal is the [Port of Istanbul](/wiki/Port_of_Istanbul) in Karaköy, with a capacity of 10,000 passengers per hour.[[292]](#cite_note-292) Most visitors enter Istanbul by air, but about half a million foreign tourists enter the city by sea each year.[[191]](#cite_note-191) [thumb|left|Originally opened in 1873 with a smaller terminal building as the main terminus of the](/wiki/File:Bahnhofsfront-Istanbul-Sirkeci_retouched_2.jpg) [Rumelia (Balkan) Railway](/wiki/Chemins_de_fer_Orientaux) of the [Ottoman Empire](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire), which connected Istanbul with [Vienna](/wiki/Vienna); the current [Sirkeci Terminal](/wiki/İstanbul_Sirkeci_Terminal) building was constructed between 1888 and 1890, and became the eastern terminus of the [Orient Express](/wiki/Orient_Express) from [Paris](/wiki/Paris).

International rail service from Istanbul launched in 1889, with a line between [Bucharest](/wiki/Bucharest) and Istanbul's [Sirkeci Terminal](/wiki/Istanbul_Sirkeci_Terminal), which ultimately became famous as the eastern terminus of the [Orient Express](/wiki/Orient_Express) from [Paris](/wiki/Paris).[[70]](#cite_note-70) Regular service to Bucharest and [Thessaloniki](/wiki/Thessaloniki) continued until the early 2010s, when the former was interrupted for Marmaray construction and the latter was halted due to [economic problems in Greece](/wiki/Greek_government-debt_crisis).[[293]](#cite_note-293)[[294]](#cite_note-294) After Istanbul's [Haydarpaşa Terminal](/wiki/Haydarpaşa_Terminal) opened in 1908, it served as the western terminus of the [Baghdad Railway](/wiki/Baghdad_Railway) and an extension of the [Hejaz Railway](/wiki/Hejaz_Railway); today, neither service is offered directly from Istanbul.[[295]](#cite_note-295)[[296]](#cite_note-296)[[297]](#cite_note-297) Service to Ankara and other points across Turkey is normally offered by [Turkish State Railways](/wiki/Turkish_State_Railways), but the construction of Marmaray and the [Ankara-Istanbul high-speed line](/wiki/Ankara-Istanbul_high-speed_railway) forced the station to close in 2012.[[298]](#cite_note-298) New stations to replace both the Haydarpaşa and Sirkeci terminals, and connect the city's disjointed railway networks, are expected to open upon completion of the Marmaray project; until then, Istanbul is without intercity rail service.[[298]](#cite_note-298) Private bus companies operate instead. Istanbul's main bus station is the largest in Europe, with a daily capacity of [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) and [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap), serving destinations as distant as [Frankfurt](/wiki/Frankfurt).[[299]](#cite_note-299)[[300]](#cite_note-300) [thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Ataturk_Airport_overview_Karakas.jpg)[Istanbul Atatürk Airport](/wiki/Istanbul_Atatürk_Airport), which handled [61.8 million passengers](/wiki/List_of_busiest_airports_by_passenger_traffic) in 2015,[[301]](#cite_note-301) is the city's primary airport.|alt=An aerial view of an airport with three runways and several taxiways arranged around a terminal Istanbul has two international airports. The larger is [Istanbul Atatürk](/wiki/Istanbul_Atatürk_Airport), [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) west of the city center. It handled [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) passengers in 2015, making it the [third-busiest airport in Europe](/wiki/List_of_the_busiest_airports_in_Europe) and the [eighteenth-busiest in the world](/wiki/World's_busiest_airports_by_passenger_traffic).[[302]](#cite_note-302) [Sabiha Gökçen International](/wiki/Sabiha_Gökçen_International_Airport), [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) southeast of the city center, opened in 2001 to relieve Atatürk. Dominated by [low-cost carriers](/wiki/Low-cost_carrier), Istanbul's second airport has rapidly become popular, especially since the opening of a new international terminal in 2009;[[303]](#cite_note-303) the airport handled [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) passengers in 2012, a year after [Airports Council International](/wiki/Airports_Council_International) named it the world's fastest-growing airport.[[304]](#cite_note-304)[[305]](#cite_note-305) Atatürk has also experienced rapid growth, as its [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) rise in passenger traffic between 2011 and 2012 was the highest among the world's top 30 airports.[[302]](#cite_note-302) Because of the traffic at Istanbul's current airports,<ref name=zaman2012>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref> a third international airport is planned for the Black Sea coast.[[306]](#cite_note-306) Building a new runway at Atatürk Airport was rejected due to the cost involved;<ref name=zaman2012/> environmental concerns have also been raised with respect to the new airport.[[307]](#cite_note-307) Currently under construction, the [new international airport](/wiki/İstanbul_New_Airport) will become the largest airport in the world upon the completion of all four stages of the project, with a capacity to serve 150 million passengers per year.[[308]](#cite_note-308)[[309]](#cite_note-309)[[310]](#cite_note-310)

## Sister and twin cities[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

* [List of twin and sister cities of Istanbul](/wiki/List_of_twin_towns_and_sister_cities_in_Turkey#Istanbul)

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

* [Historic Areas of Istanbul](/wiki/Historic_Areas_of_Istanbul), a World Heritage Site

## Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

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## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

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### Bibliography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

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## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[Template:Sister project links](/wiki/Template:Sister_project_links)

* [Official website of Istanbul](http://howtoistanbul.com/)
* [Official website of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality](http://www.ibb.gov.tr/en-US/Pages/Home.aspx)
* [Official website of the Istanbul Governorship](http://istanbul.gov.tr/)
* [Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality: Interactive aerial photos (maps) of Istanbul from 1946, 1966, 1982, and 2005](http://sehirrehberi.ibb.gov.tr/Map.aspx?&scl=6&cx=88707&cy=96189&ap=uydu&lng=en)
* [Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality: Live views of major landmarks in Istanbul](http://www.istanbuluseyret.com/TuristikKameralar/)
* [Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality: Istanbul Bulteni Magazine official website](http://www.istanbulbulteni.com/)
* [Istanbul Climate, Current Weather and Forecast](http://www.portalistanbul.com/istanbul-current-weather-and-forecast)

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