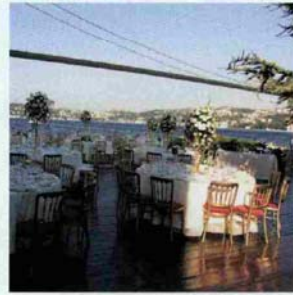


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EXCITING MEETING BACKDROP: The historic Esma Sultan Yalısı (top); a special event overlooking the Bosphorus (bottom).



Turkey

⊙ *Istanbul: Historically Dynamic*

ISTANBUL IS A NATURAL GATEWAY SPREAD OVER TWO CONTINENTS, EUROPE and Asia, divided by the Straits of Bosphorus. It is a metropolis proud of its rich 8,000-year history, with natural beauty, an exciting blend of urbane city life and history, and a modern infrastructure that make it a unique place for international congresses and meetings. As Napoleon Bonaparte said, "If the world was a single country, Istanbul would be the capital." Istanbul has been proclaimed "European Capital of Culture 2010," a recognition that can only further enhance its status as an exciting and intriguing meeting destination. As an imperial capital for 8,000 years, Istanbul has acquired a highly original personality. At every turn in the city, one is faced with Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman palaces, as well as mosques, churches, monasteries, monuments, walls, and ruins.

The city has hosted many important and large-scale international events within the past 10 years, and has become a preferred destination for international congresses. Consequently, the city's worldwide ranking in the International Congress and Convention Association's (ICCA) international association meeting statistics has risen from 40th in 2000 to 15th in 2008. Increased further still have been the number of participants attending international meetings, which positioned Istanbul fifth in Europe in 2008 ICCA statistics. Along with developments in the meetings industry, the number of foreign visitors to Istanbul reached 7,509,741 in 2009, a year-over-year increase of 6.5 percent.

Istanbul offers planners three independent, easy-to-integrate meeting clusters in the airport area, the Congress Valley, and the Golden Horn — all of which feature state-of-the-art facilities. Its hundreds of hotels cater to every taste and budget, and include top international brands as well as distinguished local chains and independent properties. Combined with Istanbul's 60,000 guest rooms, the city's three meeting clusters — each capable of hosting events of 20,000 or more delegates — make the city ideal for congresses of 500 to 30,000 or more participants.

The airport area is Istanbul's exhibition district, at the heart of which is the Istanbul World Trade Center Complex. It boasts 11 exhibition halls with a total area of 162,000 square meters, as well as accommodations and meeting facilities.

Istanbul's main congress and exhibition area, known as Congress Valley, is situated in the heart of its business and cultural district, one of the liveliest sections of the city. Congress Valley features many historical, artistic, and cultural sites; lies within walking distance of numerous four- and five-star hotels; and has two purpose-built congress centers at its heart. The Istanbul Convention & Exhibition Centre offers a 2,000-seat auditorium, numerous meeting rooms, and more than 7,000 square meters of exhibition space. The Istanbul Congress Center, inaugurated with the 2009 World Bank/IMF Summit, features a 3,500-seat auditorium, 12 meeting rooms, and 9,000 square meters of exhibition space. Congress Valley also has a range of other venues offering auditoriums, ballrooms, exhibition space, and meeting rooms.

Overlooking historic Istanbul on the shores of the Golden Horn, another new venue, the Halic (Golden Horn) Congress Center, hosted the 25,000-delegate Fifth World Water Forum. It offers a main, 3,000-seat auditorium, plus a range of other meeting spaces. ■

Facts to file

Meeting capabilities: Istanbul offers three separate, easy-to-integrate meeting clusters in the airport area, Congress Valley, and the Golden Horn. Each cluster is capable of hosting 20,000 or more delegates.

Hotel rooms citywide: 60,000

Meeting facilities:

The Istanbul World Trade Center Complex offers 11 exhibition halls with a total area of 162,000 square meters.

The Istanbul Convention & Exhibition Centre features a 2,000-seat auditorium, numerous meeting rooms, and more than 7,000 square meters of exhibition space.

The Istanbul Congress Center features a 3,500-seat auditorium, 12 meeting rooms, and 9,000 square meters of exhibit space.

The Halic (Golden Horn) Congress Center offers a 3,000-seat auditorium and a range of other meeting spaces.

For more information:

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1-877-FOR-TURKEY;
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