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# EXPO

**Stauen in Mailand.** Das Thema der EXPO2015 „Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life“ geht uns alle an.

**Stunning sights in Milan.** The topic of EXPO2015 “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life” concerns us all.

## “CITY WITH GLOBAL OUTLOOK”

Özgül Özkan Yavuz, General Manager of the Istanbul Convention Bureau



Photo: ICVB

**Özgül Özkan Yavuz** is the General Manager of the Istanbul Convention & Visitors Bureau (ICVB). Its main goal is to represent Istanbul around the world and to seek international associations and corporations planning to hold high-profile international congresses and events.

[www.icvb.org.tr](http://www.icvb.org.tr)

### ■ CIM: What makes Istanbul a world unique meeting destination?

**Özgül Özkan Yavuz:** Having been a historical meeting point between East and West and capital of the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman empires, Istanbul is an Unesco World Heritage Site but also a hub for contemporary artistic developments and creative industries. 22,000 international companies operate here. The Istanbul Stock Exchange offers investment opportunities in a reliable trading environment. Istanbul aims higher with the International Finance Center Capital project sharing the vision of “Istanbul shall first become a regional, and ultimately a global financial center”. As the youngest population in top European Cities, our 49 universities and five technology development zones give a clue to Istanbul being a hub of learning, inspiration and innovation, perfectly in line with the philosophy of MICE.

### Which sectors in particular generate meetings for Istanbul?

Topics covered include medical sciences, science, industry, education, economics, transportation, education, commerce, technology, agriculture and law. The medical sector is strongly represented by usually around 22 percent.

### Do you have appointed ambassadors who promote Istanbul?

We conducted our first Ambassador Programme 2007. In 2011 we had 47 congress ambassadors and created a significant awareness of the meeting industry among universities. Our recent study shows that 14 percent of all meetings are held at universities’ venues. Our third Programme 2015 aims to introduce deans and rectors to the importance of universities for the meetings industry as well as to our own vision of Istanbul.

### What does your marketing strategy comprise of?

The new branding “A Tale of Two Cities” aims to demonstrate the variety of Istanbul – old and new – via ever-changing visual content to metaphorically reflect “A Tale of Two Cities”. Since January 2015 we have representatives in the USA and in the UK. In 2015, the bureau will organise for the first time ever an educational session with B2B sales events at a national and international level between members and association and meeting planners.

### How does the new product [howtoistanbul.com](http://howtoistanbul.com) help planners?

[www.howtoistanbul.com](http://www.howtoistanbul.com) is the official guide to Istanbul and provides information on its history, attractions, food scene, events and practical information as well as details of tours and accommodation with booking details. It also includes sections on conference venues, business Istanbul and sports clubs. It is a resource to discover the city and practical guide for planners.

*Katharina Brauer*