

turk-ita FORUM

Sixth Turkish – Italian Forum
Istanbul, November 18-19, 2009

Italy and Turkey:
opportunities for cultural dialogue
joint proposals for action in civil society

"None of the views and proposals written in this booklet is to be considered as reflecting the opinions of the UniCredit Group and the Center for Strategic Research, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Turkey but they are to be considered as the views and proposals of the representatives of the civil society."



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INTRODUCTION

The Italian-Turkish Dialogue Forum was established in Rome in November 2004 on the initiative of UniCredit Group, the Center of Strategic Research (SAM), the Italian and Turkish Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and *East and Limes*, periodicals in the fields of geopolitics and international politics.

It is a high-profile cultural and political event, the aim of which is to encourage dialogue between Italian and Turkish societies and to support Turkey's accession to the European Union. Over the years, the forum has set up round tables, bringing together Italian and Turkish experts, representatives from the worlds of politics, economics, institutions and civil society to discuss topics of political, economic and cultural importance relating to the life of the two countries and to the development of common relations.

During the 2008 edition of the forum, held in Rome, the participants agreed to set out a new approach, aimed at reinforcing the role of the forum as an opportunity to develop proposals and ideas to further explore dialogue between the two countries. The contributions of civil society and of the experts from both countries, who participated in discussions on a purely voluntary basis, were directed at formulating ideas and plans for activities that could be carried out to stimulate better mutual awareness and to close the information gap that often lies behind potential, reciprocal distrust and prejudice.

The 2009 edition of the forum, to be held in Istanbul on November 18 and 19, will conclude the first stage of the work started last year. The basis for this stage is a joint analysis of the distorted images of the two countries that often hinder dialogue, thereby preventing real opportunities linked to closer and deeper relations between the two countries from being exploited.

During the past year, the experts have decided to focus their efforts on topics in the cultural sphere.

Following the last edition, therefore, two working groups were established in Turkey and in Italy, comprised of experts from each society in the fields of culture and higher education, which have worked in parallel over the year. The result is a series of shared observations and proposals aimed at seizing the many opportunities associated with closer cultural dialogue between the two countries.

Within this topic, the following areas were designated as priority, and therefore as the focus of the efforts of the working groups:

- The role of women in Turkish and Italian society

- The contribution of younger generations to intercultural dialogue and the role of education in developing talent
- The opportunities resulting from multicultural factors and the development of dialogue between Turkey and Europe

The observations and the proposals made by the working groups are guided by several strategic principles and recommendations discussed during the Fifth Dialogue Forum held in Rome in November 2008, which can be summarized as follows:

- Proposals and initiatives should be based on common values. Even though the analysis started as an exploration of current differences and the reticence of public opinion, it was decided to focus on the opportunities triggered by relations between the two countries. From this perspective, the objective of the working group was to encourage a relationship based on solidarity between the two countries and their respective communities.
- Recognition and acceptance of diversity. The mutual recognition and acceptance of the elements of diversity that characterize Turkish and European societies were identified as fundamental aspects of encouraging dialogue.
- The selected topics for discussion should be important to both Italian and Turkish societies. The objective of the working group was to explore and formulate joint Italian-Turkish proposals on several cultural aspects of relations between the two countries. The topics to be discussed were appraised equally by both sides.
- To encourage higher mutual awareness. Members of the working group agreed that some of the difficulties regarding relations are often linked to the Italian public's poor knowledge of Turkey and vice versa. A study conducted internally for UniCredit Group, which explored several aspects of public opinion in both countries vis-à-vis the other, showed how a higher level of willingness and openness towards the other culture goes hand in hand with the possession of better information, knowledge and direct experience. It is therefore a priority to identify solutions involving the media and communications spheres to remedy this information gap.

UniCredit Group and SAM would like to take this opportunity to thank the representatives from the worlds of culture, academia, art, enterprise and politics, who participated in this joint exercise as experts in the relevant topics and as specialists in relations between the two countries. We would like to thank them for dedicating their time, experience and imagination to

formulating the contributions described in the following. Special thanks also to **TNS** for its support of this project through the survey on the perceptions, and **IAI** (Istituto Affari Internazionali) for the analysis of the data and the development of the Chapter *Women and multiculturalism in Turkey and Italy*.

WOMEN AND MULTICULTURALISM IN TURKEY AND ITALY

Strengthening the dialogue between the two cultures

As part of the 2009 Italian-Turkish Forum focused on intercultural dialogue, UniCredit Group decided to develop a survey on the mutual perceptions of public opinion in Italy and Turkey. The survey was conducted by TNS, a leading polling organization.¹ The goal was to unveil misperceptions and stereotypes so as to identify areas in which more work is needed to reduce cultural barriers between the two countries.

Turkey has made much progress in the last 10 years towards achieving an ever more modern and open society. Many positive changes have been brought about by the reforms undertaken by the Turkish government since 1999 to meet EU standards. Nevertheless, reading the Italian press and the results of international polls or listening to the political debate in Italy, observers get the impression that the dynamism and development of the Turkish economy and society are underestimated or simply ignored. As a result, the organizers decided to investigate how Turkish society is perceived in Italy and how distant these perceptions are from those that the Turkish public has of European countries as a whole and of Italy in particular.

In general terms, the survey highlights three key aspects of the relationship between the two countries.

Turks feel close to Italians and are fascinated by Italy's culture and history, but Italians do not know enough about Turkey, especially as regards Turkish contemporary society, its internal dynamics and trends. Lack of information often feeds misperceptions. Sadly, the relationship between Italians and Turks still seems pervaded by a number of stereotypes.

The second aspect is that young people, in both Italy and Turkey, seem the most willing to learn more about the other society and its culture, as well as to support greater cooperation and closer intercultural dialogue between the two countries.

This is highly encouraging, not only because, as is often pointed out, "the youth of today makes the society of tomorrow," but more specifically in consideration of Turkey's comparatively large, young population (According to the 2007 Census, around 60% of Turks are under the age of 30).² While recent studies have

underlined a certain apathy on the part of young Turks,³ the data of the TNS survey encourages optimism, as it portrays the Turkish youth as an open-minded and forward-looking sector of Turkish society.⁴

The third aspect that emerges is that the most promising approach to demolishing existing myths and misperceptions between Italians and Turks is an indirect one.

Italians and Turks who have traveled to the other country as tourists tend to be more informed and also have more favorable opinions of the other society and culture. Italians and Turks who have had the chance to learn about the other country from relatives or friends, tend to trust this information more than information provided by the media or government. They also seem to be more inclined towards closer dialogue between the two cultures. In other words, what seems to be needed is, on the one hand, reliable information, and on the other, the chance to familiarize with "the other."

The image of the other

Looking at available statistics on Italian tourist destinations, Turkey ranks much lower as a preferred tourist destination than other Mediterranean countries such as Spain, Croatia, Egypt and Morocco. Bank of Italy data reveal that the number of Italians who traveled to Turkey increased between 2006 and 2008 (from 215,000 to 260,000). This growth has been less pronounced, however, than for Egypt (from 623,000 to 929,000) and Morocco (294,000 to 398,000), both of which start out from higher absolute levels.⁵ In the TNS survey, countries displaying higher levels of tourist flows were sometimes seen in a more favorable light than Turkey, even as regards aspects of those societies that do not have a direct bearing on such traits as hospitality and receptivity.

Out of a rich basket of European and Mediterranean countries submitted for their consideration, Italians declare that they feel sentiments of real *closeness* only with the Spaniards, Germans, Croatians and English; but Egyptians and Turks are also seen by the average Italian

¹ Unicredit-TNS, "Women and Multiculturalism in Turkey and in Italy. How to Strengthen the Dialogue between the Two Cultures," September 2009.

² TurkStat, Turkish Statistical Institute, http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/AltKategori.do?ust_id=11.

³ Ibrahim Kalin, "A Bleak Picture of Turkish Youth," *Today's Zaman*, May 22, 2008, <http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/columnists-142515-a-bleak-picture-of-turkish-youth.html>.

⁴ United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report, "Youth in Turkey," 2008, <http://europeandcis.undp.org/poverty/mdghdpm/show/7153E9AF-F203-1EE9-B3404D3FE67422D4>.

⁵ Banca d'Italia, "Turismo Internazionale dell'Italia," June 2009, www.bancaditalia.it/statistiche/rapp_estero/altre_stat/turismo-int.

as belonging to a different culture. When asked if they are *interested* in the culture of these nations, however, Italians are definitely open, including towards Turkey. Italians' interest in Turkey increases as their level of education rises. Italian young people (age 18-34) feel significantly closer to and more interested in exploring and familiarizing themselves with Turkish culture than other age groups. Not all the Italians who traveled to Turkey came back with the impression that Italy and Turkey are similar culturally and socially. But among those who have had the chance to visit Turkey, one can find higher levels of interest and stronger feelings of closeness and belonging.

The same basket of countries submitted for consideration by Turkish interviewees highlighted a different reaction. Italy stands out as the one country for which sentiments of closeness are the strongest, even if Turks also seem to be fairly proud of their own identity as Turks and are not too keen on identifying themselves with any foreign peoples. With the exception of Egypt, Italy is also the country that attracts the highest levels of interest in its rich culture and traditions. Young people are the segment of Turkish society that displays the highest level of interest in Italy. Stronger feelings of closeness can be found among the more educated, who are also those who feel closest to Italians culturally and historically.

When it comes to positive traits associated with Turkey, Italians seem familiar with the evolution of the country's role in the region, and acknowledge its "strategic role" as a country at the crossroads of different cultures and continents.

Italians also seem to have some familiarity with Turkey's history, which played a very important role in the history of Europe. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the "founding father" of the Turkish Republic, is by far the Turkish figure that Italians know the best. This is encouraging, as Atatürk remains a historic national leader in today's Turkey. The achievements of his statesmanship are recognized by both secular and non-secular elites, as Atatürk espoused aspirations that have been shared by the Turkish people as a whole, such as modernization.

The Italian public, however, seems much less aware of the positive development of the Turkish economy, and in particular its dynamism, which has, in recent years, put Turkey among the fastest-growing countries in Europe (Before the crisis, Turkey's annual GDP growth rate averaged 6%, around five times that of the Italian economy).⁶ Italians also comparatively undervalue the

⁶ International Monetary Fund, "World Economic Outlook Database," July 2009, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2009/01/weodata/index.a.spx>.

association between Turkey and its "young economy," even though Turkey is "young," not only in terms of the position that youth occupy in its workforce, but also in terms of the recent expansion of its service sector and "new technologies."

This lack of information about Turkey's economic potential is particularly worrying, as Italy has traditionally figured among Turkey's top trading partners. In 2008, Italy ranked as Turkey's third-largest trading partner in Europe, behind Russia and Germany (USD 18.8 billion, +7.5% from 2007)⁷.

Italians also seem to underestimate Turkey's rich and growing handicrafts sector, which adds to the country's tourist potential.

Finally, the Italian public has only limited knowledge and appreciation of Turkish cuisine, which builds on a long culinary tradition and overlaps to some degree with Italian cuisine. It is considered among the finest in the Mediterranean, the Middle East and the Balkans.

Turks, for their part, seem to have a somewhat more extensive and also more accurate knowledge of contemporary Italy, even if their opinions are not completely free from misperceptions. Besides subscribing to the traditional image of Italy as a beautiful, hospitable and culture-rich country, Turks are ready to rank Italy higher than other Mediterranean countries, such as Spain, Croatia and Egypt, when it comes to economic and political indicators. Among them, Italy's economic and political presence in the Mediterranean seems to be important. Turks also recognize that Italy has achieved high levels of socio-economic development and see Italians as well-disposed towards Turkey and its culture.

When it comes to negative perceptions, Turks tend to associate Italy with long-standing problems of Italian society, such as the mafia and organized crime, and to a way of life that is considered by some as having departed too much from traditional values and norms. Some Turks also seem worried about the resurgence of xenophobia and the spread of "Islamophobia" in Italy and Europe more broadly.

The condition of women and multiculturalism

The survey conducted by TNS also investigated the perceptions of the Italian and Turkish publics in two focus areas: the condition of women and multiculturalism. There was reason to believe, in fact, that preconceptions and stereotypes in these two fields tend to be even more widespread and deep-seated.

⁷ Istituto Commercio Estero (ICE), Joint Country Report on Turkey (2008) by ICE and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.ice.it/paesi/pdf/turchia.pdf>.

Unfortunately, the survey confirmed that there are several deep-seated stereotypes, especially regarding the condition of women. These stereotypes, moreover, seem to have a direct impact on how the two peoples look at each other in more general terms. In other words, (mis)perceptions about women and multiculturalism often end up shaping (distorted) images of Italy and Turkey as a whole.

These stereotypes and preconceptions seem notably less common and widespread among Turks than among Italians. Misperceptions on the Turkish side, when they exist, tend to overestimate the degree of emancipation. Turks think that Italian women have reached a high degree of emancipation and that their current condition is not substantially different from the European average. The vast majority of Turks, for instance, believe that women in Italy already enjoy equal opportunities for promotion and have equal access to politics – a view that is optimistic, to say the least, as available statistics show that the average income level of Italian women is about half that of men and that the number of women in parliament is only about 20%.⁸ Only around a fifth of Turks believe that Italian women enjoy lower levels of equality in both the domestic and work environments than in the rest of Europe.

On both the condition of women and multiculturalism, Italians seem to have an uninformed, when not distorted, view of the situation in Turkey. Particularly worrying is the gap between perception and reality regarding the condition of women. Large segments of the Italian public have prejudices, portraying Turkish women as inherently discriminated against in society. Only a minority of Italians think that women are free to choose whether to cover their hair in Turkey – a perception that may have been reinforced by controversies extensively covered by the Italian media, such as the headscarf issue. Only one percent of Italians think that gender equality has been achieved in Turkey. This percentage is much higher among Turks (19%), although Turkish women (not unlike Italian women in the Italian context) are notably less satisfied.

Statistics on the condition of women in Turkey are not encouraging. Participation of women in the labor force, which had grown in the past, seems to have undergone a decrease in recent years.⁹ Several women's associations and NGOs lament the persistence of domestic violence in households and unfair treatment in certain sectors. The fraction of Turkish women in

parliament is still around 9% and is sometimes lower at the municipal level.¹⁰

At the same time, however, progress has been made in many fields, and the Italian public's perception of Turkish women as structurally discriminated against and victimized in society does not do justice to the history of women's emancipation in Turkey.

As is often pointed out when public perceptions are contrasted with reality, Turkey had a female prime minister in the 1990s, whereas Italy has never had one in its entire history. Mrs. Tansu Penbe Çiller, an economist by education, entered politics in November 1990, soon becoming a national leader. Among the accomplishments of her statesmanship, the EU-Turkey Customs Union Agreement of 1995 stands out, which brought Turkey closer economically to the countries of the European Union and paved the way for the decision, taken four years later by the European Council, to grant candidate status to Turkey.

As far as education is concerned, Turkish women seem to have made substantial progress in recent years, bringing them to levels comparable to (although still lower than) those in EU countries. Turkey has recorded high growth rates in female enrolment at all levels of education, sometimes higher than the EU average. Between 2000 and 2007, for instance, female enrolment in secondary education jumped by six points and tertiary education by more than 10 points, with female students in university almost doubling in number.¹¹ The female to male gross enrolment ratio also improved, passing from 90.7 to 95.4 in primary education, 74.6 to 82.8 in secondary education, and 68.2 to 75.4 in tertiary education between 2000 and 2007. It is noteworthy that the field of gender studies has become increasingly popular among female university students.

Despite the negative data mentioned above, Turkey still displays much lower levels of female unemployment (both youth and adult) than other countries of the region. Unemployment before the recent economic crisis was more or less at the same level for women and men. Wages increased more in relative terms for the female population than for the male population between 2000 and 2007. A further notable fact is that employment in the service sector has seen higher and faster growth rates for Turkish women than men

⁸ ARCI Donna website, <http://www.arcidonna.org/index.php/donne/notizie-donne/Elezioni-2008-lieve-aumento-delle-donne-in-parlamento.-Male-Berlusconi-e-Lega-poco-meglio-il-PD.html>.

⁹ European Commission Progress Report on Turkey, 2008, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/press_corner/key_documents/reports_nov_2008/turkey_progress_report_en.pdf.

¹⁰ "Women in Power and Decision-Making," report by the Turkish Republic Prime Ministry Directorate General on the Status of Women, http://www.ksgm.gov.tr/en/publications_books.php.

¹¹ World Bank, Turkey page, <http://www.worldbank.org/tr>. Following data are also drawn from the World Bank statistical database. See <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/DATASTATISTICS/0,,contentMDK:20535285~menuPK:1390200~pagePK:64133150~piPK:64133175~theSitePK:239419,00.html>.

(almost 80% of the female workforce is employed in services against only 56% of the male).

Turkish women, moreover, seem to stand out when it comes to entrepreneurship. NGOs and other institutions have actively promoted female entrepreneurship by providing training and support for businesswomen who have just entered business life. "The Global Gender Equality 2006 Report" highlighted that the chances of women being promoted to leadership positions in Turkish enterprises are greater than in many EU and OECD countries.¹² According to Eurostat (2008), there are more women on the management boards of large businesses in Turkey than there are in Italy.¹³

Other improvements in the condition of women, resulting from the reforms that Turkey undertook in the run-up to the opening of negotiations with the EU and the four years that have now passed since the accession process started, have yet to be reflected in the statistics.

In 1998, a year before Turkey was granted formal candidate status by the EU, the Turkish Parliament ratified a new law against domestic violence. The Law on the Protection of the Family was designed to protect women who suffer from all kinds of domestic violence and to fight the culture, rather than just the practice, of gender discrimination. The law is the fruit of more than 20 years of intense campaigning on the part of the women's movement. Two independent NGOs, the Purple Roof Women's Shelter Foundation and the Altindas Women's Solidarity Foundation, led the campaign. Another NGO closely involved in the campaign was Women for Women's Rights – New Ways, still active in the country.

In 2001, a new Turkish Civil Code was approved. In the context of the family, the new code abolished the supremacy of men and established full equality. Among other provisions, the code sets 18 as the legal minimum age for marriage. The husband is no longer the head of the family. The concept of "illegitimate" children, used to refer to children born out of wedlock, was abolished.

In 2004, the Turkish Penal Code was amended with a view to increasing penalties for certain forms of "honor crimes" involving women. Most recently, in March 2009, a special commission was established in the

Turkish parliament under the name of the "Women and Men Equal Opportunities Commission."

All these achievements have been recognized and praised by the European Commission, which continuously monitors Turkey's progress towards the attainment of EU standards.¹⁴ On women's rights, the EC Progress Report (2009) reads, "awareness-raising activities and gender sensitivity training programmes for public service and health personnel have continued. In April 2009 a protocol was signed between the Directorate-General for Women's Status and the Ministry of Justice with a view to training prosecutors and judges on violence against women. Women's NGOs launched campaigns to increase female participation in local elections, such as the '50/50 equality' campaign, run simultaneously with the European Women's Lobby's '50/50 no modern European democracy without gender equality' campaign."¹⁵ The report admits, however, that "gender equality remains a major challenge in Turkey and a gender equality body as required by the *acquis* has yet to be established."

Although often unaware of these facts and trends, Italians are not pessimistic about equal gender opportunities in Turkey. The majority of Italians are confident that gender equality will be achieved. This outcome is believed to be realistic by more or less an equal number of Italian men and women.

More importantly, Italians state clearly that further progress in the attainment of women's emancipation would significantly affect their opinion on the issue of Turkey's EU membership by making the prospect much more desirable. This is a noteworthy point, as it highlights a "dynamic element" of the survey: Italians currently have a poor view of women's place in Turkish society, but were positive developments to take place, this opinion would change, with Turkey as a whole becoming more attractive as a country and a culture.

On multiculturalism, the majority of Turks support the view that immigration in Europe has enriched European countries, making them more diverse and hospitable. This opinion receives even stronger support from Turkish youth. At the same time, many recognize that multiculturalism in Europe may have in some cases weakened existing local traditions, with a potentially negative impact on national "identities."

¹² See "Women in Power and Decision-Making," op. cit. See also "Women and Economy," 2008, report by the Turkish Republic Prime Ministry Directorate General on the Status of Women, http://www.ksgm.gov.tr/Pdf/ekonomi_ing.pdf.

¹³ Eurostat Statistical Books, *The Life of Women and Men in Europe*, 2008, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=sv&catId=681&newsId=240&furtherNews=yes>.

¹⁴ European Commission, "Progress Report on Turkey," 2008, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/press_corner/key_documents/reports_nov_2008/turkey_progress_report_en.pdf. The report acknowledges some positive changes but also admits that "gender equality remains a major challenge."

¹⁵ EC – DG Enlargement, "Progress Report on Turkey," http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2009/tr_rapport_2009_en.pdf.

Italians, when asked about multiculturalism, either betray a lack of knowledge or seem to easily embrace stereotypes. For instance, Italians seem to ignore the fact that Turkey has always been highly multicultural and that Istanbul is one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world. Italians also seem to ignore the fact that Turkey has borders with many countries and has long been a country of immigration, not only of emigration. Turkish communities in Europe, especially in Germany, are important in size, but nothing compares to the migration inflows that Turkey has witnessed throughout its history, first as the heart of the multinational Ottoman Empire and later as a republic.

Initiatives moving in the direction of greater interchange between the two countries hold potential, as both Italians and Turks seem well-disposed towards the concept of multiculturalism itself. A vast majority of Italians believe that the presence of people from foreign countries in Italy has “enriched” Italian culture and has not significantly weakened Italian national traditions. One may conclude that Italians do value tolerance and diversity, despite sometimes displaying racist attitudes. This may also help explain why they would like to see these same values respected in other societies, including Turkey. The same may be said for the Turks, who, although having some concerns about the impact of immigration on national culture and traditions, are unequivocal about preferring diversity and openness to uniformity and closure. Positive attitudes towards multiculturalism, it is worth noting, are even more pronounced among the more educated and the young in both countries.

Sources of information and attitudes towards the future

Lack of basic knowledge about their respective countries remains an important factor in determining the persistence of misperceptions among both Italians and Turks. A look at sources of information may highlight some issues and priorities for action.

Both Italians and Turks admit that they rely mainly on TV, the press and the internet (although the internet seems much more popular among Turks than Italians). They are also both ready to recognize that documentaries could prove useful for improving and disseminating knowledge about their respective countries. However, when it comes to the reliability and authoritativeness of sources, TV shows and programs drop to much lower levels, and both Italians and Turks express a preference for personal contacts. The latter can be direct or even indirect, through relatives or friends. They also consider NGOs as reliable and trustworthy sources and prefer information from international organizations to information from their own national elites, although Turks seem to have a better opinion of their politicians than Italians do.

Unfortunately, however, Italians and Turks principally form their opinions of each other by watching TV shows and movies, and reading the press. These media are so commercial that they often are unable to fight stereotypes and misperceptions. In their attempt to please and satisfy the public, they actually often follow the common opinion rather than provide objective information. Yet, the ability of these media to invert existing trends and demolish stereotypes should not be underestimated. This would be particularly true if they were given incentives to do so. Turks, for instance, seem to like the idea of dedicated shows or even channels to promote intercultural dialogue. Italians, for their part, would not mind having the chance to watch a movie highlighting some aspects of contemporary Turkish society. If produced in a creative and intelligent way, these productions could prove commercial, inducing the media to buy them.

It is worth noting that the emphasis on relying on personal contacts does not necessarily reflect an uneasiness with more modern and mediated means of information. Rather, it reflects the importance of the simple human element in nurturing encounters between two cultures. Young people in both Italy and Turkey are even more inclined than other age groups to rely on personal contacts. It is not surprising – but it should be fully appreciated – that student exchanges are seen by both Turks and Italians as a practical and very useful way to foster encounters. Programs such as Erasmus have become very popular, bringing hundreds of students to Turkey from Europe and vice versa. These programs could be expanded further and new ones created. Similar initiatives that also have great potential are the “twinning of cities” and joint cultural projects. Other activities mentioned by both Turks and Italians include exchanges between people in similar occupations in their native countries, and artistic and cultural events, as well as expositions and fairs. As already noted, tourism is also considered a useful means of improving knowledge of a foreign culture.

Not to be underestimated is the broad role of education: For Italians and Turks, the discovery and understanding of foreign cultures should start at school. Aware of the fact that Turkey’s image is often distorted abroad, some Turks believe that specific TV spots or announcements could be prepared to correct perceptions.

Turkey and the European Union

A vast majority of Italians state that one of the positive effects of Turkey’s membership in the EU would be the “cultural enrichment” that this would bring about.

Italians also recognize that Turkey’s EU membership would provide Europe with greater stability and more

leverage in foreign affairs. Turkey's increasingly constructive relations with its neighbors, starting with Armenia, and its mediating role in the Middle East (Turkey has been mediating between Israel and Syria, for instance), is generally seen positively by EU leaders as they aim to develop a more effective and ambitious EU foreign policy.

Italians are also not blind to the benefits that Turkey's EU membership would have on business and trade relations, although some concern exists about the effects of possible migration flows and the impact on Italian employment. The majority of Italians, moreover, agree that Turkey's integration would facilitate the dialogue between the "West" and the "East," an objective that Turkish leaders have fully endorsed by leading such initiatives as the "Alliance of Civilizations." Proposed by Spanish President José Luis Zapatero in 2005, the Alliance has been co-sponsored by the Turkish government as a way to defuse conflicts between religious groups and stem the spread of fanaticism and extremism.¹⁶

When asked directly about the desirability of Turkey's membership in the EU, Italians confirmed that they are among the least skeptical in Europe. Only a minority is strongly opposed, although there are different levels of enthusiasm and support among those who are open to it. This is clearly different from the data coming from other EU countries, where skepticism if not outright opposition is much more widespread.¹⁷

In consideration of the bipartisan support that Turkey's EU membership enjoys among Italian political parties (only a few parties are resolutely against it), Italy has the potential to act as a strong advocate in Europe for swift and successful negotiations. As a matter of fact, the Italian government has already championed the cause of Turkish integration, often trying to bring pressure on those EU member states that are struggling with internal opposition. Governments of both the center-left and the center-right have stressed the benefits that Turkey's full membership in the EU would bring to the Italian and European economies. Italian political elites have also portrayed Turkey as a bridge between cultures and religions, underlining the highly positive role that Turkey is playing as a force of peace in the Middle East.

Despite these many positive features, the overall picture of Italians' attitudes towards the prospect of Turkey's entry into the EU also has some troubling aspects. Thirteen percent of Italians currently have no

opinion on Turkey's EU membership. This should be seen as an invitation to disseminate more and better information on the subject and familiarize Italians with the many faces of contemporary Turkish society.

¹⁶ United Nations, Alliance of Civilizations, <http://www.unaoc.org/content/view/full/63/79/lang.english/>

¹⁷ For an overview of European debates on Turkey, see, Nathalie Tocci ed. 'Talking Turkey in Europe', QUADERNI IAI, December 2008 http://www.iai.it/sections/pubblicazioni/iai_quaderni/Indici/quadern_o_E_13.htm

THE PROPOSALS

This section presents the proposals developed and discussed by the Italian and Turkish experts involved in the activities of the working groups during the year, as coordinated by the organizers of the forums in Italy and Turkey. These ideas, written jointly, are at times more structured and at others more schematic. They represent the result of intensive teamwork and aim to be a productive and constructive contribution by the Turkish and Italian communities to re-launch an intense cultural dialogue based on better mutual awareness.

The role of women in Turkish and Italian society

The past decades have placed the goal of gender equality on the agenda of all states and societies worldwide. While inequality between women and men continues to be a universal and common reality, there is a wide variation in the actual position women occupy within and among societies. An understanding of woman's role and status in Turkish and Italian societies – countries representing diverse political, economic and cultural traditions – will not only facilitate building bridges and enhancing collaboration between the two, but will also contribute to identifying the opportunities and obstacles facing the gender equality agenda in different contexts.

Towards this end, positive developments have taken place in three key areas:

- Female entrepreneurship;
- Women in arts and sciences;
- Gender-sensitive legislation.

In the following section, different categories of activities are envisaged to explore these three key areas.

The proposals described below are mainly aimed at:

- Developing joint initiatives between Turkish and Italian women active in economic and public life;
- Strengthening networking, especially creating links between associations and NGOs;
- Involving Italian and Turkish media in presenting a more balanced picture of the gender conditions in Turkey and Italy, and their evolution.

Turkish-Italian Businesswomen's Meetings

Objectives

- Bringing successful female entrepreneurs together and helping them to draw on each other's experiences in the business realm
- Promoting business linkages among Turkish and Italian businesswomen
- Overcoming the reciprocal stereotypes linked to the role of women in society (both Turkish and Italian) by presenting successful examples and areas for improvement

Beneficiaries

Turkish and Italian women in the business world

Activities

- Under the project, regular women-to-women business meetings can be held in both Turkey and Italy, as an initiative of organizations in Turkey, such as the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges in Turkey (TOBB) and the Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (TUSİAD), and of their Italian counterparts.
- This network can facilitate the preparation of a documentary on Turkish and Italian female entrepreneurs, which could be entitled "Women in the Business World."
- This project can also serve as a platform for proposals by women from both countries, screened through a competition financed jointly by Turkish and Italian businesswomen. Within this framework, female-oriented projects in the fields of theater and cinema might be encouraged.

Council of Women Leaders

<i>Objectives</i>	Overcoming the reciprocal stereotypes linked to the role of women in society (both Turkish and Italian) by presenting examples of success and areas for improvement
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	Turkish and Italian women
<i>Activities</i>	Creating opportunities for periodic (annual) meetings between a group of Italian and Turkish women who have achieved high levels of responsibility and success in their respective professional areas (political, institutional, economic, academic, artistic, etc.), in order to examine and share their experiences and the career development paths of women, while presenting success stories and identifying areas for improvement and growth. The meeting could be composed of two separate events, one behind closed doors in order to encourage discussion and debate, and one open to the public, at which examples of success could be presented.

Academic Network of Turkish and Italian Women

<i>Objectives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reinforcing academic linkages among female scholars• Enhancing the exchange of reciprocal knowledge of women's status in Turkish and Italian societies• Outlining the role of women in the academic and professional worlds
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	Turkish and Italian women from the academic world
<i>Activities</i>	<p>The project aims to create a Turkish-Italian Academic Network of Women by launching several joint activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organizing academic events at Turkish and Italian universities on several issues, including women's rights• Making a comparative academic study of Turkish and Italian legislation affecting women's status• Launching training programs for female graduates in Turkey and Italy through the initiative of professional institutions• Preparing an academic study or documentary on commonalities between Turkey and Italy relating to the role of women in Mediterranean culture• Creating a Turkish-Italian journal, in order to publicize periodically the results of the network's academic activities• Carrying out comparative research aimed at investigating the role of women in the academic and professional worlds, through a study addressing key female figures in both societies:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The research will involve a small group of Turkish and Italian students, supervised by professors and research fellows.○ The study will be conducted to encompass the panorama of women's status in Italian and Turkish societies.○ At the end of the study, a publication will provide the first results of the joint research and identify further issues to be investigated. This publication will be presented in a bilateral academic seminar.

- Organizing an Ita-Turk Summer School on gender issues:
 - It will involve Italian and Turkish students at the graduate level.
 - It will last for a month of the summer – half of which will be spent in Turkey and half in Italy.
 - It will be focused on academic programs created ad hoc.
 - Collateral events (guided tours, participation in local cultural events, etc.) taking place during that period will aim for a better understanding of the two cultural heritages.

Turkish-Italian Women’s NGO Network

- Objectives*
- Establishing linkages among Turkish and Italian women’s NGOs
 - Providing a platform for dialogue and exchange of information about their activities and programs
- Beneficiaries*
- Turkish and Italian women from civil society
- Activities*
- Holding meetings among the Turkish and Italian women’s NGOs
- Organizing a series of partnership-building activities between the stakeholders of Turkish and Italian women’s NGOs, reinforced by project-oriented seminars/meetings

Stories of Women

- Objectives*
- By presenting high-profile women from the different worlds of economics, culture, art, etc., the objective is to encourage better mutual knowledge of the place of women in the two countries.
- Beneficiaries*
- Italian and Turkish communities
- Activities*
- Creation of presentations for the media (TV, women’s press) built around “parallel interviews,” in which successful female figures from both countries are profiled:
- For each sphere identified (economics, politics, art, science, welfare, etc.) a pair of similar female personalities will be selected, one Turkish and one Italian. Both women will be interviewed using the same list of questions. For example, the interviewees could be the chairman of Confindustria Italiana and the chairman of TUSAID. The results, presented on television or in the press, could contribute to improving mutual knowledge of both societies, drawing attention to the similarities of the two.

Literary Works in Turkish and Italian

- Objectives*
- Highlighting the role of women in the development of each country’s literature
 - Acquainting literary audiences with the other country’s respective literary traditions and development
 - Promoting works from each literary tradition as well as contemporary authors
- Beneficiaries*
- Literary audience, including scholars and students from participating institutions, as well as a wider public interested in literature

- Activities*
- The project is based upon the translation of well-known novels by Turkish and Italian female authors into either Turkish or Italian.
 - As a part of the project, Zeynep Oral's bibliographic novel, *Tutkunun Romani*, in Turkish can be translated into Italian in memory of Leyla Gencer, who has an international reputation and is known as "*la Diva Turca*" in Italy.
 - The translated works can present contributions by Italian authors to the Women's Library in Istanbul.

Turkish-Italian Joint Fair

- Objectives*
- Providing a platform for the promotion of Turkish and Italian products, as well as traditional dishes and crafts
 - Promoting cultural familiarity through presentations of art, fashion exhibitions and training programs on traditional dishes and crafts

Beneficiaries Women in various fields, including business, fashion, cuisine and performance arts, as well as the wider public interested in Turkish and Italian cultures

- Activities*
- The core activity of the project is to organize a joint fair with extensive activities in several areas.
 - This fair is expected to be an arena in which female Turkish and Italian performers can produce their shows and female entrepreneurs from the fashion and textile sectors can promote their products. In addition, Turkish and Italian traditional dishes and traditionally female handicrafts could be promoted during this fair.
 - During the fair, joint concerts by female Turkish and Italian musicians can be held and music CDs can be recorded.
 - As part of the fair, exchange programs providing training in the best-known crafts of both countries can be launched, with support from trade corporations and chambers of artisans.
 - Joint fashion exhibitions can be organized to showcase clothing created by female Turkish and Italian designers.
 - The fair can also serve as a platform for new proposals for activities to be launched around the themes of "Woman-Olive" and "Woman-Mediterranean."
 - The fair can be inaugurated in 2010, when Istanbul will serve as the European Capital of Culture, and can be sustained in subsequent years.
 - Interviews with successful Turkish women in fields that interest the Italian public, such as architecture, art, sculpture, cinema, theater, opera and classical music, can be carried out and released in the media. One of these interviews could be with the Turkish minister in charge of Women's Affairs, on the subject of women's rights and Turkish initiatives involving women.

The contribution of younger generations to intercultural dialogue and the role of education in developing talents

The role of youth is crucial for the development of the societies. Young people are the social and economic capital for a country's development. Furthermore, in all societies, young people tend to be more open to dialogue and discussion. Therefore investing in young people, with a view to their ability to forge bonds and develop relationships that overcome differences of culture and identity, is strategic to future relations between the two countries. Investment in education and training activities in particular have a key role to play in this field.

It is a shared opinion among Turkish and Italian experts that currently existing mechanisms and tools available for the promotion of student and academic exchanges are not exploited enough and should be implemented

on a wider scale. Language skills are often a barrier in the development of study exchange programs, as well as administrative immigration procedures. The experts express the wish that authorities of both countries, together with academic institutions, will find simplified paths and new solutions for enhancing the exchange programs already in place and allowing their broader utilization.

The proposals developed encompass different spheres of the world of young people, including scholastic and academic environments, associations and non-government organizations, and the realm of art.

Joint Educational Efforts for Young People in Italy and Turkey

<i>Objectives</i>	To provide new educational opportunities for young people and to motivate them towards having an in-depth knowledge of each country
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	Young people in secondary and tertiary levels of education
<i>Activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The promotion of student-exchanges at the graduate-level within the framework of the Erasmus Program and organizing general meetings between Erasmus Program officials of the universities in the two countries.• The promotion of academically designed summer school activities between the universities of the two countries.• A joint initiative on a Turkish-Italian language course that may have similar features with the language-training program, currently conducted by the Turkish General Directorate for Youth and Sports, with the support of the Council of Europe.• The arrangement of cultural and social activities for Erasmus students.• The undertaking of academic research on changes in the perceptions of Erasmus students at the end of their exchange programs.

High School Twinning

<i>Objectives</i>	To encourage reciprocal knowledge between the younger generations, starting with an exchange on various cultural themes
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	Secondary school classes (schools specializing in the classics)
<i>Activities</i>	The promotion of twinning for Italian and Turkish secondary school classes, with a visit to the other country. The exchange may be structured into various levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The organization of study visits to Turkey/Italy built around specific themes linked to the study curriculum (e.g., in the case of Italian high schools and the counterpart Turkish institutes, there could be many aspects to examine linked to ancient history).

- The organization of teacher exchanges for courses of lessons on themes regarding:
 - Ancient history
 - Modern and contemporary history
 - Art history
- The creation of “Italian Corners” and “Turkish Corners” in the institute libraries with books, DVDs and material relating to the other country.

University Scholarships in Sectors of Excellence

<i>Objectives</i>	To encourage the exchange of knowledge on scientific themes and mutually assess the fields of university excellence in the two countries
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	Italian and Turkish university students
<i>Activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping areas of excellence in Italian and Turkish Universities • Promoting networking among the identified centers of excellence • Guaranteeing scholarships for Italian and Turkish university students to attend specialization courses on various subjects in which the other country excels

Creation of a Web of Interaction between Italian and Turkish Young People Through Non-Curricular Activities

<i>Objectives</i>	In addition to educational activities, youth interaction can be promoted in each country with a number of cultural and non-curricular activities.
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	Young people in general
<i>Activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The promotion of organized summer/youth camps consisting of athletic/cultural activities and voluntary service, and which serve to reinforce current practices. • The creation of an internet blog through which young people who have benefited from the Erasmus Program and European Voluntary Service of the EU Commission can share their opinions and impressions of Turkey and Italy. • The promotion of project proposals to be drawn up by the youth of both countries through a competition financed by Turkish-Italian businessmen. • The planned organization of exchange program initiatives involving trade corporations and artisan groups to train young people in the well-known crafts of the two countries, such as pottery, rug business or viniculture.

Strengthening of Collaboration Between Youth NGOs

<i>Objectives</i>	Promotion of sharing experiences and forming partnerships between youth NGOs
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	Youth NGOs in Italy and Turkey, Universities
<i>Activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The encouragement of mutual study visits by youth NGOs in Turkey and Italy. • The organization of a series of partnership-building activities between the stakeholders of Turkish and Italian youth NGOs through the reinforcement of project-making seminars/meetings.

- The planning of an Info-Fair that will host Turkish-Italian NGOs and universities, providing them a platform to present their activities and projects for youth.
- The organization of traveling caravans to provide universities and youth NGOs in one country with the opportunities and assets offered to young people in the other country.

Italian - Turkish Young Leaders Program

Objectives To create a community of young leaders (academics and representatives of the business and diplomatic world) who are reciprocally exposed to key cultural, social and economic issues in Italy and Turkey (or alternatively Europe and Turkey), and are linked by bonds of knowledge that can be consolidated over time

Beneficiaries 150/160 people under the age of 30 per year, ideally:

- 100 brilliant university students (50 per country) from economic, political or humanities faculties (or pursuing Master's degrees)
- 50-60 young business people, representatives of various category associations, think tanks and diplomatic institutes (25-30 in total per country)

Activities Each year the program involves:

A) Two summer courses (one in Italy and one in Turkey) for university students, lasting a maximum of 20 days.

B) Two workshops (one in Italy and one in Turkey) for young business leaders and institutional leaders, lasting a maximum of one week.

Both the courses and the workshops will tackle themes linked to the main economic, social and cultural challenges that face the two countries, and the potential for bilateral dialogue (with appropriate subject matter for different audiences of the two initiatives).

As well as traditional lessons, there will be workshops, testimonials and participation in cultural initiatives.

Each program also envisages meetings and socializing between the two groups of participants (in Italy, when the young Turks are there, and in Turkey when the the young Italians are visiting). This will aim to encourage the creation of relationships based on reciprocal knowledge that can be consolidated over time and through special initiatives.

Forum of Dialogue Between Young Italians and Turks

Objectives

- Creating a Permanent Forum of Dialogue between young Italian and Turkish students
- Reciprocal exchanging of knowledge and cultural cooperation
- Promoting joint cultural projects

Beneficiaries

Turkish and Italian students, young people interested in the Turkish-Italian dialogue

Activities

The project aims to extend and formalize an Ita-Turk Forum of Dialogue between young people:

- Young people from universities and the economic, political and civil society realms interested in Turkish-Italian dialogue will find a forum to meet and discuss some issues and share ideas.
- The “Young Section” will be articulated in workshop discussions, so that small groups of interest can focus in a determinate issue.
- Each group will propose a reference theme for carrying out concrete projects and promoting further subjects of discussion for the next Forum.
- The results of each Young Section will be presented in the official Ita-Turk Forum.

The tool that will permit the maintenance of this cultural cooperation will be the creation of a permanent network, as explained in the following section.

Permanent Network of Dialogue Between Young Italians and Turks

Objectives

- Creating a permanent network for dialogue between young Italian and Turkish students
- Reciprocal exchanging of knowledge and cultural cooperation
- Promoting joint cultural projects

Beneficiaries

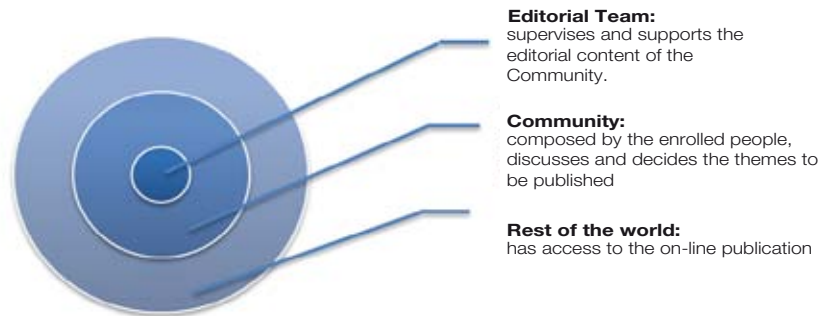
Turkish and Italian students, young people interested in the Turkish-Italian Dialogue

Activities

The project aims to extend and formalize a series of collaborations and concrete projects between the younger generations of Turkish and Italian society.

- The permanent network of dialogue aims at teaming up select young people who are active and truly interested in Turkish-Italian relations with a view to shaping the community.
- The network will be initially comprised of the young people who participated at the Young Section of the Ita-Turk Forum. The channels of enrollment will be the Forum itself and the universities.
- The network will be active in creating and managing a digital publication, i.e., a platform base on the best features of both a blog and a digital newspaper:
 - Blog technology will let the entire community internally share the themes that are worthy of discussion and decide which of should be the object of precise research and training projects, whose outcomes would be in the form of on-line publications. Only enrolled members will be allowed to participate in this first step of the discussion.
 - The electronic newspaper approach will rely on the Editorial Team, comprised of a very small group of people who are amongst the first enrolled. The main purpose of this team will be to proficiently address the back-end discussion and front-end management.
- The front-end, visible to the rest of the world, will consist of the on-line publication itself, which will be a clean and structured collection of articles, studies and research on the issues selected by the community so far.

Structure of the Permanent Network of Dialogue



This project would have the undoubted advantage of creating opportunities for a cultural and scientific exchange between the younger generations and the experts, which could be carried out via the Ita-Turk Forum.

The project aims to create a permanent and self-supporting network of dialogue, involving young people who are really interested, proactive and motivated. The community will continue to grow, thanks to privileged channels of enrollment and the reciprocity in sharing ideas, experiences and knowledge.

It will enhance the bilateral cultural relationship of a sensitive part of society, as young people will represent the future of any further dialogue experience.

Objectives

Art has always inspired relationships at various levels. The artist is a central character and an architect of dialogue within society. The latent energy in a work of art is its capacity to establish relationships. Artwork generates symbols, abbreviations, visual indicators, signs, empathy, sharing and, above all, produces relationships. Participation and transitivity are among the characteristics of art. Artistic practices and activities can take on a significant role in the triggering of social and cultural change.

It is therefore possible that the concept of “Art” constitutes a model of communication and exchange between different people.

Istanbul and Turkey have always been a crossroad for various cultures and, since the onset of globalization in the 1990s, Istanbul has become the real showcase and departure point for Turkish culture – a true “Gateway in the Mediterranean.”

A discussion platform

In Turkey, there are various important cultural and artistic festivals and over the past few years exhibitions of contemporary Turkish art have been organized both in Istanbul and Italy.

The *Istanbul Modern Museum*, *Platform Garanti Contemporary Art Center*, *Santralİstanbul*, and *La Biennale d’Arte*, are some of the most significant and successful art centers. But as of yet, no real residential, studio and international exchange project exists for young Turkish artists. Thus, one of the aims of the international residential project is to create a platform to promote the free circulation of the ideas and works of young artists.

Therefore, the *Mediterranean Gateways* project is an opportunity for exchange and intercultural dialogue between young artists in the two partner countries, Italy and Turkey, which belong to the same Mediterranean cultural matrix. The project will achieve its goals through a series of activities and meetings that aim to show culture as a resource for social and economic development, and which promote the country in terms of its cultural, artistic and environmental heritage.

Beneficiaries

Young Italian and Turkish artists

Activities

The residency would last several months and would cover various appointments, studios, seminars, and workshops so as to balance public thought and debate with the ultimate realization of a themed exhibition.

The group of young Turkish artists, coordinated by various lecturers or experts in the field, would be involved in an active workshop program with a similar group of young Italian artists.

The practical studio would be centered on the inter-disciplinary nature of contemporary visual languages and focused on various pivotal themes that are part of and reflect human and social issues and problems (e.g., the female condition in Turkish society, or youth and unemployment.)

Young Italian and Turkish artists are invited to spend a period of residency between Istanbul and Rome in 2010 (the year of “Istanbul 2010: European Capital of Culture”) in one or more locations known for contemporary art. They will collaboratively develop a themed project and organize an exhibition of contemporary art that can be shown in both countries involved.

The studio and the final show will aim to reveal a look at the similarities and differences between the two societies in terms of human conditions, concepts, perceptions, implications and individual relations. The focus will be on the multitude of expressive languages: painting, graphic arts, installation pieces/sculpture, photography, film, performance/theatre, writing, music/sound.

The project aims to support the group of young guest artists by making available to them other artists, experts or university lecturers of the host city. The experience is based on the principle of art being born of art.

This proposed platform is a place where an individual with strong creative potential may develop and enrich his or her own human and artistic potential by meeting and working in close contact with the other resident artists. It hopes to contribute to the development of future Turkish and Italian contemporary art.

The project involves:

- 14 residencies for two groups of artists (seven Italian and seven Turkish) held between Istanbul and Rome for a period of three months, hosted in buildings relating to art, such as museums, foundations and university faculties
- Accommodation, use of a studio, the provision of the materials necessary to produce the works and reimbursement of monthly expenses for the duration of the period of residence
- The creation of a traveling show to be set up in two prestigious art centers in Rome and Istanbul
- Publication of a catalog at the end of the project

Requirements

The project is planned to last three months and involves Italian and Turkish artists residing in Italy and Turkey, between the ages of 25 and 35, who have followed a complete training course (e.g., through a university, an academy of fine art, a conservatory, a design school, or other institution offering study in dance, theater, cinema, etc.) and have had, in the last three years, a personal or collective exhibition in a gallery or a public/private national/international museum.

The “Mediterranean Gateways” project also aims to involve other institutions in order to open a dialogue with other large artistic centers, as meetings between artists is an important opportunity for growth both at national and international levels.

Creation of Cooperation Networks Between the Art Sectors of the Two Countries

Objectives Art has the power to overcome the barriers that often hinder cultural dialogue. Encouraging the consolidation of relations between the art sectors of the two countries – and in particular between young Italian and Turkish artists – could reinforce ties between the two spheres and create new communication channels.

The final objective of the project is to nurture young artists and foster collaborative artistic enterprises that create opportunities for shared cultural experiences.

Beneficiaries Young Italian and Turkish artists and members of the art sector (e.g., gallery owners, critics, curators, etc.) in various fields (e.g., visual arts, literature, music, theatre, dance, cinema and audiovisual media, architecture, etc.)

- Activities**
- The creation of a network of Italian and Turkish universities, museums, galleries, artistic foundations, musical associations, festival of arts, specialized fairs, specialized press and reviews, among others.
 - The creation of a portal to host those existing institutions and professionals interested in participating in joint initiatives.
 - The creation of opportunities for project beneficiaries to meet and exchange opinions, thereby encouraging the development of joint projects such as exhibiting the work of young Turkish artists in Italy and vice versa.
 - To identify, for each year, a joint project for development in multiple artistic fields

Consolidation of the Collaboration Between Institutions Relevant to the Implementation of Youth Policies

<i>Objectives</i>	To give technical and institutional support to the national agencies and institutions in charge of the youth policies of Italy and Turkey
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	Universities, youth organizations, NGOs, national agencies/institutions
<i>Activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To exchange best practices on the attainment of secondary (high school) and tertiary (university) level qualifications in accordance with EU standards.• To reinforce the activities and partnerships of national youth agencies in order to increase the extent and scope of the European Voluntary Service Program conducted by the EU Commission via these agencies.• To organize a problem-solving seminar/meeting on the “obstacles to youth mobility” (e.g., denial of young artists’ visa/residence permit applications for projects approved by international institutions such as the EU). In addition to the participation of national youth agencies and youth organizations, the attendance of the European Commission, as well as the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of both Italy and Turkey, should be supported.• To exchange best practices between institutional specialists and responsible partners for the encouragement of youth entrepreneurship, including meetings among youth representatives and private sector companies.

The opportunities resulting from multi-cultural factors and the development of dialogue between Turkey and Europe

Cultural dialogue between Turkey and Italy precedes the birth of the two countries. This wealth of important history must be further disseminated and appreciated in order to fuel and renew dialogue between these two cultures. This is an important way to encourage mutual awareness capable of overcoming the prejudices and fears that often divide us, and to encourage the appreciation of those bonds and values that, even today, still unite the two societies.

The proposals presented in this section show possible ways to promote better mutual awareness of each country's historical roots and artistic and cultural heritage in a number of different forms. The media is recognized as playing a key role in shaping awareness. Tourism is also considered particularly important to increasing awareness and encouraging the two countries to become closer.

Promotion of Turkey in Italy by Using Local Media

- Objectives** To promote the image of Turkey by exploiting the opportunities offered by local media. This possible communication channel targets middle-aged/older readers who have deep territorial roots and are often characterized by strong prejudices and a higher degree of closure as regards cultural dialogue.
- Beneficiaries** Italian society, with specific focus on territorial situations
- Activities** In addition to the main TV channels that operate on a national scale, Italy has a wealth of small local channels that form a very important network in the Italian information system. The program schedules of these channels often offer opportunities for the free broadcast of high quality material to these networks by external parties.
- In order to exploit this opportunity, it would be useful to have a package of high quality material available for use in a broadcast proposal.

Exchange Between Italian and Turkish Journalists

- Objectives** To involve young Italians and Turks in activities to encourage better/more accurate knowledge of Italy and Turkey (and of relations between the two countries and with the European Union); to indirectly promote the case of Turkey's accession to the EU; to exploit the articles produced as "multipliers" to reach a wider audience, possibly non-experts, through publications. A contest will be involved to encourage the publication of articles on Italy-Turkey relations and Turkey-EU relations, and contestants will be required to submit previously published articles to gain access to the contest. The winners will then be required to write another article on the subject. It would be useful to involve a publishing house to guarantee that the winner's articles are published.
- Beneficiaries** The primary beneficiary is the public debate on relations between Turkey and Europe, as well as Turkey and Italy. This is a project that aims to launch a debate that is as open and informed as possible on the core issues of relations between Turkey, Italy and the whole of Europe. The other beneficiaries will obviously be the winners of the contest.
- Activities** A Journalism contest, open to young Italian and Turkish journalists (age 18-35) in print, television, radio and/or internet news media.
- To participate in the contest, journalists must submit one or more publications on the topic "Italy, Italy-Turkey" (for Turkish journalists), or "Turkey, Turkey-Italy, Turkey-European Union." Based on the value/content of the publication and of the curriculum vitae, five (or more) Italian and Turkish winners will be selected by a commission. The winning articles will be published in an

ad hoc publication to be distributed at the next Italy-Turkish Forum and on other occasions. There will also be a cash prize. A visit of one week to both countries will be organized for both groups, with a final meeting (in Rome, Istanbul or another city, such as Brussels), during which the journalists will be able to gain a deeper understanding of the country they have written about (e.g., through meetings organized with representatives of public companies, government officials, etc.)

At the end of the stay, the journalists will be asked to write a new article (or to produce a video service, etc.) based on the experience of their visit of the other country. (We could even consider having an article written jointly by an Italian and a Turkish journalist).

As described above, the activities are:

- The announcement of the contest (with a specific website and a campaign to promote awareness)
- The publication of the winning articles and their presentation
- The organization of trips to visit Turkey and Italy, and possibly other events (public meetings, meetings with trade associations, presentation of any other publications by the winners, etc.)
- Final meeting between winners (if in Brussels, this could include a meeting with one or more Italian MPs at the European Parliament)
- Publication of the final articles

Exploring Millennia-Old Cultural Interactions through Audio-Visual Arts and Academic/Literary Works

<i>Objectives</i>	To explore mutual interaction, the result of centuries-old relations between Turkish and Italian societies, and still-existing similar cultural characteristics in traditions, customs, habits and architecture.
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	The Turkish and Italian wider public, particularly academics and scholars – historians and art historians, as well as performers and artists.
<i>Activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The organizing of a joint photography or painting exhibition under the theme “Traces of the Turkish culture in Italy and the Italian culture in Turkey throughout history.”• On the occasion of Istanbul’s being the Cultural Capital of Europe in 2010, an exhibition to be held on Levantine architecture in Istanbul that could incorporate the production of an art history book on the same theme.• The organizing of an exposition on Levantine architecture in İzmir and, again, the publication of an art history book on the same theme.• The production of a short-film or documentary on the imperial monuments of Turkey in Italy and those of Italy in Turkey.• The creation of a documentary on Italian neo-classical architecture, such as the Ottoman-era Italian Embassy building in Istanbul.• The production of books and TV documentaries on the architectural and philosophical examination of the dome structures of the significant works of architecture, such as the Selimiye Mosque in Istanbul and the San Pietro Cathedral in Italy, under the theme of “Celestial Domes.”• The organization of exhibitions and meetings among Turkish and Italian museums under the theme “Millennium-Old Cultural Interactions.”• The organization of joint concerts with the participation of performers from both countries.• The musical interpretation of Turkish songs by Italian singers and Italian songs by Turkish singers.• The support of events in the fields of literature, art and music by the Italian futurists, to be organized in Istanbul.• The organization of academic events or seminars on Ottoman-Italian relations, to be attended by both Turkish and Italian historians.

- The publication of a book on the works of Turkish art in the Palace of the Venetian Ducat and in Venice.
- The publication of a book on the place of Venetian industrial sectors such as caftan, fabric, crystal and ceramic products in the Ottoman palace, and holding an exhibition under the same theme.
- The publication of a book and/or a documentary on the contributions of Venice/Genoa to Ottoman and Turkish naval technology.
- The ensuring of attendance of Turkish and Italian authors at book fairs organized in their respective countries and, on the occasion of these fairs, organizing special meetings between Italian and Turkish authors.
- An invitation to publishers from both countries to the book fairs launched respectively in the other country, and the support of the translation of literary work into either Italian or Turkish.
- The conducting of inventory research of historical documents related to Italian city-states – such as Venice, Genoa and Florence – in the Prime Ministry State Archives and Topkapı Palace Museum.
- A joint academic study on the influences of Roman law on Ottoman legislation, and support for the study’s publication.
- The establishment of a Turkish Cultural Center in order to meet the Turkish language-learning demands of the Italian people, including students who are planning to come to Turkey through the Erasmus Program and others from various professional sectors. The center will also provide information on Turkish culture.
- The support of exchange programs for the organization of workshops for young art historians under the aegis of the Erasmus Program.
- Publication of a joint issue on Turkish-Italian relations by two journals of popular history from the respective countries.

Lessons Learned from the Italian Emigrants’ Experiences by the Turkish Emigrants

<i>Objectives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transmitting Italian immigration organizations’ experiences in achieving unified communities to Turkish immigrants • Providing an exchange of ideas on ways for legally protecting the rights and interests of Turkish and Italian immigrants in their host countries, and conveying the experiences of each to the other side
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	Turkish and Italian immigrants from both countries, academics and practitioners interested in this area
<i>Activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The production of a documentary or short-film under the title “My Italian Friend,” which is about the friendship between an Italian and Turkish immigrant who leave their home countries and meet in a third country. By analyzing their lives and common adaptation problems in the host country, as well as the ways they strive to overcome these problems, the film is expected to culminate with the message “we are different, yet we are the same.” • The production of a documentary or short-film about the life of an Italian-Turkish married couple. • In the host countries for immigrants, establishing mechanisms that serve to bring together politicians of Turkish or Italian origin, and to offer a framework for cooperation and dialogue among them. • The establishment of a research center or an “Institute of Turkish and Italian Diasporas.” • Inviting Turks and Italians living in the same host country to the cultural activities organized by either side, and reinforcing of the launch of common cultural activities by both parties.

- Making a joint comparable academic study by Turkish and Italian universities or think tanks on the adaptation of Turkish and Italian immigrants to their host countries, as well as the protection of their rights and interests in these countries. The study may also cover the issues of their relationship with each other and the process of returning to their home countries.
- Depending upon the experience of the establishment of the Commission by the Italian government in the past, the initiation of the study and its examination process by the Turkish and Italian Bar Associations.
- The translation into Turkish of Italian literature on the experience of Italian immigrants in Europe.
- The hosting of workshops between immigration organizations from both sides.

Exchange of People in Italy and Turkey

Objectives Greater and more in-depth reciprocal knowledge; overcoming mistrust through knowledge of the others' daily lives

Beneficiaries The populations of Italy and Turkey through the viewing of television programs and journalistic reports

Activities A group of Italian people (approximately between five and ten) take the place, for one week, of the same number of Turkish people who have the same job or live in similar conditions in their own country.

These people are accompanied to the other country by a small television crew who will film them during the main moments of the day, when they find themselves carrying out the usual tasks of the counterparty. The same thing will occur in parallel in the other country.

The events must be arranged in advance and on the basis of the activity/life covered.

For example: a Turkish nurse will take the place of an Italian nurse, and vice versa. The day will start prior to their arrival to the workplace: dressing, punching in, entering the department, the usual professional tasks carried out during their day. The filming will show the work environment and the ways in which the work is carried out, and will capture occasional comments from the "protagonist."

Another example: a housewife and mother of one or two teenage children will prepare breakfast for her family, help them leave the house, and go do her shopping where normally the counterpart goes. She will then prepare dinner in the traditional style of the "host" country with the help of another local woman or perhaps a relative of her counterpart. Comments will be made on the food, methods, habits, etc.

Another example: a high school student will take part in community events with fellow local students as an "external observer."

All the locations where the "protagonists" are filmed must be pre-warned and their consent must be granted.

The professions or types of people involved must be agreed upon and identified so as to:

1. Expose and refute common negative clichés
2. Show, in their diversity, the "human and daily" similarities which the two populations share
3. The people selected must at least be able to be understood (even in a third language) by the local representatives involved, or must be assisted by an interpreter who, although their presence is obvious, will remain only in the background.

The overall production will work if it is agreed with the television presenter of each country, in advance, that their respective “protagonist” will be present in their home country’s studio to make final comments prior to the transmission of the film.

Because television is by far the most popular medium, using it to show images of the daily life of the other country – images that are seen (favourably) through the eyes of fellow countrymen – is the most appropriate and least-didactic way to increase knowledge of Italy and Turkey among the two populations. Of course, the film and program editing must be adapted to ensure their popularity in both countries.

Valorizing the Opportunities of Bilateral Cultural Relations

- Objectives*
- Advancement of Turkish and Italian people’s knowledge of their respective national cultures
 - Improve the perception of strong cultural relations between Turkey and Italy
- Beneficiaries*
- Turkish people and their counterparts in Italy, as well as wider Europe
- Activities*
- The holding of an academic workshop on the cultural similarities and practices of Turkish and Italian societies, along with a publication under this theme.
 - The holding of a symposium with media circles in order to determine how to improve Turkey’s promotion strategy towards Western countries.
 - The organization of a workshop on the “negativities of artificial images and their causes,” and the promotion of the resulting publication comprised of the symposium presentations to EU circles in Brussels.
 - The production of a short-film on cultural interactions in the marriages of people from the two different nations.

Creation of a “Network of Ideas and Projects” Between Italian and Turkish Civil Society Towards a European Civil Society”

- Objectives*
- The main objective of this proposal is to contribute to the strengthening of the cultural exchange between Turkey and Italy, and to encourage the flow of ideas between and concrete initiatives among Turkish and Italian society. This will be through the creation and promotion of joint initiatives between associations, foundations, publishers, newspapers, non governmental organizations, universities, museums and tourist attractions, voluntary organizations and, in general, all elements of Turkish and Italian society interested in forming a common European dimension of cultural growth. It will create a network of cultural projects developed between the two countries. In order to do this, attention could be initially concentrated on several “pilot projects” and toward creating a network of initiatives, conferences and promotional activities around them that could attract and encourage the flow of additional ideas.
- Beneficiaries*
- Civil society organized in the form of NGOs, universities, cultural foundations, research centers, museums and tourist attractions
- Activities*
- Turkish non-governmental organizations are going through a phase of growth and important transition, slowly strengthening their links with society. They can be grouped into various areas and we can focus on several priority groups of particular interest:
- Women’s NGOs
 - Environmental NGOs
 - Youth NGOs
 - Cultural NGOs
 - Business NGOs

Some NGOs could therefore be identified and contacted, above all in the areas of interest we have chosen (culture, women and youth) and joint projects launched.

Further activities include:

- The organization of conferences and seminars with scholars, journalists and representatives of both Italian and Turkish NGOs, also with the aim of strengthening intellectual debate.
- The strengthening of collaboration between Italian and Turkish universities.
- The creation of a website and the use of the internet to promote initiatives and encourage the exchange of ideas.
- The linking of some initiatives to the European projects to assess the dialogue between civil societies. An aspect of this activity can contribute to the seeking of finance.

Experience Sharing for Young Diplomats

Objectives Encourage the mutual knowledge of Turkish and Italian systems on themes relating to the foreign policy of both countries

Beneficiaries Young Turkish and Italian diplomats

Activities The creation of a weeklong summer school for Italian and Turkish diplomats to be organized one year in Turkey (for Italian diplomats) and one year in Italy (for Turkish diplomats).

A group of Young Italian diplomats (no more than 10) selected by the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, could be invited to Turkey for this full immersion program into the political and economic realities of Turkey. During the workshop, the Turkish Ministry for Foreign Affairs would prepare for them a program that incorporates meetings with:

- Institutional representatives and politicians
- Opinion leaders
- Academicians
- Entrepreneurs

The summer seminar would also allow the Italian participants to get in touch with Turkish diplomats for an exchange of views on major geopolitical or economic issues of common interest, such as:

- The European Union
- The role of Italy and Turkey in the Mediterranean Area
- The relations of Turkey in the Central Asia, etc

Similar events would be organized by the Italian Ministry for Foreign affairs for a selected group of young Turkish Diplomats.

Turkish Season in Italy

Objectives To improve knowledge of Turkish culture in Italy, beginning with Turkish art, by providing an occasion that brings together the Italian and Turkish artistic cultures. A “soft approach” designed to promote an accurate understanding of problems, including political problems, in a specific country (Turkey), either indirectly or through the use of prominent or more contemporary artistic products.

Beneficiaries Italian people in general; experts but, above all, those with no knowledge of Turkey or its art culture. Turkish people, including artists and intellectuals.

Activities The organization of a series of public initiatives (e.g., concerts, book presentations, photo exhibitions, debates) in various small, medium and large Italian towns over a specific period of time (three to six months, between 2010 and 2011), supported by the Italian authorities (e.g., Foreign Ministry, Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities, President of Italian Republic, etc.) and organized by public and private entities (including NGOs) under the guidance of respective cultural institutes.

The model is that of the "Saison de la Turquie," <http://www.saisondelaturquie.fr/>, currently taking place in France.

The activities organized could range from the purely art-related (e.g., concerts, exhibitions) to artistic/journalistic (e.g., photographic exhibitions, film and book presentations) and artistic/commercial (e.g., organization of small-scale local trade fairs, festivals). A series of "big launch events" will be followed by a longer series of small to medium-size events, according to the interests of local entities and institutions, and then capped off with a number of "large closing events." The Season requires public funding and plenty of preparation and organization. The aim, however, is to promote the presentation of projects by private institutions and individuals, who will be partly funded by others. The length of the Season will depend on the amount of funds gathered and the time available for preparation. It could begin in the summer of 2010 and either close at the end of the summer or carry on into the autumn. The French experience, including direct contact with the organizers of that event, could be used as a model if it is seen to be effective, or otherwise as a lesson.

Permanent Update of the Turkish Situation

Objectives In partnership with the "La Sapienza" University in Rome, the establishment of a Study and Information Center on the Turkish social, political, economic, geopolitical, linguistic, religious and cultural situation

Beneficiaries All present and future institutional, economic and cultural operators in Turkey; all individuals, public and private institutions and media that intend to acquire serious and updated information on Turkey; Italian public opinion as a whole

Activities

- The preparation and implementation of "educational packages" designed to meet the different requirements of interested individuals and institutions.
- Permanent information, both directly through existing media and, when possible, in association (and not overlapping) with that which already exists.

Promote Cooperation Among Training Institutions in the Tourism Sector.

Objectives The implementation of joint training programs, among schools and universities, specialized in the tourism sector could pave the way for stronger future business relations between tour operators from the two countries with a direct mutual benefit for the sector.

Beneficiaries Italian and Turkish training institutions specialized in the tourism sector

Activities

- The creation of twinning programs between Italian and Turkish training institutions.
- The organization of visiting professor programs (Italian professors in Turkish School, Turkish professors in Italian School).
- The organization of study tours.
- The funding of scholarships for Italian and Turkish students in the tourism sector.

Networking Among Tour Operators

Objectives	To build a network of Italian and Turkish tour operators able to better exploit the opportunities offered by the sector.
Beneficiaries	Italian and Turkish Tour Operators
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The organization of technical meetings/events for specialized operators.• The creation and marketing of tourism packages jointly developed by Italian and Turkish operators.

Promotional Programs for Italian and Turkish Journalists Specializing in the Tourism sector

Objectives	To promote and spread knowledge of tourism opportunities offered by Turkey to Italian tourists and vice versa through the publishing of dedicated articles, reportage, and a dossier on specialized media.
Beneficiaries	Specialized media in the tourism sector (e.g., TV, magazine, radio, etc)
Activities	The organization of a dedicated “study tour” for Italian journalist to Turkey and vice versa, with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Site visits to selected tourist destinations• Meetings with local tour operators• Meetings with local institutional counterparts in charge of the development and promotion of local tourism

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BERTE'	Pietro	International Relations, UniCredit Group
BIAGINI	Antonello	Professor of History of Eastern Europe, Università degli Studi La Sapienza – Roma
CAVINATO	Paolo	Artist
CENTINARO	Valeria	Lecturer and Ph.D. Candidate, Università Cattolica di Milano
CERAMI	Carola	Doctor in International History, Università di Pavia
CHEVALLARD	Giancarlo	Chairman, Paralleli, Istituto Euromediterraneo del Nord-Ovest
FRAPPI	Carlo	Research Fellow, Caucasus and Central Asia Program, ISPI, and Director of ICTS
GRASSI	Fabio L.	Expert in Turkish History, Society and Politics, Yildiz Technical University
MAGRI	Paolo	Chairman, ISPI
MASSIMI	Serena	Head of International Relations, UniCredit Group
PIACENTINI FIORANI	Valeria	Chair of History and Institutions of the Muslim World, Director of the Center of Research on Southern System and Wider Mediterranean (CRiSSMA) Università Cattolica, Milan
RIVOLTA	Dario	Honorable, Foreign Policy Expert and Vice President of IPALMO
SCOGNAMIGLIO	Giuseppe	Head of Institutional & International Affairs, UniCredit Group
TALBOT	Valeria	Research Fellow, ISPI
ZUCCONI	Mario	Visiting Professor of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University

TURKISH EXPERTS

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ALTAY	Yunus Alper	Turkish Rep. Prime Ministry State Planning Organization – Center for European Union, Education and Youth Programs
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GÖKYAY	Birten	Head of the Association of Turkish University Women
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