

# Tourism policies and plans in turkey



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

## 1. Introduction

The Republic of Turkey is situated on the borders where Asia and Europe meet, quite literally in the centre of the world. Throughout history, from the times of the Byzantine Dynasty through Alexander's Invasion and the Ottoman Empire, the present land of Turkey has been the home to many cultures. But Turkey has a lot more to offer than just different cultures. They have on offer beautiful landscapes, quality beaches and enough world history to satisfy a historian.

With its wide plethora of natural and cultural assets, Turkey should be among the top most popular destinations. In 2014, at the height of Turkey's popularity, 42 million foreign tourists visited Turkey awarding them the rank of 6<sup>th</sup> most visited global destination that year, with many tourists traveling for their culture, spa and healthcare tourism. (UNWTO, 2015) But the numbers have gradually declined since then caused by political tensions, terrorist attacks, negative political image etc.

All tourism related planning, strategies and actions are headed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. This department has been tasked with the protection and perseverance of Turkish culture and the administration of all tourism related activities in Turkey. For Turkey as a destination, it is this Ministry of Culture and Tourism that is designated with the title of Destination Management Organisation.

The World Tourism Organisation (2007) defines a Destination Management Organization (DMO) as a body or organisation that is responsible for the co-ordinated management of all the elements that make up a destination like

attractions, accessibility, marketing, human resources, brand, etc. These organisations are ultimately responsible for the planning, management and execution of all plans and policies, which have been decided or implemented in order to achieve their short term and long term goals for that destination. (Esmeralda & Eleina, 2013)

This paper aims at reviewing and critically analysing the tourism plans and policies of Turkey in place until 2023 within the parameters of ‘ branding’, ‘ vision’ and ‘ monitoring and evaluation’ as detailed in their tourism plan titled ‘ Tourism Strategy of Turkey – 2023’ (2013) which was planned and will be executed by their DMO, The Ministry of Culture and Tourism and to gauge its effectiveness in turning Turkey into a competitive and sustainable destination.

## 2. Literature Review

DMOs are vital in developing and implementing tourism policies for the creation and maintenance of a sustainable and competitive destination. J. R. Brent Ritchie and Geoffrey I. Crouch (2003) explain tourism policy as a set of rules, directives, guidelines, strategies and the framework for tourism development.

### 1. Vision

James Tallant (2009) describes a vision as the state of an organisation in the future after it achieves its mission. J. R. Brent Ritchie (1999) detail that a critical early stage in the strategic planning by any DMO is the inception of a destination vision.

Charles R. Goeldner (2008) explains that a good vision defines what the DMO aims to accomplish in a certain given time period using language to inspire members, staff and stakeholders to actively contribute in the attainment of that goal. He elucidates that a vision may describe on how things may be different because of the DMO and how the DMO would wish to be perceived by others.

Sooskan Kantabutra and Gayle C. Avery (2010) details that any good vision would incorporate the following elements:

- Should be conveyed in a dramatic fashion to inspire and motivate
- Should enhance the development of a new product/service that in turn aids in the further development of other existing products/services.
- Should aspire to serve customers through a defined product portfolio that has been designed by the DMO and ensure the quality as well.
- Should be responsive to customer needs.
- Should ensure the sustainable growth of the destination for the benefit of its stakeholders

## 2. Branding

According to J. R. Brent Ritchie and Robin J. B. Ritchie (1998), branding should encapsulate either a name, symbol, or logo that identifies and differentiates a destination from others. It must be unique, and reinforce the positive experiences of the destination.

For a destination, a brand bridges the gap between its given assets and the perceptions of potential visitors (Morgan, Pritchard, & Piggott, 2002). Qu (2011) states that destination brands serve two main functions; identification

and differentiation. As with singular product brands, a destination brand is also made up of the components of awareness and image. Like before, brand awareness is considered a pre-requisite to any other brand dimensions (Konecnik & Gartner, 2007). Without some level of awareness, the consumer cannot have perceptions on the destination's image, quality, etc.

The elements of a good destination brand are as follows:

- It should be unique, identifiable and recognisable
- It should use pleasing aesthetics to appeal to the target market and enhance recognition and emotional response.
- It should be culturally relevant.
- It must stand the test of time
- It should be easily reproduced across multiple media formats like print, online, billboards, etc. (Morgan, Pritchard, & Pride, 2007) (Hankinson, 2005)

### 3. Monitoring and Evaluating

Much attention has been directed to the implementation of tourism strategies. Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) state that with the increased attention to policy implementation since the 1970s, the interest in policy evaluation has also proportionally increased. By incorporating monitoring and evaluation at the very beginning of policy formulation, the type of information and indicators required can be specified in advance of the implementation of the tourism policy. (Hall & Jenkins, 1995)

The long term sustainability and competitiveness of a destination is directly linked to its ability to adapt to and evolve with fluid market conditions.

Monitoring and evaluating is important in identifying future opportunities and challenges for the destination to improve performance and sustainability over time. (Sr., Allen, Swanson, & Smith, 2008)

Research has shown that effective monitoring and evaluation should comprise of the following:

- Possess key performance indicators that were developed and agreed upon during the conceptualisation stages of the policy
- Possess a regular performance monitoring review process
- Identify relevant performance monitoring tools, methods and certification options to assist in monitoring and evaluating performance
- Consider the economic, environmental and social impacts on the destination and stakeholders
- Measure sustainability and competitiveness over time against agreed industry benchmarks
- Identify strategies for continual improvement to achieve best goals
- Communicate and report on performance achievements with stakeholders, including customers
- Identify strategies to leverage performance achievements with funding agencies, suppliers and statutory bodies. (Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005)  
(Rio & Nunes, 2012)

### 3. Policy Review

In this section, the parameters of ' Vision', ' Branding' and ' Monitoring and Evaluation' of the Tourism Strategy of Turkey-2023 will be critically analysed

using the literature discussed as parameters, as well as the need to be sustainable and competitive in the world destination market

### 1. Vision:

The vision for Turkey that has been decided by the DMO, The Ministry of Culture and Tourism, in their tourism plan (2013) on page 4 is as follows;

“ With the adoption of sustainable tourism approach, tourism and travel industry will be brought to a leading position for leveraging rates of employment and regional development and it will be ensured that Turkey becomes a world brand in tourism and a major destination in the list of the top five countries receiving the highest number of tourist and highest tourism revenues by 2023.”

On reading and analysing the vision statement, the primary inference that can be drawn is that the vision statement is not very articulate with problems caused by its length and its business style tone and hindered by the unnecessary use of certain language. As Kantabutra and Avery (2010) explained, a vision should be conveyed in dramatic fashion in order to inspire and motivate, which clearly the DMO has failed in achieving. A simpler concise version with motivational and inspirational themes would have fared much better.

But where The Ministry of Culture and Tourism’s vision succeeds is in its detailing of the goals regarding its market position and the goals the DMO aims to accomplish for the region and citizens by the year 2023 in lieu with the ideas put forward by Goeldner (2008), Tallant (2009) and Ritchie (1999).

On cross examining the vision statement of Turkey with the necessary elements for a vision as put forward by Kantabutra and Avery (2010), the vision decided by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism contains only a singular element, that being the one regarding sustainable growth of the destination for the benefit of the stakeholders. But even in this case not all stakeholders have been represented, especially the most important one, the tourists.

To conclude the critical analysis of the ' Vision' for Turkey set forth by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, one can say empirically that it is not an effective one on multiple fronts.

## 2. Branding

The branding strategy for Turkey which has been designed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the tourism policy mentioned on page 34 of the same is to ' Manage the branding of cities rich of cultural and natural heritage and thereby convert them into a point of attraction for travellers.'

Istanbul along with cities like Ankara, Izmir and Antalya are focussed upon in their city travel project, with aims to make them popular destinations among the tourists. Istanbul is being given more preference as it was designated the Cultural Capital of Europe for the year 2010 which would force the strengthening of its cultural, artistic, urban as well as the environmental qualities of Istanbul.

As per J. R Brent Ritchie and Robin J. B Ritchie (1998), branding must be able to encapsulate either a name, symbol or logo which would help Turkey to be differentiated from other tourist destinations. The process calls for Turkey to

<https://assignbuster.com/tourism-policies-and-plans-in-turkey/>



restore its uniqueness which would be a plus factor in order to attract more travellers to the country and facilitate more options for the domestic as well as international tourists who arrive.

After going through Turkey's objectives towards branding of its cities, it is easily understood that the objectives designed by the DMO is able to cover up major areas which would establish Turkey as a hotspot in the tourism sector in the coming years in accordance to their vision for its cities. The only negative part to draw out of this is that the objectives seems a little too ambitious for the time frame it has got. This could be risky if the plans are not executed properly on time and deadlines not being met.

The tourism plan put forth by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture clearly aims at improving the brands of all the individual destinations within Turkey with them end goal that this strategy will reap benefits to the overall brand of Turkey. By focussing on improving the brands of the local destinations, the DMO aims to not only generate a unique niche identity for the country but also to differentiate the experience on offer from the other similar destinations. (Qu, Kim, & Hyunjung, 2011)

By implementing a strategy to improve on destination attractions, accessibility, infrastructure, superstructure, etc. the Ministry of Culture and Tourism have taken a page out of Konecnik and Gartner's (2007) ideas of improving destination image by improving destination quality.

But the fact remains that the Ministry of Culture and Tourism is still under the process of building a brand. In this day and age it makes sense to understand ones assets as well as the market segmentation before

<https://assignbuster.com/tourism-policies-and-plans-in-turkey/>

committing to the release of a brand, because that brand should stand the test of time, which is the only barometer to gauge its success. (Morgan, Pritchard, & Pride, 2007; Hankinson, 2005)

To summarise the critical analysis of Turkey's branding, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism has just begun taking the ground level steps to develop a timeless brand for the country. The strategies employed will assist in not only the task of developing a brand for the country but helps in the building a unique destination that will remain competitive and sustainable.

### 3. Monitoring and Evaluation:

Credit should be given to The Ministry of Culture and Tourism for understanding the importance of monitoring and evaluating the performance indicators in Turkey's tourism system.

But the Tourism Strategy of Turkey does not elucidate on the key performance indicators that will be monitored, nor the monitoring review process, tools, methods or certification options that will assist in the monitoring and evaluation performance. The reason for this is because the Ministry of Culture and Tourism has just implemented this facet to the tourism strategy for Turkey. With their new ideology of sustainable tourism as mentioned in their vision and their reinvigorated approach to branding, there are a lot of fluid elements in the Tourism System of Turkey.

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism have decided to form two new bodies to aid in the task of identifying, monitoring and evaluating the key performance indicators of tourism in Turkey, The National Tourism Database Repository and The National Tourism Certification Service.

The National Tourism Database Repository will be tasked with collecting and organising the data transmitted by the various public and private sector entities. After analysis the repository will submit its conclusions and opinions to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the National Tourism Council. On reflecting upon the data and inference received, the DMO will decide the key performance indicators and the monitoring review process. The National Tourism Service will then provide methods to implement amendments into the tourism strategy accordingly.

To summarise the critical analysis of the Monitoring and Evaluation element of Turkey's tourism strategy, one can easily understand that the steps taken are the ground level steps to setup a system and framework that will help enable the various tourism bodies to actively monitor and evaluate the tourism system and make real time changes that will bring about the most effective and sustainable outcome. The only negative that can be said about the monitoring and evaluation strategy is that the DMO has not declared time frames for the formation of the new regulatory bodies nor a target date when they hope the new monitoring review process will commence

#### 4. Conclusion

After researching valid literature, ideas and viewpoints of many scholars, authors, researchers, etc. within the context of Vision, Branding and Monitoring and Evaluation and applying them to the Tourism Strategy of Turkey which has been compiled by Turkey's Destination Management Organisation, The Ministry of Culture and Tourism, we can arrive at the following conclusions.

There are a number of issues with their Vision, predominantly the inarticulateness and word flow of the text. The Vision fails to inspire, motivate or fill one with hopefulness. Where it succeeds is that it details their commitment to sustainable tourism, their labour market and what position they will strive to achieve in the global tourism market by 2023.

The element of Branding in Turkey's Tourism Strategy is more of an action plan to develop the individual brands of local destinations, with the long term goal of developing a timeless national brand that will help tourists to identify and differentiate Turkey as a niche tourist destination. But with their approach to sustainable tourism, the strategy of branding individual destinations to promote assets of the same destinations seems contradictory.

Similarly, the Monitoring and Evaluation facet of Turkey's Tourism Strategy is also a plan to setup the ground level protocol and infrastructure that will aid in the identification, monitoring and evaluating the key performance indicators of Turkey's Tourism Systems. Furthermore, entities whose purpose is to help with the amendment and improvement of all tourism based activities, decision making and legislation have also been conceptualised.

To summarise, the Tourism Strategy of Turkey-2023, is in essence a weak tourism strategy. The vision statement disappointing on multiple fronts, no national brand and the lack of a monitoring and evaluating framework is evidence of the same. But with that being said, there are some positives like their listing of certain specific goals regarding market placement and their product differentiation.

## References

- Esmeralda, S., & Eleina, Q. (2013). Role of Destination Management Organization in Developing Sustainable Tourism in Korça Region. (*Young Scientist Journal*) , 93-96.
- Goeldner, C. R. (2008). *TOURISM: Principles, Practices, Philosophies*; ISBN 9780470084595. Wiley.
- Hall, C. M., & Jenkins, J. M. (1995). *Tourism and Public Policy*, ISBN: 1-86152-998-8. Cornwall, U. K.: Routledge.
- Hankinson, G. (2005). Destination brand images: a business tourism perspective. *Journal of Services Marketing*, Vol. 19 Iss: 1 , 24 – 32.
- Kantabutra, S., & Avery, G. C. (2010). The power of vision: statements that resonate. *Journal of Business Strategy*, Vol. 31 Iss: 1 , 37-45. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/02756661011012769>
- Konecnik, M., & Gartner, a. W. (2007). Customer-Based Brand Equity for a Destination. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 34 , 400-421.
- Miller, G., & Twining-Ward, L. (2005). *Monitoring for a Sustainable Tourism Transition: The Challenge of Developing and Using Indicators*, ISBN: 0-85199-051-7. Oxfordshire, U. K.: CABI Publishing.
- Ministry of Culture and Tourism. (2013). *Tourism Strategy of Turkey – 2023*, ISBN 978-975-17-3281-1. Ankara, Turkey: T. R. Ministry of Culture and Tourism Publications.

Morgan, N., Pritchard, A., & Piggott, a. R. (2002). “ New Zealand, 100% Pure. The Creation of a Powerful Niche Destination Brand. *Brand Management* , 335-354.

Morgan, N., Pritchard, A., & Pride, R. (2007). *Destination Branding; ISBN : 0750649941*. Oxford, UK: Butterworth-Heinemann Ltd.

Pressman, J. L., & Wildavsky, A. (1973). *Implementation, ISBN: 9780520053311*. Oakland, U. S. A.: University of California Press.

Qu, H., Kim, L. I., & Hyunjung, H. (2011). A Model of Destination Branding: Integrating the Concepts of the Branding and Destination Image. *Tourism Management, 32* , 465-476.

Rio, D., & Nunes, L. (2012). Monitoring and Evaluation Tool for Tourism Destinations. *Tourism Management Perspectives, Volume 4* , 64-66.

Ritchie, J. B. (1998). THE BRANDING OF TOURISM DESTINATIONS – PAST ACHIEVEMENTS & FUTURE CHALLENGES. *Annual Congress of the International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism*. Marrakech, Morocco.

Ritchie, J. B. (1999, June). Crafting a value-driven vision for a national tourism treasure. *Tourism Management* , pp. 273-282.

Ritchie, J. B., & Crouch, G. I. (2003). *The Competitive Destination: A Sustainable Tourism Perspective; ISBN: 085199847X, 9780851998473; .* CABI Pub.

Sr., D. E., Allen, M. D., Swanson, J., & Smith, G. (2008). *Tourism Policy and Planning*, ISBN: 978-0-7506-8557-3. London: Butterworth-Heinemann Ltd.

Tallant, J. (2009). Importance of Vision, Mission, and Values in Strategic Direction. *Business Economics Journal* , 3.

UNWTO. (2007). *A Practical Guide to Tourism Destination Management*, ISBN: 978-92-844-1243-3, . Madrid, Spain: World Tourism Organization.

UNWTO. (2015). *UNWTO World Tourism Highlights*. Madrid, Spain: World Tourism Organisation Publications, DOI : 9789284416899.