

Studying in Türkiye

A guide for international students & families — how Turkish higher education works, the student visa and residence permit, affordable tuition, English & Turkish programs, and the Türkiye Scholarships.

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VERY AFFORDABLE, TRANSCONTINENTAL, WITH A WORLD-CLASS SCHOLARSHIP

Türkiye (Turkey) offers **very affordable, quality universities; a huge range of programs in Turkish and English; and a unique transcontinental setting** spanning Europe and Asia. Its flagship **Türkiye Scholarships** is one of the most comprehensive fully-funded programs in the world. Non-EU students get a **student visa, then a residence permit (ikamet)** after arrival. This guide walks it in **ten steps**.

General guidance, not legal or immigration advice. Turkish rules, tuition, and funds change (exchange rates affect costs). The details here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with Study in Türkiye, the Turkish consulate, the Migration Management (Göç İdaresi), and your university.**

Understand Why Students Choose Türkiye

WHAT TO KNOW

Türkiye offers **very affordable tuition and living**, a wide choice of **English- and Turkish-taught programs**, **respected universities**, a **rich transcontinental culture**, and the **world-class Türkiye Scholarships** — in a country bridging Europe and Asia.

BY THE NUMBERS

Very affordable

tuition & living

English & Turkish

many programs

Türkiye Scholarships

fully funded

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Türkiye's **affordability and flagship scholarship** against learning some Turkish for daily life — for budget-conscious students, and scholarship winners especially, it's outstanding value.

GOOD TO KNOW

The **Türkiye Scholarships** is among the most comprehensive fully-funded programs anywhere — a major reason students choose Türkiye.

Understand the System

WHAT TO KNOW

Türkiye has a large network of **public and private universities**, overseen by **YÖK** (Council of Higher Education). Leaders include **Boğaziçi, METU (ODTÜ), Istanbul Technical, Hacettepe (medicine)**, and private universities **Koç, Sabancı, and Bilkent**. Main student cities: Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir.

BY THE NUMBERS

Public

Boğaziçi, METU, Hacettepe

Private

Koç, Sabancı, Bilkent

Cities

Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir

HOW TO HELP

Choose among Türkiye's **public universities** (very affordable, prestigious — METU, Boğaziçi) or **private universities** (Koç, Sabancı), by field, language, and budget.

GOOD TO KNOW

Top public universities are **very affordable and prestigious** but competitive — entry often needs a strong TR-YÖS score (see next steps).

Get the Student Visa & Residence Permit

WHAT TO KNOW

Türkiye uses a **two-step process**: obtain a **student visa from a Turkish consulate before travel** (apply as soon as you have your admission letter), then apply for a **residence permit (ikamet) within 30 days of arrival** via the **e-ikamet system** and the Migration Management. You **cannot switch a tourist visa to a student visa**.

BY THE NUMBERS

Student visa

from the consulate first

Residence permit (ikamet)

within 30 days

No switching

from a tourist visa

HOW TO HELP

Get your **student visa from a Turkish consulate** with your admission letter, then apply for your **residence permit (ikamet) within 30 days** of arrival — you can't convert a tourist visa.

WATCH OUT

You **can't switch a tourist visa to a student visa** after arriving — get the student visa from a consulate first.

Handle Admissions (TR-YÖS)

WHAT TO KNOW

Public universities often require **TR-YÖS** (Türkiye's centralized entrance exam for international students, run by ÖSYM; offered in several languages, in May and November) for competitive programs (medicine, engineering) at top universities. **Private universities usually admit on high-school grades**. SAT may also be accepted.

BY THE NUMBERS

TR-YÖS

public, competitive programs

Private

admit on grades

May & November

exam dates

HOW TO HELP

Check whether your program needs **TR-YÖS** (top public programs do; private universities usually don't) and prepare accordingly — exam dates fall in May and November.

GOOD TO KNOW

For top public programs (METU, Hacettepe, Boğaziçi) you'll usually need a strong **TR-YÖS** score — private universities admit on grades.

Plan for Tuition & the Türkiye Scholarships

WHAT TO KNOW

Tuition is **very affordable**: public universities ~\$300–9,000/year (many international programs \$1,500 or less), private ~\$3,000–15,000+. The **Türkiye Scholarships (Türkiye Bursları)** fully funds selected students; those who miss out can get **merit discounts of 25–50%** at private universities.

BY THE NUMBERS

Public

~\$300–9,000/yr

Private

~\$3k–15k/yr

Türkiye Scholarships

fully funded

HOW TO HELP

Budget the **very affordable tuition** (public is cheapest), and pursue the fully-funded **Türkiye Scholarships** or, at private universities, **merit discounts (25–50%)**.

GOOD TO KNOW

The **Türkiye Scholarships** covers tuition, a stipend, accommodation, flights, insurance, and a Turkish course — apply via turkiyeburslari.gov.tr.

Meet the Financial Requirement

WHAT TO KNOW

For the visa/permit you must show **proof of funds** (commonly around **\$500/month**) and **health insurance** (\$100–300/year via the state SGK or a private policy). A Türkiye Scholarships award covers these. Living costs are low (\$300–600/month).

BY THE NUMBERS

Funds

~\$500/month

Insurance

SGK or private

Low living

\$300–600/mo

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **proof of funds (~\$500/month)** and **health insurance** (SGK or private) — or rely on your Türkiye Scholarships award, which covers both.

GOOD TO KNOW

Health insurance is required for the residence permit — the state SGK is recommended for full coverage.



Meet Language Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

Programs are taught in **Turkish or English** (many of each). For English programs you prove English (TOEFL/IELTS); a high score can **exempt you from the “English Prep Year”**. Turkish-taught programs may require a **Turkish Prep Year** (or C1 Turkish). Some Turkish helps daily life.

BY THE NUMBERS

Turkish or English

many programs

English

TOEFL/IELTS

Prep year

if not proficient

HOW TO HELP

Confirm your program’s language, prove **English (TOEFL/IELTS)** to skip the prep year, or plan for a **Turkish prep year** for Turkish-taught study — and learn some Turkish for daily life.

GOOD TO KNOW

A high **TOEFL/IELTS** score can **exempt you from a full English prep year** — worth achieving to save a year.

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

After arriving, apply for your **residence permit (ikamet) within 30 days via e-ikamet**, **arrange health insurance (SGK)**, and **set up banking**. Universities offer dormitories, and state (KYK) and private dorms are affordable. Living costs are low; Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir have large student communities.

BY THE NUMBERS

ikamet

within 30 days (e-ikamet)

SGK insurance

+ banking

Dorms

KYK & private, affordable

HOW TO HELP

Handle arrival admin — **ikamet within 30 days (e-ikamet)**, **SGK insurance**, **banking** — and use affordable KYK/private dorms in Türkiye—s big student cities.

WATCH OUT

Apply for the **ikamet within 30 days** — your university's international office assists, and submit documents promptly (per the 2023 CoHE protocol).

Understand Work Rules

WHAT TO KNOW

International students may generally work **up to 24 hours per week**, subject to regulations, while maintaining valid student and residence status. Confirm the current rules — they can differ by study level — and never work without the correct permit.

BY THE NUMBERS

Work

up to 24 hrs/week

Valid status

must maintain

Correct permit

always

HOW TO HELP

You may generally work **up to 24 hours/week** (maintaining valid status) — confirm the current rules for your level, and always work with the correct permit.

WATCH OUT

Always **keep valid student/residence status and the right permit** — working without them causes serious complications.

Thrive & Work After Study

WHAT TO KNOW

Türkiye's growing economy and transcontinental location (a bridge between Europe, Asia, and the Middle East) offer strong opportunities. You can **work in Türkiye to develop your career** after study — confirm the current work-permit pathways, and use your Turkish for a regional edge.

BY THE NUMBERS

Transcontinental

Europe/Asia bridge

Work after study

develop your career

Turkish

a regional edge

HOW TO HELP

Use Türkiye's **transcontinental location and growing economy**, build Turkish and networks, and confirm the current **work-permit pathways** if you want to stay and work.

GOOD TO KNOW

Post-study work runs through **work permits** — confirm the current, evolving process for your field and situation.

Studying in Türkiye: The Essentials

A snapshot — figures change (exchange rates matter), so confirm everything with Study in Türkiye, the consulate, Migration Management, and your university.

The system

Public and private universities under YÖK; Boğaziçi, METU (ODTÜ), Istanbul Technical, Hacettepe (public) and Koç, Sabancı, Bilkent (private); cities Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir.

Visa & ikamet

Two-step: a student visa from a Turkish consulate before travel (no switching from a tourist visa), then a residence permit (ikamet) within 30 days of arrival via e-ikamet and Migration Management.

Admissions & scholarships

Public universities often require TR-YÖS (ÖSYM; May/November) for competitive programs; private admit on grades; the fully-funded Türkiye Scholarships and 25–50% private merit discounts.

Money & language

Prove ~\$500/month plus health insurance (SGK or private); tuition public ~\$300–9,000/year, private higher; Turkish or English programs (TOEFL/IELTS can skip the English prep year).

Work & after

Generally work up to 24 hrs/week (maintaining valid status, with the right permit); post-study work runs through work permits in a transcontinental, growing economy.

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