Turkey Cultural Policy

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“Turkey is a colourful, pluralistic country with a profound culture and a rich historical, archaeological and artistic heritage. Embracing, preserving and maintaining this richness and diversity without prejudice forms the basis of the government’s cultural policy.”
“Preserving and improving the cultural richness in the process of social change, passing it on to future generations, and enabling all individuals to live with tolerance and solidarity around common cultural values by respecting distinctions are the fundamental aims.”

The plan was approved at the 127th plenary session of The Grand National Assembly of Turkey, on 1 July 2013.
Goal of the Tenth Development Plan

- The Tenth Development Plan is designed to include not only high, stable and inclusive economic growth, but also issues such as the rule of law, information society, international competitiveness, human development, environmental protection and sustainable use of resources.
- In the Plan, economic and social development processes of Turkey are discussed with a holistic and multi-dimensional view, and a participatory approach has been adopted within the human-oriented development framework.
Policy Priority 6: Language & Media

“The major figures of history, events, fairy tale characters and cultural wealth will be transformed into documentaries, series and cartoons.”
Essentially, this policy ensures:

- Research will be conducted to determine the social institutions and resources which nourish solidarity, consensus and tolerance in Turkish culture and expose the issues that weaken this culture.

- Broadcasts, such as series, documentaries, cartoons, will strengthen family relations, enable children and young people to build healthy relationships both with their families and society overall. They will serve to highlight common values be reflected in written and visual media more often.
Channels of Communication

- **Newspapers**
  - 7,109 published newspapers and magazines in 2012
  - Political cartoons

- **Radio & Television**
  - 6,112 of radio and television and on-demand broadcasting services as of 2012

- **Regulated by**
  - Turkey Radio and Television Corporation
    - Established in 1964 as an “objective” state-owned enterprise
    - Its monopoly was abolished in 1990
    - Now, it serves as a public service broadcaster that is broadcasting in all media tools
  - Radio and Television High Council
    - Entrusted with the foundation, duties, authorities and responsibilities of radio and television
Policy Priority 6: Implications

- Despite the Plan’s call for a more inclusive society free to express themselves, the current Prime Minister has sued political cartoonists over 57 times
- Example: Charlie Hebdo Muhammad
  - Local court blocked seeing the cartoon, claiming that “Insulting the prophet can never be regarded within the context of media freedom”
  - “If you have limitless freedom of speech, Muslim community has limitless right to protest.”
Policy Priority 7

“The incentive mechanism will be created to handle the basic elements of our culture and values of the Turkish film industry”
Turkish Film Industry ---- Europe’s second largest theatrical growth market

- Achieving remarkable growth in admissions

- Turkish admissions more than doubled in 2013 compared with 2003.

2014 Turkish film industry report

http://www.obs.coe.int/en/-/pr-turkish-film-industry-report
- Advocate national culture and values through film industry

- Attracting international partners to the Turkish film industry

- Financial Incentives
- Diverse shooting locations and High quality equipments
Culture and values of the Turkish film industry

- “We shall make the expansion and rise of Turkish culture in every era the mainstay of the Republic.” --- Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

- Value of world civilization
- Personal and universal humanism
- “a creation of patriotism blended with a lofty humanist ideal”
- ancient indigenous cultures, arts and techniques of the entire world civilization, past and present
Policy Priority 9: Language

“By taking into account city architecture and the impact of the landscape on human, it will be paid attention to contribute urban design to development plans, public housing and public buildings to landscape, city texture and aesthetics and the identity. The compliance of urban transformation applications with cultural identity and structure will be considered.”
Policy Priority 12

“Due to the fact that the Turkish language is under the risk of losing its distinctive and fundamental characteristics because of the negative effects of foreign languages on Turkish language, it will be ensured that Turkish language especially in media institutions will be used actively and correctly in all areas of life.’
Policy 12 Analysis

- Turkish Language Association: authority and regulatory body on language and research, but no enforcement power
  - focus on “infiltration” of English in Turkish language, campaigns for use of Turkish equivalents or creation of new words
  - Bill in consideration to enforce labeling of Turkish and foreign words in media
- Aims for correct and efficient language in scientific, academic, publishing--new dictionaries, Turkish sign language
- Expand cultural rights and education opportunity for other languages and dialects (Arabic, Bosniak etc.) in school, propaganda, broadcasting
Conclusion: Clash of West and East

Importance of modernizing, but struggle to maintain identity