



**TABDC TURKISH - ARMENIAN
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**



The Challenge of Developing Tourism Potential on Turkish-Armenian Border

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The Border, a Material Embodiment of History

"Time Written in Space"

- Territorial borders both shape and are shaped by what they contain, and what crosses or is prevented from crossing them. The container and the contents are mutually formative. Borders have both material and symbolic uses, encapsulating a history of struggle against outside forces and as marking the limits of the community or society.
- They are at once gateways and barriers to the outside world, protective and imprisoning, areas of opportunity and/or insecurity, zones of contact and/or conflict, of cooperation and/or competition, of ambivalent identities and/or the aggressive assertion of difference: Borders look inwards and outwards: they simultaneously unify and divide, include and exclude.
- Geographically far from central administrations, state control may paradoxically be strongest at the vulnerable border, however. The nation-state ideal of cultural homogeneity and centralized political control is both confirmed and disrupted at the border.
- Contradictions abound at borders. Resolving contradictions generally requires opening the gateways and reducing the barrier functions of the border.

The Turkish-Caucasian Borderlands in Historical Perspective

- The Turkish-Caucasian border had been the traditional frontline between Turkey and Russia : these borderlands at the edges of the Russian and Ottoman Empires had been most of the time battlefields.
- The Moscow and Kars Treaties of 1921, which established the Soviet-Turkish border, as a result of the entente between the Kemalist government and the Bolshevik regime in 1920-21, gave birth to 70 years of stability. The demarcation of the Turkish-Soviet border ran through the village of Sarp/Sarpi.
- NATO flanking state in the Cold War, the Turkish-Soviet border, part of the Iron Curtain, stretches over 619 km. Sarp/Sarpi villagers could freely cross the border to tend their farms or visit relatives until 1937 when, after an uprising on the Soviet side, it was sealed by a barbed-wire fence and the local leaders of Turkish origin were sent to Siberia. Sarpi was considered as the most sensitive border of the USSR. It was neighboring Turkey and NATO, was the Soviet gateway to the Black Sea and to the warmer seas. Doğu Kapı/Akhourian was the official border crossing between Turkey and USSR
- In the early 1990s, the days of Turkey sharing a land border with the USSR ends. For the first time in several centuries (with the exception of 1918-1920), Turkey and Russia have no land frontier.

Discovering New Neighbours

- **Three Eastern Neighbours:** Turkey shares a 276 km long border with Georgia, 325 km long border with Armenia and a 18 km long border with Azerbaijan, the Autonomous Republic of Nakhitchevan.
- Opening Turkish-Georgian border crossings : Sarp/Sarpi opens in 1988, Türkgözü-Posof/Vale opens in 1994. The opening of Sarp/Sarpi has been a harbinger of the end of the Cold War. The Adjarians still remember the 17 km long queue starting from the Gogno Fortress to Sarpi, people all over the Soviet Union gathering to Batumi to go into Turkey
- Opening of Turkish-Nakhitchevani border crossing in 1993. "Hasret kapisi" located at Dilucu the easternmost point of Turkey, meeting point between Turkey-Iran-Armenia-Azerbaijan. The opening of Dilucu border post was also a long-awaited event. For the first time, Turks and Azeris have been in direct contact
- Closure of the official border-crossing between Turkey and USSR : Doğu Kapi/Akhourian connecting Kars to Gyumri.
 - No direct inland communication
 - Major achievement: Opening of an air corridor between Istanbul and Yerevan in 1996
- The fall of the Iron Curtain which triggered the process of the reunification of the European continent, didn't allow Turkey to embrace all of her Caucasian neighbours.

Turkey and Vicinity



International boundary
National capital
Road
City
Scale: 1:4,500,000
0 50 100 Kilometers
0 75 100 Miles
Normal Conic Projection
Miles: 33°15' N, 42°30' N

Boundary representation
not necessarily authoritative

UN buffer zone
Morphou
Nicosia
Famagusta
Dhekelia Sovereign Base Area (U.K.)
Larnaca
Limassol
Sovereign Base Area (U.K.)

Case for the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border

- **The opening of the border will launch of a confidence building process**
- **A border that both sides strife to preserve**

The Kars Treaty drew a border that both sides are eager to preserve. The opening of the border will increase the sense of security at both sides. The perception of a potential threat stemming from the border will vanish with its opening to trade and human interactions.

- **To eliminate the human barrier and discover the Turkish-Armenian common past**
- **Creation of new sources of income generation on the impoverished borderland**

Business Cases for the opening of the border

- **Development of joint tourism packages on the borderlands : eliminate the human barrier and discovery of the Turkish-Armenian common past**
 - **380 000** tourists visited Armenia in 2006. In the border was open and all had visited Turkey (Akhtamar, Ani, Mount Ararat) and spent 100 USD a day – total cash flow into the economy of Eastern and South Eastern Anatolia **76 million USD**
 - The organization of the “pilgrimage” in 2001 by TABDC in cooperation the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America that brought about 150 US Armenians to Turkey and Armenia, during this trip, in 10 days nearly **1 million USD** has been spent. Ani and the Mount Ararat, located on the border are advocating for the development of joint tourism packages
 - Important step ahead: Restoration of the Akhtamar Church
February, 6th 1998: TABDC facilitated the signature of the protocol on the organization of Akhtamar church’s reconstruction between Istanbul Chamber of Commerce , the Union of Manufacturers and businessmen of Armenia and Union of Architects of Armenia





