



European
Joint
Support Unit

Accommodation

Istanbul





INITIAL ARRIVAL

You will need to tell the UK NSE how and when you will arrive. Appropriate welcome arrangements can then be made.

Hotels and “Get you in Pack”.

If your house is not ready for occupation, it is likely that you will stay in a hotel until it is ready – this may be for two weeks or more. When you move in to your house an informal “get you in pack” will be provided by the NSE, to allow you to live for a few weeks until your boxes are cleared through Customs. The pack will contain everything you need for those first weeks but couldn't get into 2 suitcases, e.g. furniture, bedding, towels, cooking utensils, crockery, glassware etc. Ask if you want to know specifics however, be realistic in your expectations as there is no storage space in Istanbul so the provision is basic, but adequate. The UK NSE will make all the necessary arrangements once you tell them how many persons they are providing for, i.e. accompanied or not.

Customs Procedures.

Once you are in Istanbul, the UK NSE will get you to help them complete your NATO Beyanname (Customs) Form. This form is principally a declaration of your high value goods (mostly electrical). The UK NSE will have done much of the work before you arrive if they have received a copy of your packing lists with these items clearly highlighted. Once this is signed and stamped the process of clearing your boxes (so long as they are in Istanbul) can begin which can take up to 7 days. You should not be personally required at the Customs Sheds. If you drove to Turkey, the import actions for your car have to be completed before your 180 days authorisation (the stamp in your passport) expires, but this should be easily achievable. Further details are included in Chapter 9.

PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION

Zekeriyaköy Village.

There are 5 UK MoD posts in the HQ and for the last 3 iterations all have been filled by married accompanied. For a number of good reasons all married UK personnel are housed in Zekeriyaköy, a village a dozen miles to the northwest of Istanbul, and 3 miles from the nearest beach on the Black Sea. It takes 25-30 minutes to drive to work. Because of the roads and traffic, it takes approximately one hour (potentially much more during rush hour) to drive into central Istanbul, but an almost guaranteed one hour via Metro/tram. Zekeriyaköy is a relatively new development of expensive and exclusive housing for wealthy Turkish families and ex-pats of many countries. ('Old Zek' is further up the hill from the main modern part of the village and is more rustic). Zekeriyaköy is a pleasant place to live, being near the sea and bounded by woods. There is a good range of shops including supermarkets, banks, hairdressers, restaurants, a hardware shop, vets, etc, and the British International School Istanbul (BISI), all within about 15 minutes' walking distance, depending on where exactly you live. Also there are some lovely walks in the woods nearby or along the Black Sea cliffs - within an easy drive.



Unaccompanied Personnel.

A previous unaccompanied OF5 had an apartment in a central district of the city.

Accompanied Personnel.

Presently, all 4 x OF4 live on a gated compound of approx 30 houses which has a 20m pool. The houses are all detached, have an adequate garden, 4 / 5 beds, ~20 yrs old, Mediterranean style villas, partially air-conditioned, and in good order. The OF5 is currently in a similar compound approx 2km across the valley. The houses are usually handed down from one post incumbent to the next since this allows DIO to maintain a relationship with the landlords and avoids steep rent spikes. All aspects of the tenancy are administered by the UK NSE under the aegis of Defence Infrastructure Organization. You will not pay SFA rent or CILOCT or utilities (water, sewerage, gas and electricity) as these are not charged under SSLOA. Your predecessor should be able to provide more details of your specific house and may send you photographs, etc. NSE will also send you details.

Water.

Tap water is perfectly safe to drink in Zek (as it is in most of Turkey), but can be heavily chlorinated so most people choose to buy bottled water for drinking. Water Cooler Machines can be purchased quite cheaply and are a definite bonus in the summer months. In this way you can enjoy chilled 'bottled' water for about 4p per litre. It is a medium-hard water area in terms of limescale for appliances though some houses have water softeners.

Household Items.

Some houses are provided with some white goods by the landlord; what is provided in each house differs, so it is vital to liaise with the NSE to clarify these details for your house (as this may impact on your decision regarding FMS/UB). Legacy garden furniture may have been sourced some time past by NSE but this will not be replaced as it becomes unserviceable. Note that, as a minimum, all houses have air conditioning in the master bedroom and the living rooms.

Electrical Supply.

Electric supply is 220V, 50 Hz. Sockets are the European 2 round pin type, eg German style. Electricity cuts are becoming less frequent, and they do not generally tend to last more than an hour or so. All houses have back-up power provided by a diesel generator that will require monitoring / filling up periodically; the diesel can be claimed back on JPA.

Other items.

You may also wish to consider the following:

- a. Television. BFBS satellite dish and set top box is installed in all the current UK community houses and provides, via an HDMI lead, a number of reasonable channels, including a straight, live feed of BBC1 and 2, ITV 1, and Sky Sports 1 and 2 and Sky News. NB that we therefore get all programmes 2 hours 'later', so today's BBC 6 o'clock news is at 2000 hrs local and the 9 o'clock watershed arrives at 2300hrs local.



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There are also 2 channels providing BBC1 and ITV 21 hours after they were broadcast in the UK - hence yesterday's 6 o'clock news is available at 1700hrs local. Some channels are blocked by BFBS if you have children resident at post or who visit during school holidays. The main provider of satellite TV in Turkey is Digiturk which provides BBC World and Prime/CNN News, Kids Channels, etc. If you wish this addition at your own expense, it can also be installed relatively cheaply and monthly subscription is around 70 TL (No one bothers!).

- b. DVD player, BlueRay etc. Most films can be bought cheaply in Istanbul. The local cinemas show most English-speaking films in English, with Turkish subtitles, so you will be able to watch the latest releases. However, children's films, especially cartoons, are dubbed in Turkish.
- c. Radio. DAB will not work here. However, the Turks seem to enjoy 'modern European' music as well as the more traditional style, so local radio is certainly not totally alien. UK radio stations can also be accessed via the internet.
- d. Computer and printer. Note that while manufacturer's printer cartridges can be more expensive here (depending on types) and you may wish to bring a stock, the generic printer ink cartridges are widely available, and you will also find refilling services.
- e. Light bulbs. The houses are kitted out with lamps and shades, but if you are bringing UK lamps you may want to pack a supply of bayonet fitting bulbs as these are not available in Turkey.
- f. Pictures. Note that you can get pictures framed cheaply and well locally. The houses have walls which are so solidly built that they resist all attempts to put in brass picture hooks. The only ones that have any success are the plastic ones with 3 hardened steel hammer pins.
- g. Barbecue grill. If you use a gas BBQ, the regulator should be compatible European, not American (beware if you have a BBQ from PX). An appropriate adaptor is easily bought here for about 20TL
- h. Baby Buggy, if appropriate. The UK NSE can provide a cot, high chair and play pen if asked and if given sufficient warning.
- i. Extension cables, multi-plug adaptors, surge protectors. Most houses have 'too few' sockets. Also, when there are power cuts and the generators kick in there may well be current surges. If you are concerned, it may be easier to bring a surge protector with you from UK.
- j. Tools. Any significant work required in the house will be done by local tradesmen (although you may want to hang pictures, etc, yourself) and will be the responsibility of the DIO rep, Irfan. While tradesmen are easy to find, they are less reliable in turning up on time, and the quality of their work can leave something to be desired ('Turkish job'). It can, therefore, be easier to do simple jobs yourself. Praktica, Bauhaus & Koçtaş (B&Q equivalents) are here and while tools are cheap in Turkey, high quality tools cost the same as in UK.



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DOMESTIC STAFF

Maid.

Finding a good cleaner, and keeping her, can be problematic but the same local lady, Emine, has been on the UK circuit for years. She is hard working and trustworthy. Most families employ her for one day per week: she charges 150TL for a 6-hour day (Sep 17). Arrangements can probably be made for Emine to be 'transferred'.

Gardener.

The leases for all 5 quarters include provision for gardening, including lawn-cutting, lawn-watering, hedge trimming, chemical treatments, etc. Your sponsor and Irfan can explain the provision for your quarter.