

>> Turkish Film Industry getting more attractive for co-productions

Turkish Hollywood



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On February 10, 2011 the 61st annual Berlin International Film Festival will once again roll out the red carpet for guests from the international film world. This year the competition includes a Turkish entry, the film "Our Grand Despair" by the Turkish director Seyfi Teoman, in the race for the coveted Golden Bear. Last year, a Turkish-German co-production, Semih Kaplanoglus' film "Bal" was awarded the Golden Bear. Turkish films have long enjoyed international popularity and are an indispensable part of the international film scene. The prestigious Istanbul International Film Festival celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. London, Atlanta, Boston, New York, Miami, Amsterdam und Nürnberg are only a few of the cities that organized a Turkish film festival in 2010. It is time to take a closer look at the Turkish film industry.

Cinema

Domestic films in Turkey have a much higher market share than American or other foreign productions. Only three foreign/American productions are ranked among the top 10 box office hits of the year 2010 (Inception, Twilight Saga: Eclipse and Harry Potter); the remaining films were exclusively Turkish productions. The box office champion of the last year is the Turkish film "Five Minarets in New York" by Mahzun Kırmızıgül, which reached 3,455,089 viewers. Below is an overview of the 10 biggest box office hits in Turkey in 2010:

1	New York'ta Beş Minare (Five Minarets in New York)	3,365,710
2	Recep İvedik 3	3,325,842
3	Eyyvah Eyvah	2,459,815
4	Yahşi Batı	2,323,061
5	Av Mevsimi	1,214,408
6	Inception	1,099,969
7	Çok Filim Hareketler Bunlar	1,141,448
8	The Twilight Saga: Eclipse	1,041,920
9	Veda	1,028,032
10	Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows: Part 1	763,839

In 2009 the biggest box office success was also a domestic production, with the film "Recep İvedik 2" by the Ozen Film studio, which earned USD22.37 million and sold 4.3 million tickets, the precursor of which, "Recep İvedik" led the box office rankings in 2008 with earnings of USD24.63 million. "Recep İvedik" ran 372 copies on 390 screens. James Cameron's 2009 worldwide hit "Avatar" came in second place, with earnings of USD18.02 million.

Cinema visits per capita in Turkey are well below the average of European countries. In 2008, Germany with over 80 million inhabitants had approximately 125 million cinema visits, France with 65 million inhabitants had approximately 190 million cinema visits, and Turkey had a comparatively low 38.5 million cinema visits for more than 70 million inhabitants. However, the trend is rising.

FACT SHEET (2009)

Average Ticket Price	3.51 € (1 €/ = 2.2 TL)
Average Price for one Beer	2.50 €
Number of Screens (2009)	1,679
Number of Films Screened in the Cinema (2009)	255
Number of Domestic Films Screened in the Cinema (2009)	69
Total Cinema Admissions (2009)	36,899,954
Box Office (2009)	140,000,000 €
Admissions for Domestic Films (2009)	18,790,700
Admissions for Domestic Films (2008)	23,074,291
Market Share of Domestic Films (2009)	51%
Digital Cinema Screens (2009)	33
Average Budget of a Domestic Film Production	500,000 €

Sources: Antrakt Film Newspaper, Altyazi Monte Film Journal

Television

Turkey has a dual television system. There is no legal quota for Turkish films in television programming.

TRT is the first and at this time the only public service broadcaster and operates seven national television stations and five radio stations. Private television and radio stations were permitted for the first time in 1990. The market share of the state broadcaster TRT is by now significantly lower than that of the most important privately operated competition.

Today there are a wide range of private television stations. The five largest private television stations are Show TV, ATV, KanalD, Fox TV and Start TV, each of which is designed with full programming. All of these channels are distributed throughout Turkey via satellite and cable. Today a few large media companies dominate the Turkish media landscape. The five most important media companies are the Aydın-Doğan-Gruppe (among others Tageszeitung Hürriyet, Milliyet, Radikal, Kanal D, CNN-Türk), the Worldmediagroup (among others Tageszeitung Zaman, S HABER TV, Yumurcak TV, Samanyolu TV, Mehtap TV, Ebru TV amerika, Ebru TV europa, Hazar TV, the news agency Cihan Haber Ajansı , Burc FM und Dünya Radyo), the Calik-Gruppe (among others Sabah, ATV), the Ihlas-Gruppe (among others Türkiye, FOX TV TÜRKIYE), the Çukurova-Gruppe (Show TV, Akşam) and the Doğuş-Gruppe (NTV).

Regulation

There are no state restrictions on the production of films. The media authority RTÜK is responsible for the award of broadcasting licenses for private radio and television stations in the broadcasting field. Journalism is not subject to government regulation, yet most print media submit to voluntary control by the Turkish Press Council.

A 2011 media law passed by Parliament gives the Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan personal power to temporarily close television channels and to prohibit programs if the contents threaten national security or disturb public order.

Production

69 domestic films were produced and released in Turkey in 2010. The most successful of these was "Five Minarets in New York" by the Pinema studio. The Turkish cinema is well represented in international film festivals and is regularly considered for awards:

International Awards for Turkish Films (2002-2010)
2010: Bal (Honey) by Semih Kaplanoglu wins the Golden Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival
2009: Pandora'n in Kutusu (Pandora's Box) by Yesim Ustaoglu wins the "Golden Shell" in the categories Best Film und Best Actress at the San Sebastian Film Festival
2009: Uzak Ihtimal (Wrong Rosary) by Mahmut Fazil Coskun wins the Tiger Award at the Rotterdam Film Festival
2008: Uc Maymun (Three Monkeys) by Nuri Bilge Ceylan wins the Best Director prize at the Cannes Film Festival
2008: Gitmek (My Marlon and Brando) by Hüseyin Karabey wins the Best New Narrative Filmmaker prize at the Tribeca Film Festival
2006: Iklimler (Climates) by Nuri Bilge Ceylan wins the FIPRESCI prize at the Cannes Film Festival
2002: Uzak (Distant) by Nuri Bilge Ceylan wins the Grand Jury prize as well as the Best Actor prize at the Cannes Film Festival

Sources: Antrakt Film Newspaper, Altyazi Monte Film Journal

There were an average of 15 international co-productions per year between 2008 and 2010.

Incentives for Film Production in Turkey

A major incentive for film production in Turkey or with Turkish participation is the creativity and growing popularity of Turkish actors, scenes, scripts and directors. A group of young directors and producers founded the "New Cinema Movement" in 2010 with the goal of improving the cooperation and communication between young filmmakers. In addition, the Turkish Ministry of Culture awards grants and loans with very favorable conditions for investment in the film industry. The Cinema Council, founded in 1990, contributed significantly to the creation of favorable tax rules for production companies. Since 2009 there are also remote tax benefits for foreign production companies. Turkey is also a remote member of the European film financing fund Eurimages. An average of six co-productions are produced annually in Turkey with Eurimages funds.

Finally, the Istanbul International Film Festival in 2010 for the first time held the so-called "Meetings on the Bridge" for the promotion of joint projects between Turkish and European filmmakers. That first meeting drew the attention of numerous Turkish and European filmmakers and attracted representatives from European film financing institutions, organizations and broadcasters, for example Eurimages, Arte, Unifrance and ZDF, as well as Turkish producers and directors, who together discussed possible funding opportunities for shared film productions. During the 61st annual Berlin International Film Festival Gülin Üstün, head of the "Meetings on the Bridge" and Kirsten Niehuus, of the Berlin-Brandenburg Media Board and other film funding agencies, will present the framework of a joint development fund in order to further promote the concept of joint European-Turkish projects.

On February 11, 2011 at 16.30 the international law firm Hogan Lovells together with the Berlin International Film Festival will host a panel with the theme of "Movie goes Turkey" on the opportunities and possibilities of cooperation with the Turkish film and media industry. The event will take place at the Panoramacafé, Potsdamer Platz 1, Berlin, 24th floor. After an overview of the legal framework for film production and distribution in Turkey, a high profile Turkish delegation will give comprehensive advice on possibilities for cooperation with the Turkish film and media industry.

Panelists: Azize Tan, Director of the Istanbul International Film Festival; Gülin Üstün, "Meetings On The Bridge"; Johannes Rexin, Heimatfilm, Producer of "Bal", winner of the 2010 Golden Bear; Mehmet Demirhan, Eurimages Turkey und Head of Acquisitions of Kanal 7; Shebnem Askin-Schreger, EVP Sales Production Finance of Fox International Productions; Yamac Okur, Bulutfilm, Producer of "Our Grand Despair", competition entry in the 2011 Berlin International film Festival; **Moderators:** Christiane Stütze, Hogan Lovells Berlin; Rüdiger Suchsland, journalist.