

## Turkish

# Türkçe

**Spoken in:** Turkey, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Belgium, France, and Bulgaria

**Total speakers:** about 100 million

**Genetic Classification:** Altaic (disputed) Turkic Southern Turkish Turkish

**Official language of:** Turkey, Republic of Cyprus

When the Turks came from middle Asia to Anatolia about a thousand years ago, they came in contact with Islam and the Arabic societies. Since the Turks accepted Islam, Arabic and Persian words started infiltrating the language. During the course of over six hundred years of the Ottoman Empire, Turkish kept borrowing loan words from these two languages. Towards the end of the 19th century, this got to a point where the language was rather called the Ottoman language. This is because Turkish had been inundated with so many loan words that the language became a mix of Turkish, Arabic and Persian.

After Atatürk founded the Republic of Turkey, he established the "Turkish Language Foundation" whose task was to replace Arabic and Persian origin words with their new Turkish counterparts. The foundation did succeed in expelling over a few hundred Arabic words from the language, which are now considered obsolete in Turkish today.

The characteristic features of Turkish are the pattern regularity (if the first vowel of a Turkish word is a front vowel, the second and other vowels of the same word are usually the same vowel or another front vowel; e.g. Erdem), the abundance of suffixes (and very few prefixes), and a word order that is the opposite of that in English and other Indo-European languages).

Dialects of Turkish include Danubian, Eskişehir, Razgrad, Dinler, Rumelian, Karamanlı, Edirne, Gaziantep, and Urfa.

### Turkish alphabet

The current Turkish alphabet used for the Turkish language replaced the earlier Arabic alphabet and was created by borrowing different Latin characters in 1928. The letter Ö was taken from the Swedish alphabet, Ç was taken from Albanian, Ş from Romanian, and Ü from German.

**A, B, C, Ç, D, E, F, G, Ğ, H, I, İ, J, K, L, M, N, O, Ö, P, R, S, Ş, T, U, Ü, V, Y, Z**

Currently SSWAHS Health Care Interpreter Service employs 1 FTE Turkish interpreters and 4 sessional interpreters.