

EURASIA'S RISING STAR

The Rising of the 'Young Turks': The idioms 'bailout' and 'financial meltdown' have become synonymous with Western markets, which have struggled to gain control of a volatile economy since the global financial crisis began, in earnest, in early 2008. >>

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Indeed, while the USA and Europe continue to battle with unstable markets and retracting economies, Turkey's economic growth accelerated to an unprecedented 11% in Q1 of 2011; far exceeding China's growth. Ranked the 16th largest economy in the world, it is currently the 6th largest economy when compared with countries in Europe (IMF- WEO) and is undoubtedly Eurasia's rising star.

A population of 74 million, half of which is under the age of 28, a labour force of 25.9 million educated and motivated individuals combined with a solid infrastructure and highly competitive tax breaks has attracted some of the world's leading brands to Turkey including GE, Vodafone and Coca-Cola.

Companies that have ventured to this 'jewel' in Eurasia have been rewarded with significant returns. Nestlé, one of the world's leading brands, has enjoyed a long and distinguished history in Turkey since it first entered the market over a century ago. Today, the company employs over 5000 employees, offers 400 high-quality products and boasts revenues of 1 billion TL (2010).

During a news conference to announce the opening of its new \$55 million USD factory in the province of Bursa, Dr Hans Ulrich Mayer, the Executive Chairman of Nestle Turkey announced, "We believe in Turkey 100 percent". He added that Turkey was a preferred choice for Nestlé due to its prime location from which to efficiently export Nestlé goods to the Middle East and North Africa.

The political situation in Turkey has perhaps been a contentious issue for some. Widely believed to be a moderately Islamist political party, AKP secured a third term in office in June 2011 with 49% of the public vote. The secular elite of the Turkish army and the bourgeois society of Turkey remain in opposition

to the AKP party and it's supposed 'Islamist agenda'. This has subsequently led to unrest, particularly since Turkey's Courts tried twenty senior Army Generals for an alleged coup, last year.

However, there is no denying the fact that the current Turkish Government has achieved what previous successors have failed to dream of. Significant structural reforms coupled with a sound monetary & fiscal policy have seen Turkey become not just an economical investment hub but a political leader too. Turkey has become increasingly more ambitious in its foreign policy, acting as a mediator in the Middle East while retaining its strategic alliance with the US and Europe - its most significant trade partner.

Turkey is recognised as being more 'culturally' relaxed compared to some of its Arab neighbours, offering ex-pats from foreign multinationals a modern and westernised environment to live and work in. Indeed Istanbul, with its enviable position on the sublime Bosphorus, offering easy access to international markets and boasting high standards of living, is an obvious choice in many respects, for multinationals looking to invest in the region.

Speaking to the Sabah newspaper, PricewaterhouseCooper's Global CEO Dennis Nally verified Turkey's appeal to MNC's by confirming that "There has been an enormous increase in inquiries from our customers regarding Turkey. Information requests about Turkey's potential, market dynamics and investment environment

from all over the world show that Turkey blinks strongly on global investor radars".

The Nigel Wright Group has also experienced an increase in demand for qualified professionals in the Turkish market. Our knowledge of the region coupled with our belief in Turkey and its potential, has lead to the formation of a Turkish desk, which handles management and executive level roles across commerce and industry. We are proud and excited to play a part in Turkey's success story and its promising future.

Sources: The Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Investment Support and Promotion Agency (ISPAT); International Monetary Fund and World Economic Outlook; Sabah Newspaper.

Gender diverse boards essential ...says consumer sector >>

Nigel Wright Report

A new report by Nigel Wright Group has found that the overwhelming opinion held by senior executives, working for major global consumer brands, is that gender diverse boards are a good thing for business. >>

The report, which is based on data collected from over one hundred senior executives and board level employees at some of the world's biggest consumer companies, also found that the sector is largely opposed to the prospect of imposed quotas from the EU.

Looming in the background for firms with European operations is the 'threat' (as many perceive it) of quotas for the recommended number of women that should make up a board. Currently Norway, Spain and France are the only EU countries that have a legal quota system. In the next few years, if more member states or companies do not voluntarily move to a more diverse board structure, the European Union will begin enforcing quotas. Only 8% of respondents to Nigel Wight's survey believed quotas were necessary to incite change.

Time might be running out, however, for consumer businesses to pre-empt this shift in policy. An alarming 79% of respondents indicated that gender diversity was not a top ten strategic agenda at their business. Despite this, the majority agreed that having more women on the board would lead to better decision making, greater awareness of and attention to managing risk, better understating of employees' needs and better understanding of business culture.

Although, across the sectors, the move towards an acceptance of the benefits of gender diverse boards has been incremental, it was the view of many respondents that Consumer businesses are perhaps well placed to take a lead in promoting the benefits of gender diversity to other sectors:

"Many consumer businesses have female target audiences – even if the products themselves are used by men, women tend to be the purchasers. Consumer businesses have clearly recognised the benefit of having the internal insight of their purchasers on the boards." **MD, Leading fashion brand.**

The report also documents the alternative view, which is perhaps more prevalent outside of the consumer sector - that gender diversity is irrelevant. Proponents of this view argue that creating a team of 'well-rounded' individuals with the best skills, knowledge and experience should be the only important consideration when appointing a board. A discussion is also offered on why there are not currently more women on the boards of consumer companies.

The full report which includes a summary of other research conducted into this area and a suggested further reading list, can be downloaded from Nigel Wright Recruitment's website...