



The change in the Perception of the Image of Turkiye by Tourist Guides

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Abstract: Professional Tourist Guides have an important role in the formation and perception of the country's image. Despite the perception of the image formation is a long process, it changes in time. In order to test the changes of the perception of image in 10 years, this research aims to come through by comparing the survey which was made for Professional Tourist Guides in 2004 with the survey data also made in 2014. In research, questionnaire technique has been used as data collecting method. The study has been done with 428. Professional Tourist Guides who work actively in the country. The questionnaire has three sections. ANOVA test has been carried out to measure whether there is a significant difference in Turkey's country image according to variable of both the region belonging politically and the region having strong cultural ties. Additionally, ANOVA test has also been carried out to measure whether there is a significant difference in Turkey's tourism image according to variable of both the region belonging politically and the region having strong cultural ties. In the research, it has been ascertained a statistically significant difference between the years 2004 and 2014 about the perception of the image of country by Professional Tourist Guides, but not about their perception of the image of tourism in the same years.

Keywords: Professional Tourist Guides, Perception of Image, Destination Image.

introduction

According to the World Tourism Organization, in 2015, the number of people participating in international tourism is 1,2 billion (UNWTO, 2015). However, countries are striving to improve and improve their image in order to increase their share in the number of tourists and tourism income in the world in the intense competitive environment experienced in tourism. Image changes time to time so it is important to make search and study on image again in terms of observing the changes in time. Thus, new image will be known and market, product positioning, introduction facilities will be regulated according to

new image. Image and brand have really important role in being known of products, services or area. Some destinations come first with natural beauties, some destinations come with social and cultural forms in tourism. While negativeness in a touristic region effect the image of region negatively, positive features, cultural or natural beauty of the region plays an important role in branding of the region (Pekyaman, 2008). Destination image can be described as ideas, beliefs and attitudes of tourists about a touristic place (Avcıkurt, 2005: 24). Crompton (1979) defines destination image as an attitudinal concept consisting of the sum



of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a tourist holds of a destination. Destination image exercises a positive influence on perceived quality and satisfaction. A positive image deriving from positive travel experiences would result in a positive evaluation of a destination. Tourist satisfaction would improve if the destination has a positive image. Destination image also affects tourists' behavioral intentions. More favorable image will lead to higher likelihood to return to the same destination (Chi and Qu, 2008: 625).

It's a precondition to generate an effective and suitable "image" for a successful destination marketing. Image, which is a significant component of attractiveness of a destination, also provide a basis for marketing exercises because level of information, impression, prejudice, dreams, expectations, feelings and thoughts of a tourist during process of decision constitute the determinant feature of the image (Ersun and Arslan, 2011).

The image of a country is highly effective in behaviours of travellers. People who have never been to Turkiye do not recognize Turkiye enough because of both historical prejudices and negative propogandas. It's significantly important how other countries "perceive" Turkiye. Turkiye has a notable "misperception" problem among World public opinion. Many false or missing information exist about Turkiye and misinformation become "misopinion" as time goes by. It requires much time to straighten misopinion and this proves the fact that Turkiye's image is not administrated. Misinformation, misopinion and misperception about Turkiye can only be straightened positively with the help of strategical communication (Uslu, 2010).

The image of the country also affect the preferences of potential tourists. Professional tourist guides are not only people who introduce the country and help sightsee it, but also the people who play the main role in introduction of the country. Professional tourist guides serve millions of tourists in Turkiye as they do in every corner of the World. Professional tourist guides who introduce the country to the tourists, give information about the country and represent people of the country above all, naturally play an important role in reflecting the image of the country.

The most significant study evaluating perception of Professional tourist guides about Turkiye's image was conducted by Temizkan (2005) in 2004. The study was performed as it was thought that it would be suitable to compare with a new perception to evaluate in which ways Turkiye image had changed in last 10 years, especially with regards to country guides.

This study which was done in line with this purpose was prepared to determine on the change which occurred PTG's Turkiye image perception decennially between 2004 and 2014, and on PTG's current Turkiye image perception. As the study provides Turkiye perception of PTG that they are the intellectual part of tourism sector employees, it can be seen as a mirror which is kept to Turkiye.

Professional Tourist Guideness

According to 7.6.12 datedly and 3626 numbered Tourist Guiding Occupational Law, the professional tourist guide is; a person who provides that domestic or foreign tourists who are



persons or groups on condition that they haven't the characteristics of the travel agency events are showed around as the country's culture, tourist, history, environment, natural, social or similar values and assets are introduced in line with culture and tourism policies with the use of a language that they choose before the traveling, or who provides to conduct the travel programs of tours which are organized by travel agencies in a way that are defined in the written documents of travel agencies and sold to the consumer, and managed on behalf of the agency.

In the definition of World Guides Federation, a tourist guide is a person who accompanies in the language that travelers prefer, tells a certain area's natural and cultural heritage and known and authorised by an authorities that his/her expertness is generally proper (World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations, 2013).

3. Image Concept And Turkiye Image The image consists of associations, feelings, attitudes, impressions in the minds and positive/negative evaluations; the summary that comes to mind is the Picture or symbolic meaning. Whatever the technical specifications of a product, symbolic meaning, technical specifications how it is perceived and affect preferences between competitors. Symbolic meaning, from many elements and it is a comparison of an object country with its similarity or competitors. These elements from a mental network in relation to each other and interact with network. And these measurement give up you an idea of how the image can be changed (Gürson, 2007).

Having a good image is of great importance to all countries today.

Because the positive image created will make it easier for the country to introduce itself to the world and to accept it, the leading to the transfer of all the material and spiritual values that it possesses. This gives the countries with a positive image significant opportunities to become a strong brand (Gültekin, 2005: 127). For this reason, it wouldn't be wrong to say that countries are now regarded as a brand.

How images are created is a matter to be emphasized. It is possible that the image is formed spontaneously. Tolungüç (2000: 23-25) deals with the factors that lead to image formation in three categories: level of information, judgments held and facilities and services offered. The information level of the individual is composed of information and data obtained from very different communication channels and processes. Cultural events, peer-friendly and relatives' advice, advertising and promotional activities, the data obtained through mass media, passes through a filter in the mind of the individual and directs it to a specific position. Judgments are the evaluations of individuals on a specific subject, person or object. They may also be true, or they may be in the form of a stereotype (stereotypes) which is difficult to determine from where they originate. Opportunities and service items are shaped by many factors, from cultural presence to political structure and economic conditions (Bakan, 2005: 12-13). According to Benoit (1997), image is also essential for individuals, institutions, organizations, governing bodies and non-profit groups.

The image of a tourist place or destination can be defined as an expression of all objective information,



impressions, prejudices, dreams and emotional thoughts that an individual or group has about a certain place (Avcıkurt, 2005). While there are many factors that affect individuals' requests to visit a destination, the image is one of the most important factors affecting this process. In this sense, the concept of image has become very important especially in the development and marketing of tourist destinations due to the constantly changing and hardening competition conditions.

4. Aim Of The Research

Professional Tourist Guides (PTG) have an important role in the formation and perception of the country's image. Despite the perception of the image formation is a long process, it changes in time. In order to test the changes of the perception of image in 10 years, this research aims to come through by comparing the survey which was made for Professional Tourist Guides in 2004 with the survey data also made in 2014.

Perception and thoughts of tour guides, as key role players, should be paid attention through the investigation of destination image. Therefore, this paper will focus on destination self image measurement including destination image perception of tourist guides as residents and staff of tourism destinations with special references to a specific group of tourist guides guiding in Turkiye. For a successful tourism planning, destination management and marketing strategy, opinions of tour guides should be considered. This study is contributing to the literature by establishing mirror effect (self perception) approach for the further destination image studies by positioning the tour guides as mirrors reflecting the

current and coming up situation of the destination itself.

5. Methodology

The universe of our study is that all professional tourist guides having guidance license in Turkiye. Including national and regional professional tourist guides are divided into two by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. According to the Ministry in our country; There is also 11,188 active and 3,665 passive with national guidance licensed a total of 14 853 contacts, including passive. 949's of the guides are regional guide. The 234's of them are active, 715 of them appear to be passive. The most important reason for the low number of guides with regional licensed today is only given a tourist guide license in the national level (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2012). 400 surveys, representing 11,188 active professional tourist guide is aimed to be filled. According to + 5% margin of error, at least 370 people should be included in the sample when considering the size of the universe is 1000 required for 11,188 professional tourist guides. This figure is the idea that the limit value of 400 professional tourist guides was decided to be included in the sample.

The survey method was used as the data collection tool. The questionnaire was prepared based on the questionnaire survey applied to the thesis related to the subject (Temizkan, 2005). The questionnaire consists of three parts. First part "Turism image applications". Second part "general country image perceptions" and third part general information of professional tourist guides and including questions about evaluating demographing characteristics. Some of the questions in



the survey questionnaire were arranged according to the five point likert tipe closed and open ended questions. The scale used to determine the effect levels. I certainly do not agree=1. I do not agree=2. Neither agree nor disagree=3. I agree=4. I certainly agree=5 as evaluated. The questionnaires were applied to 428 people.

6. Findings

Table 1 shows age, gender, marital status and education characteristics of the PTG who actively served in 2014. According to Table 1, The number of people who work as a guidance worker is concentrated between 18 and 25 years of age according to 2014 data. % 62.4 of the participants are males and %

30.8 of the participants are females. The majority of the participants were male and the reason why they were mostly in the profession between the ages of 18-25. It can be seen that guidance is accepted as a physically very tiring profession as much as it is mentally (Tangüler, 2000: 126). % 9.1 of the guards over the age of 46 may be due to the difficulties of the guidance profession. After these ages especially during the maturity period of the guides, they are known to continue to work as entrepreneurs and managers in the tourism sector by using the experiences to have gained in the process of being guided and the personal close relationships to have with tourism operators (Yıldız, Kuşluvan and Şenyurt, 1997: 34).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of PTG

Age	Frequency		Percent	
	2004	2014	2004	2014
18-25	6	149	1,5	34,8
26-35	150	122	37,9	28,5
36-45	120	69	30,3	16,1
46 and above	102	39	25,8	9,1
Total	378	379	95,5	88,6
No respond	18	49	4,5	11,4
Total	396	428	100	100
Gender	2004	2014	2004	2014
Female	126	132	31,8	30,8
Male	252	267	63,7	62,4
Total	378	399	95,5	93,2
No respond	18	29	4,5	6,8
Total	396	428	100	100



Marital status	2004	2014	2004	2014
Married	198	179	50	41,8
Single	168	179	42,4	41,8
Divorced	18	45	4,5	10,5
Total	384	403	97	94,2
No respond	12	25	3	5,8
Total	396	428	100	100
Education	2004	2014	2004	2014
High school	12	13	3	3,2
College (2 years Schools of Universities)	36	62	9,1	15,3
Faculty or 4 years Schools of Universities	28	251	57,6	62,1
Postgraduate	108	78	27,3	19,3
Total	384	404	97	94,4
No respond	12	24	3	5,6
Total	396	428	100	100

Table 2. Perception of Turkiye as politically by PTG (N=417)

Year	Asia		Europe		Middle East		Mediterranean		Asia-Europe		Unique		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2004	24	6	210	53	120	30,3	6	1,5	12	3	24	6	396	100
2014	164	39,3	78	18,7	146	35	29	6,9	0	0,0	0	0,0	417	100

The ratios of professional tourist guides perceiving Turkiye's political image are shown in table 2. According to this, in 2004 %6 of the professional tour guides stated that Turkiye viewed politically as Asian country, %53 as European country %30.3 as Middle East

country as %1,5 Mediterranean country. Looking at the year 2014, %39.3 of the professional tourist guides say that Turkiye is politically speaking Asian, %18.7 European, %35 Middle East and %6.9 Mediterranean. In addition, while 210 of the professional tourist guides in



2004 regarded Turkiye as a political country in Europe, this figure dropped to 78 in 2014. In the same way, 24 of the professional tourist guides rated Turkiye as a political country in Asia in 2004, and in 2014 this figure rose to 164. In this direction, Turket is increasingly perceived by the guides as being Middle Eastern and less European.

The most interesting rate on the table is that is in 2004. 12 of the professional tourist guides evaluated Turkiye as politically Eurasia (Asia-Europe) country and 24 as its own. No professional tourist guide in 2014 evaluated Turkiye as Asia-Europe an its own.

Table 3. Perception of Turkiye as culturally by PTG (N=422)

Year	Europe		North of Blacksea		Middle Asia		Middle East		Other		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2004	108	27,2	24	6,06	114	28,7	114	28,7	36	9,09	396	100
2014	45	10,6	19	4,5	205	48,5	137	32,4	16	3,79	422	100

When table 3 is examined, it is observed that the cultural ties of Turkiye 2004 were %27.2 by Europe, 56.6 by Black sea, %28.7 by Central Asia, %28.7 by professional tourist guides. In the Middle East and %9.9 in other regions. In 2014, %10.6 of the professional tourist guides have Turkiye's cultural ties with Europe, %4.5 with the Black Sea with

North, %48.5 with Central Asia, %32.4 with the Middle East and %3.7 are stronger in the other regions. According to this, professional tourist guides who believe that cultural ties are strong with Central Asia and Middle East in 2004, can give a result of Central Asia answer with about %50 in 2014 and Turkiye's cultural ties are strongest with region.



Table 4. Change in the Image of Turkiye by PTG

Turkiye's Image	Yıl	X	Ort.	S.S	P
EU membership will positively affect Turkiye's tourism image	2004	396	4,152	1,172	0,000
	2014	410	3,839	1,18	
Some tourist guides willingly give detrimental information	2004	396	3,303	1,207	0,000
	2014	413	2,7	1,335	
PTG plays an important role in image generation	2004	396	4,485	0,858	0,146
	2014	412	4,396	0,883	
Turkiye is a democratic country	2004	396	4,023	0,544	0,000
	2014	408	2,703	1,199	
Turkiye shows respect to human rights	2004	396	3,626	0,741	0,000
	2014	410	2,505	1,177	
Turkiye has good relations with neighbors	2004	396	3,318	0,988	0,000
	2014	411	2,382	1,151	
Risk of being victim of crime (burglary, snatching etc.) is very high in Turkiye	2004	396	3,621	1,205	0,000
	2014	409	2,262	1,106	
Terror risk is very high in Turkiye	2004	396	3,091	1,179	0,000
	2014	411	3,72	1,069	
Turkiye is an economically strong country	2004	396	2,47	1,119	0,098
	2014	413	2,598	1,085	
Business relationship is ethical in Turkiye.	2004	396	2,348	0,93	0,365
	2014	410	2,412	1,057	
Turkiye has variety and richness of living culture	2004	396	4,485	0,702	0,001
	2014	409	4,301	0,855	
The standards of health service are high	2004	396	2,333	1,147	0,000
	2014	413	3,041	1,071	
Turkish people are reliable	2004	396	3,861	0,735	0,000
	2014	412	3,352	0,972	
Traffic is very safe in Turkiye	2004	396	1,788	0,808	0,000
	2014	414	2,109	0,775	
Turkiye is environmentally friendly	2004	396	1,924	1,036	0,000
	2014	411	2,633	1,088	
Turkish people are hospitable	2004	396	4,348	0,827	0,000
	2014	408	3,983	0,926	

Mean Scale: 1- very bad, 2- bad, 3- normal, 4-good, 5- very good

According to the table above, a significant difference was detected between 2004 and 2014 in thoughts of PTG's about image of Turkiye. Statements are such as; " EU membership will affect the tourist image of Turkiye positively ", " Some guides are

giving harmful information for purposes of Turkiye image ", " Turkiye is a democratic country ", " Turkiye is respectful about human rights", " Turkiye is in a good relationship with its neighbors ", " There is a high risk of being a victim of crimes in Turkiye ", " There is



a threat of terror in Turkiye ", " Turkiye is rich in cultural heritage ", " Turkiye is high in standards of health care services ", " Turkish people are trustworthy " ; 'Traffic is safe in Turkiye' ; 'Turkiye is sensitive towards the environment' 'and' 'Turkish people are hospitable'. According to this, the perception of the country image of the PTG did not show any change in the three expressions from 2004 to 2014 but there were differences in the opinions about the other thirteen expressions. In this way; while Turkish people were more hospitable in 2004, hospitality decreased significantly in 2014.

Sensitivity to the environment has increased significantly. It is understood from the table again that in 2014 some of the guides gave intentionally negative information about Turkiye. While the Turkish people are perceived to be more reliable in 2004, this

confidence declined in 2014, while in 2014 traffic is perceived as less secure, traffic is perceived as safer in 2014.

There is a reduction in the thoughts of the guides about EU membership compared to 2004. The view that Turkiye is a country that is democratic and respectful of human rights is a opinion again chages negatively. In 2014, the views of the directors of Turkiye indicating that Turkiye has a good relationship with its neighbors and that the risk of being a victim of common crimes is high is reduced negatively in 2014. In the perception of the terrorist threat, improvement is observed in 2014 compared to 2004. Again, satisfaction with healthcare services in Turkiye increases from 2004 to 2014. The guides said that the cultural richness of Turkiye is decreasing in 2014 is one of discriminating subjects.

Table 5. Change in the Perception of Image of Turkiye’s Tourism by PTG

Tourism Image	Yıl	X	Ort.	S.S	P
Natural Attractions	2004	396	4,652	0,616	0,000
	2014	417	4,307	0,850	
Climatic Features	2004	396	4,545	0,701	0,000
	2014	412	4,328	0,765	
Beaches	2004	396	4,152	0,822	0,949
	2014	412	4,155	0,885	
Historical Places	2004	396	4,258	0,823	0,477
	2014	411	4,214	0,910	
Variety and richness of living culture	2004	396	4,364	0,829	0,575
	2014	411	4,418	1,767	
Variety of accommodation facilities	2004	396	3,879	0,947	0,418
	2014	411	3,825	0,947	
Quality of accommodation facilities	2004	396	3,470	0,942	0,014
	2014	410	3,634	0,955	



Infrastructure of tourism areas	2004	396	3,015	1,067	0,000
	2014	411	3,431	0,991	
Hygiene and cleanness in tourism enterprises	2004	396	3,121	1,053	0,000
	2014	411	3,416	1,012	
Night life	2004	396	3,318	1,004	0,051
	2014	408	3,458	1,032	
Affordability of service price	2004	396	3,212	1,176	0,003
	2014	410	3,444	1,067	
Professional ability of tourism staff	2004	396	3,045	1,008	0,966
	2014	410	3,049	1,188	
Attitude of public to tourists	2004	396	3,803	0,892	0,000
	2014	410	3,549	0,988	
Shopping opportunities	2004	396	3,985	0,930	0,000
	2014	409	3,714	0,949	

Mean Scale: 1- very bad, 2- bad, 3- normal, 4-good, 5- very good

According to table 5, it has been reached to a result of a meaningful difference in perception of Turkiye's tourism image by PTG about 'Nature beauties' 'Climate features' The quality of accommodation 'Tourist infrastructure' 'Hygiene and cleanliness in tourism enterprises' 'Night life' 'The suitability of the prices of the services' 'People's attitude towards tourists' 'Shopping facilities' between the years 2004 and 2014. According to this. Tourism image perception in 2004 to 2014 there were 9 expression showing that only 5 expressions did not change of PTG in this direction in 2004 PTG had a more positive view of Turkiye's naturel beauties and climate characteristics but in 2014 these views were negative. The quality of accommodation and hygiene and cleanliness in tourism enterprises increased compared to 2004. Again

compared to 2004, there is also a positive increase in tourism infrastructure. In comparison to the views of nightlife of PTG an increase in 2014 has come to fruition. When you look of the average, the appropriateness of the prices of services taken as tourism images shows an increase from 2004 to 2014. It can be said that in 2014 services become cheaper and more easily accessible. The public's attitude towards tourists has changed in the negative direction in 2014. It can be deduced that this result may damage the tourism image of the country on another subject that changes negatively is shopping opportunities. In 2014 PTG considered the shopping opportunities of the country more negative than 2004.



Table 1. Change in the Perception of Image of Turkiye and Turkiye's Tourism by PTG

Independent Variables	N	X	s.s.	T	P
Tourism Image 2004	396	3,77	0,506	-0,546	0,585
Tourism Image 2014	420	3,79	0,665		
Country Image 2004	396	3,12	0,412	5,448	0,000
Country Image 2014	414	2,93	0,577		

Although there is a positive change (2004 (3,77) - 2014 (3,79)) in the opinions of professional tourist guides regarding the tourism image of the country. There is no statistically significant difference between 2004 and 2014. ($p=0,58$). According to the study, there is a positive significant change of

the PTG's perceptions on the country's image (2004 (3,12)-2014 (2,93)), ($p=0,00$).

Perceptions of Turkiye's image on the aspect of political and cultural structure by PTG's have been tested as it is shown on Table 7. In addition to that perceptions of Turkiye's tourism image on the aspect of cultural structure by the PTG have been tested statistically.

Table 7. Data about the Perception of Image of Turkiye and Turkiye's Tourism by PTG

Independent Variables	N	X	s.s.	F	P	Post Hoc/Tukey	
Country image- Politically	Asia	186	3,02	0,526	11,157	0,000	1-2; 2-3; 2-4; 4-5
	Europe	286	3,17	0,445			
	Middle East	258	2,88	0,535			
	Mediterranean	34	2,78	0,466			
	Asia- Europe	12	3,14	0,113			
	Unique	24	3,06	0,496			
Country image- Cultural ties	Europe	151	3,14	0,481	8,997	0,000	1-3; 3-4
	North of Blacksea	43	2,98	0,472			
	Middle Asia	313	3,08	0,519			
	Middle East	248	2,87	0,517			
	Other	50	3,03	0,39			
Tourism image- Politically	Asia	188	3,95	0,658	11,799	0,000	1-3; 1-4; 2-3; 3-5; 4-5
	Europe	287	3,87	0,575			
	Middle East	260	3,59	0,521			
	Mediterranean	35	3,52	0,664			
	Asia- Europe	12	3,89	0,111			
	Unique	24	3,78	0,358			
Tourism image- Cultural ties	Europe	152	3,78	0,655	17,369	0,000	1-3; 1-4; 1-5; 2-4; 2-5; 3-4; 3-5
	North of Blacksea	43	3,9	0,436			
	Middle Asia	316	3,96	0,574			
	Middle East	250	3,59	0,56			
	Other	50	3,55	0,348			



Anova test has been employed to determine the changes of the PTG's perceptions on Turkiye's image on the aspect of political structure between 2004 and 2014.

Here, dependent variable is PTG's perception of Turkiyes image and independent variable is clasification of Turkiye on the aspect of political structure by the PTG's. The test result is 0,00, thus, there is a significant change of the perception of Turkiye's image on the aspect of political structure by PTG's between 2004 and 2014 ($p < 0,05$).

Anova test has been employed to determine the changes of the PTG's country image perceptions on positioning Turkiye in a region as cultural between 2004 and 2014. Here the dependent variable is ptg's country image perceptions, the independent variable is the region Turkiye positioned by guides as cultural perspectives. The value in the test results were found to be 0.000. Relations between Turkiye's country image and regions with strong cultural ties show a statistically significant difference between the years 2004-2014 ($p < 0,05$). The difference between groups was tested with post hoc test. Accordingly, the country image perceptions of guides' who think Turkiye's cultural ties are stronger with Europe is lower than the country image perceptions of guides' who think Turkiye's cultural ties are stronger with Middle East (1-3). The country image perceptions of guides' who think Turkiye's cultural ties are stronger with Central Asia is higher than the country image perceptions of guides' who think Turkiye's cultural ties are stronger with Middle East (3-4).

Anova test has been used in order to investigate if there is a difference of Professional tourist guides tourism image perceptions according to region which turkiye is being positioned politically between 2004 and 2014. Here the dependent variable is Professional tourist guide's tourism image, the independent variable is the region where Turkiye is being positioned politically. Accordingly since that result valve of the test is 0,000 ($p < 0,05$) a meaning full difference is rooted. Political correlated region. Again, it was with past hortest shown on the above table from which groups difference is rooted.

Anova test has been used in order investigate if there is a difference of Professional tourist guides tourism image reception according to region which Turkiye is positioned culturally between 2004 and 2014. Here the dependent variable is Professional tourist guides tourism mage reception the in dependent variable is the region where turkiye is being positioned culturally since that result valve of the test is 0,000 [$p < 0,05$] according to the region which the country image together with cultural bonds are strong there is statistical weaming full difference of thoughts.

RESULTS

Temizkan (2005) expresses that a guide has a strategic importance especially in a country like Turkiye having image problem with the outside world, struggling with the preconceived notions and reactions about it in his master thesis. He interprets PTG as a person representing the country as a scholar, a diplomat, a sample, an ambassador in the eyes of tourists. Accordingly, this study has tried to assess whether there is a change in the



perception of PTG's about Turkiye's image in the last 10 years from 2004 until 2014. For this purpose, the survey was conducted on PTG actively working in Turkiye. The results obtained from the research are as follows:

When demographic specifications of PTG are examined, an overwhelming portion of those executing their guiding professions in 2004 constitute men between the ages of 26 and 35; it is seen also that it is still the men guides between the ages of 18 and 25 who take place in the profession actively in the year 2014. that is, it comes out that the profession is being executed by younger guides with decline in the age rete. while marriage age acerage was 35 in 2004, this figure showed change which turned to be the age of 46 and over in our day. Marriage rate in most guides (71,8) shows an increase in the age of 46 and after. The reason to this is shown to be that the working conditions of guiding profession were hard, thus aggravating living and the family life per 2004 findings, It can be said per rates in the year 2014 that professional and living conditions, however leaned on harder conditions and marriage age moved further accordingly.

Acceding to educational conditions of PTG, majority of guides (62,1%) comprise the guides of Bachelor's Degree. It can be said that rate is quite over the average of Turkiye both in 2004 and 2014. Higher education levels can be very important for the image and promotion work of the country. A guide with higher education can support the image building with respect the country as compared to the guides with lower education.

By directing the question, in which ways they obtained their cockades, the ways the cockades were obtained were found to be through ministerial courses or from relevant institutions providing 2 year and 4 year education. Most country level guides in 2004, each replies given, have obtained cockades by attending ministerial courses. Yet, the result shows that the guides abtaining cockades in 2014 were graduates of 4 year departments in universities giving Tourist Guide education, In this regard, it can be inferred that a higher portion of the guide candidates wanting to be guides prefer institutions of higher education despite reasonably large number of guide courses opened the ministry.

Another aspect among the research findings is that the demographic factors (age, gender, education etc.) have an impact on the perceptions. According to PTG's evaluations about the tourism staff 's craft knowledge and skills given the education level, the view of the tourism staff about their craft knowledge and skills also varies in as the PTG education level increases. As the education level of the counsellors increases as in the data in 2004, the craft knowledge of the staff is evaluated as "poor" by regarding the staff insufficient. According to Temizkan (2005), the reason of this is that there aren't any legal regulations about the employment of the graduate staff having tourism training.

PTG considered Turkiye politically as a European country in 2004. However, according to the responses in the survey in 2014, this evaluation is seen to have changed that Turkiye has become as an Asian country anymore. In the evaluation of the region where the cultural ties are strong, in 2004 while the



Middle East and the Central Asian regions are voted equally, the counsellors have stated that there are only strong cultural bonds in the Central Asian Region in 2014.

In general, when the changes in the perception of Turkiye's image of PTG are assessed, during the years between 2004 and 2014, we see a change in the responses about the question that the European Union membership has a positive impact on the tourism image of Turkiye. In 2004, while the idea that Turkiye's EU membership will enhance the tourism image of Turkiye is commonly accepted, it has also been found out in the findings that a European tourist sees Turkiye as "the other". Correspondingly, the EU membership will result in positive outcomes when the Europeans see Turkiye like themselves. But in the current survey results, this situation has changed and there is a viewpoint coming out that the EU membership has no contributions to the country's tourism image anymore. Turkiye gaining trust in the matters forming the general image has varied in its tourism objectives by emphasizing the topics reinforcing the tourism image.

The survey questions directed to the PTG regarding the elements that make up the general image of Turkiye seem to have changed the opinions of the guides when comparing the averages of 2004 and 2014. In 2004, PTG stated that the factors affecting the overall image of Turkiye in the negative are human rights, ethics in business relations, economy, standards of health services, traffic, environmental sensitivity, standard hygiene, cleanliness and respect for private life. Some of these issues have been lost by PTG in 2014. While "Turkiye is respectful to human rights" is

considered negative in 2004, it is now seen as positive by the guides. This change can be explained by the fact that developing Turkiye becomes conscious about human rights.

Again, there seems to be no change in the opinions of the guides in relation to the expression "is in good relations with the neighbors of Turkiye". Past and present terror, crisis, economic problems, international disputes affect the business relations of the countries with each other. The impact of these events on guides and tourism may also be related to the fact that they feel less in comparison with the past. As a result of the comparison of the studies carried out in every two years, the country's economy is evaluated positively by the guides and no change is observed. The directors say that the economy of Turkiye is strong in 2004 and in 2014 as well. When the standard of health services in Turkiye is considered, the negative opinions in 2004 showed a change in 2014. It can be said that this has made progress in parallel with innovations in health field and developments in culmination.

PTG's perception of Turkiye's tourism image is also subject to change between 2004 and 2014. The comparison of these two years of change shows that there is no positive change in historical places, cultural richness and diversity, diversity of accommodation units, professional knowledge of tourism personnel.

On the other hand, in the areas of natural beauty, climate characteristics, quality of accommodation, tourist infrastructure, hygiene and cleanliness in tourism enterprises, night life, suitability of prices of services, public attitudes towards tourists and shopping



opportunities, a change in the perception of tourism image of guides from 2004 to 2014 is a question. It is especially important to overcome the shortcomings and deficiencies related to these issues. Because these issues are the factors that constitute the foundation within the scope of tourism image.

When the answers to the questions asked in the questionnaire are evaluated in general, there is a change in the perception of the PTG image of the country between 2004 and 2014. On the other hand, there is no change in Turkey's perception of tourism image.

The topic of the image is very important for Turkey. The negative image reflected in the international competition environment is harmful both to the country and to the tourism. Some of the prejudices that foreigners have attributed to the Turks are influential in the formation and maintenance of this image. Tourism is one of the most important issues when the negative image is destroyed. Negative images and prejudices stem from inadequate publicity and advertising. At this point, perceptions about the image of the country of PTG, which has both the Turkish people and the qualities that can represent the country in the best way, is an important issue. PTG, who introduces the country, tells and communicates with tourists during the tour, plays an effective role in creating a positive image. By providing the right information flow and reflecting the perception that the shared values are parallel to modern time, it will provide an image from negative to positive. It is a matter of emphasizing the fact that our country has contemporary and original values that make up our country to the modern

world in order to create a positive image of the country or if it is negative.

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