

## **Interview with Ivo Wiegersma**

Internship at the Conrad Hotel

1 Sep 2006 – 2 Feb 2007

*Could you briefly introduce yourself?*

My name is Ivo Wiegersma, a 25 year old student from the Netherlands. I enjoy politics traveling and reading. Besides this I am a football fan, and love trying new things such as skydiving.

*Why and how did you decide to do an internship in Turkey?*

I was looking for a country with a lot of possibilities, where it would also be possible for my girlfriend and me to be together during the placement. I wanted to go to Turkey, because it is on the brink of joining Europe and as the party of which I am a member is strongly in favor I decided to see what Turkey would bring to Europe. Besides this I also wanted to live close to my parents for a while as my father is working for NATO at the moment and they are living in Sariyer, Istanbul.

*What were your expectations before coming to Istanbul?*

I was not entirely sure what to expect, I heard about the Turkish lifestyle being similar to the Spanish and I thought I would enjoy it, which I did. Besides this I also expected traffic to be chaotic and it was, but after so many months you sort of get used to it and the good things still outweigh the traffic.

*How did you first feel when you came to the Turkey? Did you know any people living there before you went?*

For me it was easy as said before my girlfriend came along and my parents lived close by so in that aspect it was very easy and comfortable.

*Can you tell us a bit about what you did within the hosting company? And whether or not you faced any difficulties?*

I worked in the Sales and Marketing department at the Conrad Hotel, which was very nice, we (the company and me) had some different expectations as to what we expected from the placement, but in the end everything turned out fine. And I had a great time at the hotel and everyone was very friendly.

*How about your life outside work?*

Well as I was working six days per week, not much time was left outside work, I got to see the city and the surroundings which was very nice, but in general we just watched some DVD's and went to the mall's, Ortaköy, İstiklal Caddesi or just smoked the water pipe downstairs from our house.

*What did you and didn't you like about living in Istanbul?*

I loved the feeling of the city being alive at all hours of the day, the feeling of being surrounded by history and the Besiktaş fans (we were living in Besiktaş) cheering around when they won a football game in every little corner of the city and that was a lot of fun. The only thing I did not like was the traffic, but that speaks for itself.

*Any surprises & astonishments?*

Nothing extreme it was just great to be in Istanbul for such a time.

*What are your future plans?*

I hope to complete my studies soon. In June 2007 I'll be one of the VIP hosts during the UEFA championship under 21, and after that I hope to become more active again in my political career.

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