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## THE 7<sup>TH</sup> ETHNOSPORT FORUM WILL BE HELD IN ST. PETERSBURG

The 7th Ethnosport Forum, organized by the World Ethnosport Union, was held on April 19–20 in St. Petersburg, Russia, under the theme “**Revival of Traditional Sports**” The forum brought together around **200 participants from 40 countries**, discussing the future of traditional sports through various panels and sessions.

The event was attended by **Russian Minister of Sports Mikhail Degtyarev, Turkish Minister of Youth and Sports Osman Aşkın Bak, Kazakh Minister of Sports and Tourism Yerbol Myrzabossynov, Belarusian Minister of Sports and Tourism Sergey Kovalchuk**, as well as many other high-level representatives.

During the forum, a joint declaration was signed with the aim of preserving, promoting, and fostering international cooperation in traditional sports. Led by **World Ethnosport Union President Necmeddin Bilal Erdoğan**, the signing ceremony demonstrated a shared commitment to safeguarding cultural heritage.

On the first day, the **Ministers Panel** featured discussions on the current state and future of traditional sports. On the second day, a **Communication Panel** focused on communication strategies for promoting traditional sports. The panel included discussions on successful practices, audience engagement, and integrated communication approaches.



## THE 6<sup>TH</sup> TRADITIONAL SPORTS AWARDS HAVE FOUND THEIR OWNERS

Organized to honor individuals, institutions, and organizations contributing to traditional sports and games, the 6th Traditional Sports Awards were presented as part of the **7th Ethnosport Forum held in St. Petersburg**. The awards, presented by the **World Ethnosport Union**, recognized those who support the preservation, promotion, and transmission of traditional sports to future generations.

This year, the **Leadership Award** was presented to **Dr. Michael Degtyarev, Minister of Sport of the Russian Federation, on behalf of President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin**. The award was presented by **WEU President Necmeddin Bilal Erdoğan**. The **Junior Traditional Sports Player Award** was given to **Farangiz Abdunabieva** from Uzbekistan. The award was presented by **WEU Board Member Ali Khatem Mohammad Al-Mehshadi**. The **Senior Traditional Sports Player Award** was received by **Ayşegül Demirbağ Çalışkan**. The award was presented by **WEU Vice President Hakan Kazancı**. The **Traditional Sports Organization Award** went to the **Equestrian Federation** of the Republic of Azerbaijan. **WEU Board Member Zeynep Safiye Baki Nalcioğlu** presented the award. The **Communication Award**, given to institutions contributing to the field of communication, was awarded to **Qazastan TV**. The award was presented by **WEU Board Member Mustafa Eröğüt**. The **Academician Award** was presented to **Prof. Dr. Zinaida Kuznetsova** in recognition of her contributions to the field of traditional sports. The award was handed over by **WEU Board Member Ana Claudia Collado Garcia**.





## THE 7<sup>TH</sup> ETHNOSPORT CULTURE FESTIVAL HOSTED 1.83 MILLION VISITORS

Organized by the World Ethnosport Union, the 7th Ethnosport Culture Festival was held at Istanbul Atatürk Airport from May 22 to 25, 2025. The festival attracted 1.83 million visitors over four days, marking a major success. With strong participation across all age groups, the event transformed into a unique meeting point where traditional sports, handicrafts, stage performances, and culinary experiences brought cultural heritage to life and supported intergenerational transmission. International participation further strengthened the festival's role as a powerful bridge **“from tradition to the future”**.

The 7th edition of the festival welcomed athletes and cultural ambassadors from more than **40 countries**. Participants from regions ranging from Central Asia to Africa, the Balkans, and the Middle East shared their cultural values directly with visitors. Each country contributed to the festival's universal identity by presenting its traditional games, handicrafts, and cuisine.

On May 24, 2025, the third day of the festival, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and First Lady Emine Erdoğan visited the event at Atatürk Airport. Welcomed with great interest by the attendees, President Erdoğan watched the Karabakh Horse Show performed by the Azerbaijani delegation. The moment when Turkish and Azerbaijani flags waved together received a standing ovation — including from the President.



President Erdoğan also toured the **“Family Pavilion”**, one of the highlights of the festival and newly established this year. In this special area, created within the scope of the **“2025 Year of the Family”**, he emphasized the significance of the family institution in preserving cultural values and stated that protecting family unity is key to sustaining heritage. The President expressed his appreciation for children and parents participating together in traditional games and ancestral sports at the pavilion.

Throughout the festival, visitors had the opportunity to try a variety of traditional sports such as archery, horse riding, wrestling, mounted archery, and mangala — all offered free of charge. These experiences were presented in a safe and educational environment under the guidance of professional trainers and athletes. In addition to sports, traditional art workshops featuring weaving, tile art, and marbling provided participants with hands-on access to Türkiye’s rich artisanal legacy.

In line with this year’s theme, **“Tradition Begins in the Family”**, the Family Pavilion was introduced for the first time. This dedicated area highlighted the importance of the family in society, where parents and children played traditional games together, creating shared memories. The space also hosted talks, workshops, and interactive sessions focused on child development and intra-family communication.





Offering a vibrant atmosphere filled with traditional sports, games, and cultural encounters, the 7th Ethnosport Culture Festival captivated audiences with a wide range of shows. The Karabakh Horses impressed spectators with their graceful and skilled acrobatic equestrian performances, which were also featured during the opening ceremony. The Galkynysh National Equestrian Team from Turkmenistan became a highlight of the festival with their displays featuring Akhal-Teke horses, known for their beauty, resilience, and elegance. Other performances such as horseback acrobatics, martial arts, and mounted archery drew significant attention. Participants from Kazakhstan also contributed with traditional wrestling demonstrations, enriching the festival's cultural dimension. All these events vividly reflected the festival's mission to preserve and pass on cultural heritage to future generations.

Universal flavors and world cultures came together at the 7th Ethnosport Culture Festival. Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB)'s **"World of Coffee"** stand gave visitors the chance to sample coffee varieties from around the globe. Kıl tents introducing various regions of Türkiye, reenactments of nomadic life, and handicraft workshops offered attendees a rich cultural journey. The 7th Ethnosport Culture Festival — featuring local cultural displays, artistic performances, and international participation — concluded with a magnificent concert by Semicenk.



## ETNOTRUCK PROJECT CARRIES TRADITION TO THE STREETS OF TÜRKİYE

World Ethnosport Union not only promotes traditional values through sports, but also contributes to cultural preservation through innovative projects. Among these, the EtnoTruck Project stands out as a comprehensive cultural platform that bridges tradition and the future.

As one of Türkiye's largest cultural events, the **Culture Route Festival** continues this year with millions of visitors, uniting traditional and cultural values across the country. As a key component of the festival, EtnoTruck—spearheaded by the Ethnosport Union—travels across cities to reconnect communities with their cultural heritage.

In 2025, the EtnoTruck has already completed visits in **Adana**, **Manisa**, and **Samsun**, and is now on its way to **Trabzon** in July. The project will continue its journey with various events throughout different cities in Türkiye over the course of the year.

**At each stop, EtnoTruck offers a rich program including traditional sports demonstrations, children's workshops, handicrafts, and mind games, creating an interactive space where cultural diversity meets the public.** These events offer both educational and hands-on experiences, particularly providing younger generations to engage with traditional values.

The efforts carried out as part of the Culture Route Festival aim to pass on Türkiye's cultural heritage to future generations and to foster social cohesion. With each destination, EtnoTruck touches a different layer of cultural depth and provides an unforgettable experience.





## THE WORLD ETHNOSPORT UNION REACHES 43 INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS

The World Ethnosport Union (WEU) continues to expand its global influence with the vision of reviving traditional sports and passing them on to future generations. As of 2025, the Union brings together **43 institutional member federations from 28 countries**, representing a broader and more inclusive international structure.

Founded on universal values such as peace, respect, solidarity, and tradition, the World Ethnosport Union works to preserve traditional sports and promote cultural diversity. This commitment has evolved into a dynamic and multinational cooperation network that now spans five continents: Europe, Asia, Africa, North America, and South America.

The Union is not only active in the field of sports but is also emerging as a model in areas such as cultural diplomacy, youth engagement, and social communication. By bringing institutions from various geographies under one umbrella, the Union fosters intercultural dialogue and contributes to the spread of shared human values.

In 2025, the Union welcomed two new member federations: **the Belarusian Federation of Gorodki Sport and the International Kusbegilik Federation**. **Gorodki is a traditional precision sport with deep cultural roots in Belarus, while Kusbegilik represents an ancient hunting tradition practiced with birds of prey across Central Asia.**

Through forums, workshops, and festivals organized under its umbrella, the World Ethnosport Union gives traditional sports a global voice. With members from five continents, the Union plays a key role in sustaining intangible cultural heritage and uniting communities through the power of tradition.





## THE BEST SHOTS HONORED AT THE ETHNOSPORT CULTURE FESTIVAL

The results of the photography contest for the 7th Ethnosport Culture Festival, which took place at Atatürk Airport between May 22-25, 2025, have been announced. The most captivating images captured during the festival were selected by a jury of experts across various categories.

The World Ethnosport Union, continuing its mission with the theme of reviving traditional sports and games, hosted the 7th Ethnosport Culture Festival from May 22 to 25 with the participation of over 1.83 million visitors. Held at Atatürk Airport, the festival featured a rich program of traditional sports, games, arts, and gastronomy. Visitors had the opportunity to explore and experience many facets of traditional culture. A special photography contest was also organized as part of the festival—considered one of the most comprehensive cultural events in the world. The participants who captured the most powerful and evocative images of the festival's atmosphere and activities were honored with awards.

The jury of the 7th Ethnosport Culture Festival photography contest convened to evaluate submissions and select the best photographs. Entries were judged in the categories of **Equestrian Sports and Horse Shows, Festival Concept, Cultural Activities and Traditional Children's Games, and Archery, Wrestling, and Other Traditional Sports.**



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