

January 2021 • September 2021

# BELGIAN LUXEMBOURG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN TURKEY

## NEWSLETTER



**Belgian-Luxembourg  
Chamber of Commerce  
in Turkey**

**Türk Belçika Lüksemburg  
Ticaret Derneği**



**BLCCA**  
Belgian-Luxembourg Chambers  
of Commerce Abroad **ACCREDITED**

**H.E. PAUL HUYNEN**  
**AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM TO THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY**

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*In August 2020, I was appointed Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to the Republic of Turkey. The past year citizens and businesses in both Belgium and Turkey have been facing unprecedented challenges as they were dealing with the impact of the COVID-pandemic. Different measures were taken and efforts were asked from everyone to curtail the pandemic. In the meantime both Belgium and Turkey have massively scaled up vaccination and as a consequence the sanitary situation in both countries has gradually improved.*

*At the start of summer the sky seems to clear up and new economic opportunities loom on the horizon. It is a pleasure for me to address the readers of BLCCT Newsletter at this juncture in Belgian-Turkish relations.*

*The Kingdom of Belgium has historic, multidimensional and constructive diplomatic relations with the Republic of Turkey. In 2023 – the year marking the centenary of the Turkish Republic – Belgium and Turkey will also celebrate 185 years of diplomatic relations. These longstanding ties between our countries are reflected in various people-to-people exchanges: Belgium is home to a large Turkish community and nearly half a million Belgian tourists visit Turkey in normal times.*

*In 2020 the Kingdom of Belgium opened a new Chancery in Ankara which underlines the continued importance Belgium attaches to political and economic relations with Turkey. In addition, in January 2021 Belgium and Turkey successfully held a Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) at Ministerial level creating important building blocks for future economic cooperation.*

*Belgium and Turkey have strong commercial and economic ties. As emphasized by Minister Sophie Wilmès during the JETCO meeting, Turkey is an important trade partner for Belgium, as the trade volume between both countries nearly reached 10 billion € in 2020. This extensive trade relationship is supported by nearly 2000 Belgian companies exporting to Turkey, while over 2500 Belgian businesses have expressed interest in the Turkish market.*

*Belgium is one of the world's leading merchandise traders, currently ranking 10th for exports and 12th for imports. Belgium's key exports include chemical products, transport equipment and machinery. The expanding activities between Belgian and Turkish ports are likely to increasingly nourish bilateral trade.*

*Prospects are good for the Belgian economy: economic growth outpaced expectations in the first quarter of 2021. Even during the pandemic several sectors showed remarkable resilience. For instance, the Belgian pharmaceutical industry and logistics sector were key in the fight against the global pandemic.*

*Post-covid economic recovery in Europe will be guided by green and digital transformation inspired by the European Union's Green Deal. Belgium is looking to continue on its innovative path investing in climate-smart technologies, renewable energy and digital innovation spurring transformation towards a sustainable, smart and climate-resilient economy.*

*Smooth economic and trade relations will be crucial to spur dynamic economic recovery, fit for the challenges of the future, and to create well-being for citizens. Businesses will be the drivers of this economic transformation and I am looking forward to work together with BLCCT to support companies in identifying new opportunities.*

*Allow me to conclude with a positive look towards the future, I believe that the worst of the pandemic is behind us and that a new dawn is upon us filled with economic opportunities. As Ambassador of Belgium to Turkey, I intend to take advantage of this momentum to further deepen Belgian-Turkish ties and economic and commercial relations. Looking forward to working with you during my mission in Turkey.*

**June/July 2021**



*Dear Members,*

*I greet you, hoping that you had a relatively comfortable summer with the increase in vaccinations as of June after the pandemic. I am happy and proud to be elected as the president of our Association's Ordinary General Assembly with Election on June 23, 2021, which could not be completed during the lockdown period.*

*While I wish success to my colleagues in the new Board, I would like to thank previous President Mr. Levent Apaydın, Secretary General Mr. Gürbüz Sarı and other board members with whom I had the opportunity to work together as the Vice-president in the previous Board of Directors. I commemorate our beloved Vice President Mehmet Onultan with mercy.*

*During our two-year mandate, which we will spend with our new board members, who are more valuable than each other and who are pioneers in their fields, our priority is to increase the commercial relations with Belgium and Luxembourg, especially to spread this increase to the whole country. I hope to share our current agenda and plans with you more clearly after our first board meeting.*

*I would like to state that we will make an effort to keep the institutional memory of our association, which is the second oldest trade association in Turkey, and to remember the work of the past founders and administrations. As we move towards our centennial, I think that our formation in our 95th year is enough to remind us how deeply rooted the association is. I think that remembering the backgrounds and historical roots of social-cultural-commercial-financial relations that have been going on for years is one of the factors that will enable these relations to be transferred to future periods more strongly.*

*We hope that we will have the opportunity to carry out our online activities, which we mainly carried out during the pandemic, as a hybrid. I wish to see you soon at our first event and I respectfully greet you.*

**Sincerely,  
N. Tuğrul Şeremet**

## “The Ordinary General Assembly with election of the Board of the Belgian Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Turkey”



The Ordinary General Assembly with election of the Board of the Belgian Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Turkey was held on Wednesday, June 23.

At the General Assembly, Mr. Tuğrul Şeremet, a country manager of H.Essers Turkey, was elected as a new chairperson of the BLCCT. Mr. Dr. Şerhan Şimşek, Group CEO of CT Pharma and TFL Pharma, and Mr. Alp Tanrıöver, Business Development Coordinator & Board Member at Unit Group Companies, were elected as new vice-chairpersons of the BLCCT. While Mr. Mert Bülbül was elected as a new Secretary General of the Chamber, Mr. Hans Broucke, Ms.Nil Tunaşar, Mr. Bülent Kılınçarslan, Mr. Egemen Döven, and Mr. Bülent Tekmen were elected as new Board Members.

On behalf of the Belgian Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Turkey, we would like to thank our previous Chairperson Mr. Levent APAYDIN , Secretary General Mr. H. Gürbüz SARI and all other Board Members for strengthening ties between Belgium, Luxembourg and Turkey and for their valuable contributions to our chamber.

We would also like to welcome our new Board Members and to convey our congratulations and sincere wishes of success for their new missions.

# OUR NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS



## TUĞRUL ŞEREMET

**Board Chairperson**  
**H.ESSERS**

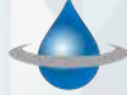


Graduated from Lycee Saint Benoit High School in 2002, Galatasaray University in 2007 and got his Master's degree from Cass Business School in 2009. He started his career in 2010, as the Supply Chain Manager in Azelis. Then he started working as Sales and Business Development Manager in H.Essers in 2012 and after 3 years there he got promoted to country manager of Turkey which he still continues to give his services there. He speaks fluent in English and French.



## ALP TANRIÖVER

**Vice-chairperson**  
**Unit Group**



He was born in 1979 in Istanbul. After completing his primary, secondary and high school education at Şişli Terakki Schools, he studied at the University of Pennsylvania in the USA in 1998. Subsequently, he graduated from Uludag University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Business Administration in 2003. After starting his professional career in Unit Group of Companies in 2004, he took on managerial duties in the group's Energy, Tourism, Hotel Management, Trade and Real Estate projects. He has also held various positions in institutions such as Yased and Hesiad, and still works as a Business Development Coordinator within the Unit Group of Companies and a Member of the Board of Directors in Domestic and Foreign Group companies. He is married and has a child.



## ŞERHAN ŞİMŞEK

**Vice-chairperson**  
**TFLL Pharma**



He was born in Adana in 1975. He completed his primary, secondary and high school education in Istanbul. He completed the 19 Mayıs University Faculty of Science Biology Department between 1992-1996, 19 Mayıs University Science Faculty Molecular Biology Master program between 1996-1999, and Marmara University Faculty of Pharmacy Pharmaceutical Technology Pharmaceutical Biotechnology PhD program between 2000-2007. He worked as R&D Specialist between at Bilim Pharmaceuticals between 1996-2003, R&D Formulation Development Manager at Hexal AG between 2003-2005, Process Development Manager at Novartis Sandoz between 2005-2009 and Regional Technical Manager Turkey and Middle East at Colorcon between 2009-2012. He established CT farma Pharmaceuticals and Biotechnology R&D company in 2012 Turkey, TFLL Pharmaceuticals and Food Supplements company in 2016 Turkey, and TFLL BVBA company in 2017 Belgium. He worked as an associate member in the Turkish Belgium Luxembourg Trade Association between the dates of 2019-2021. He is a member of FladersBio and HappyAging platforms based in Belgium. He is married and has a child.

# OUR NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS



## MERT BÜLBÜL

**Secretary- General**  
**Başıoğlu&Bülbul Law Office**



BAŞOĞLU & BÜLBÜL  
HUKUK BÜROSU

Born in Istanbul in 1984, Mert Bülbul graduated from Şişli Terakki Primary School and Saint Michel French High School. After graduating from Istanbul Bilgi University Faculty of Law in 2008, he went to London for his master's degree. He studied Arbitration, Competition Law, M&A and Energy Litigation from London City University in 2011 and completed his master's degree by specializing in Energy Litigation. After working in the country's leading law firms operating in the field of commercial law and M&A since 2011, he has been working as a managing partner at Başoğlu & Bülbul Law Firm in 2018. Mert Bülbul, who speaks English and French, is married and has a child.



## BÜLENT KILINÇARSLAN

**Board Member**  
**KARL Institute**



KARL  
INSTITUTE

Mr. Kılınçarslan is an Engineer, Research Scientist, and Educator; currently the owner of a global research and polling firm called 'KA Research Labs' and its non-profit division called 'KARL Institute'. He works on special international research programs; with his own offices in Belgium, Turkey, Iraq, and affiliates in the USA, Netherlands, Kenya, and fellow research partners/associates in more than 100 countries around the world. He has been an active member of WAPOR (World Association for Public Opinion Research), ESOMAR (European Society for Opinion and Market Research), CIBAR (Conference of International Broadcasters Audience Research), European Documentary Network, Turkish Society for Quality, DEIK Business Councils (Belgium 2016-2021, Netherlands 2016-2019), currently National Representative of WAPOR for the Republic of Turkey, lives partly in Brussels, Rotterdam, Istanbul, and Izmir.



## BÜLENT TEKMEN

**Board Member**  
**Colendi**



COLENDI

Bulent is a Serial Entrepreneur. His prior Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency Licensed e-money company ininal.com has reached more than 3 Million accounts, and 1 Million active digital wallet users monthly, and still growing fast. Cheque-Dejeuner Group acquired in May 2016 a majority stake at ininal and signed for one of the biggest deals in the Turkish Startup ecosystem. He is working for years to transform the banking industry, micro credits and credibility world into digital and has started Colendi as the right solution for this vision. Bulent is also an active investor and invests in earlystage FinTech start-ups through NextVentures. Bulent has been elected as the "Internet Entrepreneur of the Year" in Turkey and EY Entrepreneur Of The Year - Accelerating Entrepreneurs program in Monte Carlo. He won several awards: "Best FinTech Start-up". The Wired UK magazin elected in 2013 and 2014 ininal as the hottest 100 companies in Europe. Prior to ininal, Bulent spent more than 15 years in Financial Technology Consultancy and Software development. Bulent holds B.S. Industrial Engineering degree and joined Harvard Business School later.

# OUR NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS



## EGEMEN DÖVEN

**Board Member**  
**Reysaş Logistics**



Born in April 23, 1985 in Ankara, Egemen Döven completed primary school at Büyük College, secondary school at Private Bilkent High School and high school at TED in 2003. In the same year, he started Koç University Business Administration Department. He graduated from the department in 2007 with a Vehbi Koç Honorary degree. He did his logistics internship at Hödlmayer in Győr, Hungary in 2002 and worked at HSBC in the banking, finance and treasury departments in 2004. In 2005, he worked at the Toyota Automobile Factory in Adapazarı in the operations and planning departments. He worked in the field of corporate finance at Deutsche Bank's New York office in 2007, and since this year he has been a Member of the Board of Directors and Vice Chairman of Reysaş and its group companies. In addition to being a licensed aircraft pilot, he is also a sea captain. Egemen Döven, who speaks English very well and little Italian, is married and has 3 sons.



## HANS BROUCKE

**Board Member**  
**TEB**

Hans Broucke (1964) is a Belgian national and graduated from the Catholic University of Louvain in 1986 as Master in Applied Economics. His banking career started with ING Bank in Belgium. In 1993 he became Head of Corporate Banking at ING Bank Czech Republic based in Prague. In 1998, he joined the Executive Committee of ING Bank Ukraine based in Kyiv. He joined Fortis Bank, later to become part of BNP Paribas, in 2003 as responsible for Business Development Commercial Banking with specific focus on CEE. He became General Manager of Fortis Bank Czech Republic in 2005 and Country Head of BNP Paribas Czech Republic in 2008. Between 2012 and 2017, he became Country Head for BNP Paribas Bulgaria based in Sofia. In 2017, he was appointed Head of Corporate Banking and Member of the Management Board of UkrSibbank Ukraine. In August 2020, he was appointed as resident Board Member of TEB A.S.



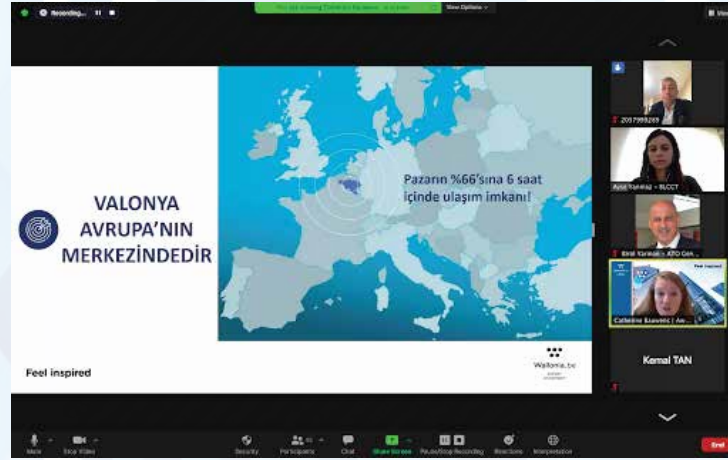
## NİL TUNAŞAR

**Board Member**  
**Transorient**



Nil Tunaşar holds a Bachelor's Degree in English Language and Literature from Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey. She started her business career as Coordinator to General Manager in Ford Motor Company Turkey Liaison office in Istanbul and stepped into logistics sector as being AEI Ankara Branch Manager. Nil is the Managing Partner and shareholder in Transorient International Forwarding Inc. since 1991. Her role in Transorient covers Management of Sales & Marketing, Finance and Quality Departments. She serves UTIKAD as a Director of Board since 2008. She actively chairs UTIKAD E-Commerce and UTIKAD Innovation Focus Groups. She also serves logistics sector as Board Member in TIM (Turkish Exporters Union), Logistics Sub-Committee, TOBB E-Commerce Assembly, ITO E-Commerce Committee. Nil will represent Turkey in FIATA and CLECAT Digitalisation Work Groups as of July 2021. Nil is married and mother of twin girls.

# BLCCT EVENTS



## “Expand your business to Wallonia/Belgium”

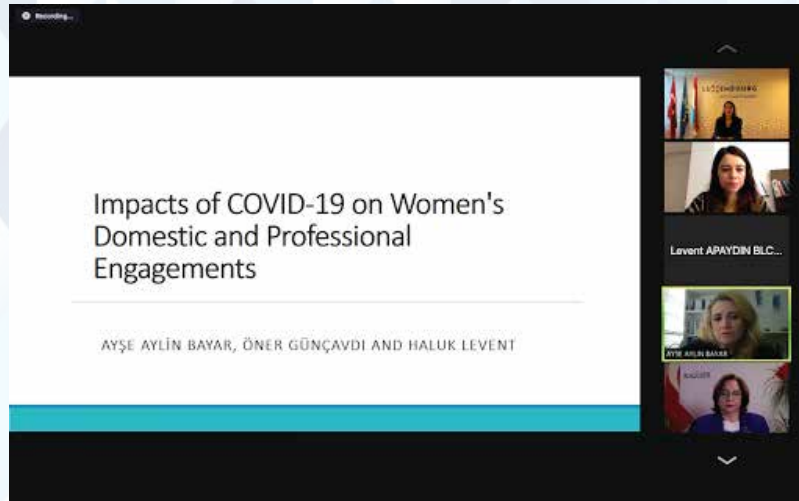
Our first event of 2021, “Expand your business to Wallonia/Belgium”, was held under the coordination of the BLCCT and Adana Ticaret Odasi on Wednesday, January 13. Ms. Catherine Bauwens, Trade and Investment Commissioner (Awex) to the Consulate General of Belgium in Istanbul, and Mr. Franck Toussaint, In-house Supply Chain Expert, were the speakers in the event.



## “Doing Business in Luxembourg”

Doing business in Luxembourg webinar was held on February 2021 with the contributions of The Belgian Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Turkey, The Embassy of Luxembourg in Ankara and Luxinnovation. Ms. Jenny Hällen Hedberg and Mr. David Foy, Head of International Business Development, Luxinnovation, Ms. Chris Welter, Entrepreneurship coordinator, House of Entrepreneurship were the speakers in the event.

You can access the presentations and the video recording of the event by clicking [here](#).



## “Gender Equality in Business During and After the Pandemic”

The second edition of our Women Leaders in Business Seminar Series titled as “ Gender Equality in Business During and After the Pandemic” was held on Thursday, April 1.

The opening speeches of the webinar were delivered by the Ambassador of Luxembourg in Turkey H.E. Ms. Angèle Da Cruz and Mr. Levent Apaydin, BLCCT Chairperson. Assoc. Dr. Ayşe Aylin Bayar , Istanbul Technical University – Management Faculty, Ms. Emine Erdem , President of KAGİDER Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey and Ms. Neslihan Nigiz Ulak, General Manager Barry Callebaut Turkey were the speakers in the event.

You can access the presentation made by Assoc. Dr. Ayşe Aylin Bayar titled “ Impacts of COVID-19 on Women’s Domestic and Professional Engagements” and the video recording of the event via the following [link](#).



## “Latest Developments in Customs”

Our webinar titled “ Latest Developments in Customs” was held on Monday, May 3, 2021. Mr. Barış Demirel, Deloitte Turkey - Director of Global Trade Advisory, was the speaker in the event. In his presentation, Mr. Demirel focused on:

- \* Brexit, TR-UK Free Trade Agreement and its differences from the Customs Union
- \* Problems and latest situation in Certificates of Origin
- \* Main issues in recent customs inspections

You can access the presentation made by Mr. Demirel and video recording of the event via the following [link](#)

# BLCCT EVENTS



**Circular Economy and Sustainability Seminar Series - I**

 **Ahmet Atıl Aşıcı**  
ITU Faculty member  
2010-2021 IFU, Mexico Fellow

 **Christopher Van Den Daele**  
Business Unit Manager  
H.Essers Belgium

 **18 June 2021, Friday**  
**14.00 - 15.00 (Turkey Time)**


\*The webinar will be held in English on Zoom platform.


**14.00 - 14.05**  
Welcoming Speech - BLCCT Secretary General  
H. Gürbüz San

**14.05 - 14.25**  
"Potential Effects of the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism on the Turkish Economy"  
Ahmet Atıl Aşıcı

**14.25 - 14.45**  
Belgian Perspective and H.Essers' Sustainability Strategy  
Christopher Van Den Daele

**14.45 - 15.00**  
Q&A

 **Belgium-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Turkey**  
Belgium-Luxembourg Member of Consulate in Turkey

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**REGISTER NOW**

## “CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABILITY SEMINAR SERIES – I”

“Think green and act green!”

Our webinar titled “Circular Economy and Sustainability” was held on Friday, June 18, 2021. Mr. Ahmet Atıl Aşıcı, Associate Professor at Istanbul Technical University and Mr. Christopher Van den Daele, H.Essers Belgium - Business Unit Manager, were the speakers in the event. In his presentation, Mr. Aşıcı focused on “Potential Effects of the EU’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism on the Turkish Economy”, while Mr. Vanden Daele presented H.Esser’s sustainability strategy as a great example of how companies act green.

You can access the video recording of the event via the following [link](#).

# WOMEN LEADERS IN BUSINESS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

## Women Leaders in Business Scholarship Program

Would you like to support young women students who want to pursue their higher education in Belgium or Luxembourg?

- ✓ You can cover the student's tuition fee
- ✓ You can grant a monthly scholarship (Min 12 months)

Please contact us via [info@blcct.org](mailto:info@blcct.org) if you would like to support our project and future's female professionals!

**Provide scholarship for young women now,  
Support female professionals of the future !**



Belgian-Luxembourg  
Chamber of Commerce  
in Turkey  
Belgium-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Turkey



As the Belgian Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Turkey, we believe in the importance of gender equality and attach importance to increasing the representation of women in business life. For this purpose, we want to support young women students who want to pursue their higher education (undergraduate or graduate) in Belgium or Luxembourg and to help them find scholarships for their higher education in Belgium or Luxembourg. We aim for our scholars to research the policies and tools applied to strengthen the position of women in business life and increase their importance in the countries they study. We also intend to transfer this experience and practical knowledge of our scholars to Turkey when they come back and to contribute to our country in these matters.

In line with this goal, we look forward to the support of companies and individuals from Belgium and Luxembourg and, of course, every volunteer without any restrictions. You can serve this good purpose by providing scholarship support to students who want to pursue their higher education.

Please contact us at [info@blcct.org](mailto:info@blcct.org) if you would like to support our project and future's female professionals!

### Scholarship Scope

- Covering the student's tuition fee
- Granting a monthly scholarship of 700-1000 Euros for a minimum of 12 months to contribute to living expenses (accommodation, meals, etc.) in the country.

# OUR SERVICES



## MATCHMAKING

To make it abroad you need a business partner: an agent, a distributor, a supplier, an importer, a customs agent...

The Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Turkey maintains an extensive network to help you get in touch with potential partners

### BLCCT Services:

- Connects matchmaking platform
- Trade missions
- Networking events

Access new markets

## VISIBILITY

The BLCCT can help you to increase the reputation of your company and to make your company more visible.

### BLCCT Services:

- Newsletter, website, social media posts
- Sponsorships



Strengthen your presence abroad

## PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Your job is to explore the market, to find new opportunities, to sell.

The BLCCT can help you stay focus on your job and make your trip abroad a lot easier, because we know the country and its customs.

### BLCCT Services:

- Assistance with visa procedures
- Support during business trips
- Business centre facilities
- Domiciliation services



Become a member and let us help develop your business abroad



**Belgian-Luxembourg  
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Ticaret Derneği



## KNOWLEDGE SHARING

What are the normal payment conditions? How does this new environmental legislation impact my business? How can I protect my intellectual property rights? Can I discuss politics with my business partner? Being successful abroad starts with a good understanding of the local political, economic, social and cultural environment. The BLCCT can help you in many ways.

### BLCCT Services:

- Information and advice
- Seminars and workshops
- Cultural training



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