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EIT-Food Startup Guide **Turkey**

Contact

EIT Food accelerates innovation to build a future-fit food system that produces healthy and sustainable food for all.

We believe inclusive systems innovation, which enables all people and places to participate and benefit, is essential to a strong food system that is better for everyone. With teams on the ground across Europe, we bridge the gap between countries and regions with low innovation capacity and those leading the way. And we put consumers at the heart of our work, helping build trust by reconnecting them to the origins of their food, directly involving them in the innovation process, and working with the food sector to increase transparency. Collaboration is central to all our work, which spans the whole food value chain, and is vital to meet the big challenges we face. Together with our community, we will build an innovative and resilient food system that in turn creates a healthier society and planet.

**This report was prepared by Enky Consulting
for EIT Food CLC South S.L.**

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Disclaimer: The guide is intended to help entrepreneurs and startups. However, it does not replace seeking professional advice and guidance. As such, although EIT Food has made every effort to ensure that the information in this book is useful, they do not assume any responsibility for the outcome of your business.



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Dear reader,

If you have this guide in your hands it is because you're probably a savvy and curious entrepreneur who wants to make a positive impact within the agrifood industry, so I would like to congratulate you on the work you are doing towards achieving a better world!

Over the last four years, at EIT Food South we have been working towards a more sustainable, trustworthy and healthy agrifood industry and we do so by creating connections across the agrifood system that stimulate new ideas and inventions to drive change. As one of EIT Food Co-Location Centres, EIT Food South was established in the second half of 2017 to build bridges among leading businesses, universities and research centres. One of our priorities is to ensure that new ideas and technologies - which often emerge in startups or young entrepreneurs - can be transferred to the market, that they are scalable at European level and that no great idea falls by the wayside for lack of resources or support.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the overgrowing consequences of global warming that are so evidently changing our environment have once more exposed the need for an urgent change towards sustainable economic development. This poses an opportunity for startups to help industry players addressing the markets change, moving faster than ever before.

There is no single recipe to build a successful startup ecosystem; in the case of southern Europe, several factors need to be considered including cultural and institutional diversity, geographical position, and political context of each country within this region. Every country has its own unique identity and culture, so it is crucial to understand how business is conducted in these markets.

The agrifood sector still constitutes a big proportion of Southern European countries' economies. As we shared in the [Food Foresight report](#) published in March 2021, there is still room to increase the digitalisation and automation of different agrifood processes, especially the most relevant ones to reduce the environmental impact of agrifood businesses.

The internationalisation of startups is a natural step as a response to the environmental and technological challenges that we are facing. Each country is unique, with its own culture and customs, its own regulations and bureaucracy and new customers surely can seem overwhelming for companies that land in a new country. Therefore, finding partners to expand your network is key if you want to be successful on your journey towards a new market.

With the aim of achieving this goal, we have devised this guide to make sure that the process of establishing your company in Southern Europe is as smooth as possible, starting from the legal and bureaucratic steps that have to be taken to operate in region to funding opportunities and support groups, as well as an overall look of the main stakeholders in the local Agrifood industry within each country in which we operate (Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Cyprus, Malta, Turkey and Israel). This guide will show you, among other things, how to set up a legal entity in Turkey, the required permits for agrifood businesses, funding opportunities and other useful information to make your arrival into the country the next step towards a successful international expansion of your business.

I really hope that this information helps you start your journey in the country and set the base for a strong and long trajectory towards creating an innovative and strong Agrifood ecosystem that trespasses frontiers and builds a better future for everyone.

Begoña Pérez-Villarreal
EIT Food CLC South Director

EIT-Food Startup Guide Turkey 2022

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Turkey is one of the largest markets in the region with its unique geostrategic location and population of more than **83 million**.

Turkey has experienced a V-shaped recovery in the post-COVID-19 period, with **11%** economic growth in 2021 compared to the previous year. The country has proved to be a strong player in global value chains where multinational companies maintain their presence in the country.

Fastest-growing economy
in the G20, OECD and EU in 2021.

Labour costs in the sector are **70% – 80%** lower than in Europe and the rest of the world.

Turkey is an agriculturally self-sufficient country with its favourable climate, large arable lands and abundant availability of water resources. These eligibilities make Turkey one of the leading countries in the world in the field of agriculture and food.

Turkey has a robust agriculture and food industry that employed almost **18%** of the country's working population and that accounted for **6.6%** of the country's GDP in 2020.

The agrifood sector's financial contribution to the overall GDP was **USD47.3 billion** in 2020.

Turkey is the world's 10th-largest agricultural producer and is the world leader in the production of: figs, hazelnuts, quinces and apricots, and number one global exporter of: quinces, raisins and flour.

Estimated total of **11,000** plant species, while the total number of species in Europe is 11,500.

Turkey's entrepreneurial ecosystem, powered by its entrepreneurial business culture, young and technology-savvy population and a pool of talented engineers, broke a new record by providing **USD1.6 billion** in 2021. Moreover, Turkey's ecosystem has seen three unicorns and a decacorn recently. International investors accounted for **89%** of the investment volume. In this case, Turkey was among the 10 countries that received the most investment in Europe. Turkey has the benefits of business-friendly policies, export opportunities, a deep talent pool and global market access to support the foreign start-up ecosystem and sustainable FDI.

HOW TO SET UP A COMPANY IN TURKEY



1



1.1. Introduction

At the intersection of Europe, Asia and Africa, Turkey offers business-friendly policies, a deep talent pool and global market access to attract sustainable FDI as a resilient, fast-growing economy. With its unique geostrategic location, production capabilities and logistics infrastructure, Turkey is at the centre of economic activities in the region. Cumulative foreign direct investment inflows to Turkey, strengthened by viable fundamentals and a determined reform, have increased to USD239 billion since 2003. Turkey has become a regional R&D, design, production, logistics and management centre where multinational companies can carry out their activities. By 2021, FDI inflows to Turkey had recovered faster, thanks to the resilience of the economy and global trends. International investors continue to make significant commitments and serve as a testament with increased cross-border transactions. In 2021, FDI inflows increased by 74% year on year to \$13.6 billion. Exports, on the other hand, increased by 33% in 2021 compared to the previous year and reached USD225 billion. Turkey's share in world exports exceeded 1% for the first time in its history. The Turkish economy grew by 11% in 2021 compared to the previous year. It is obvious that Turkey has experienced a V-shaped recovery in the post-COVID-19 period.

Recently, there have been two main trends in FDI projects. First, Turkey has proved to be a strong player in global value chains where multinational companies maintain their presence in the country in line with their close scoring, regionalization and diversification strategies. Due to its strategic location connecting three continents, Turkey has strengthened its position as a powerhouse in its search for alternatives to its Asian-based production network. Second, technology start-ups have proved to be effective in diverting the flow of foreign direct investment to Turkey in recent years. Turkey's entrepreneurial ecosystem, powered by its entrepreneurial business culture, young and technology-savvy population, and a pool of talented engineers, broke a new record by providing USD1.6 billion in 2021.

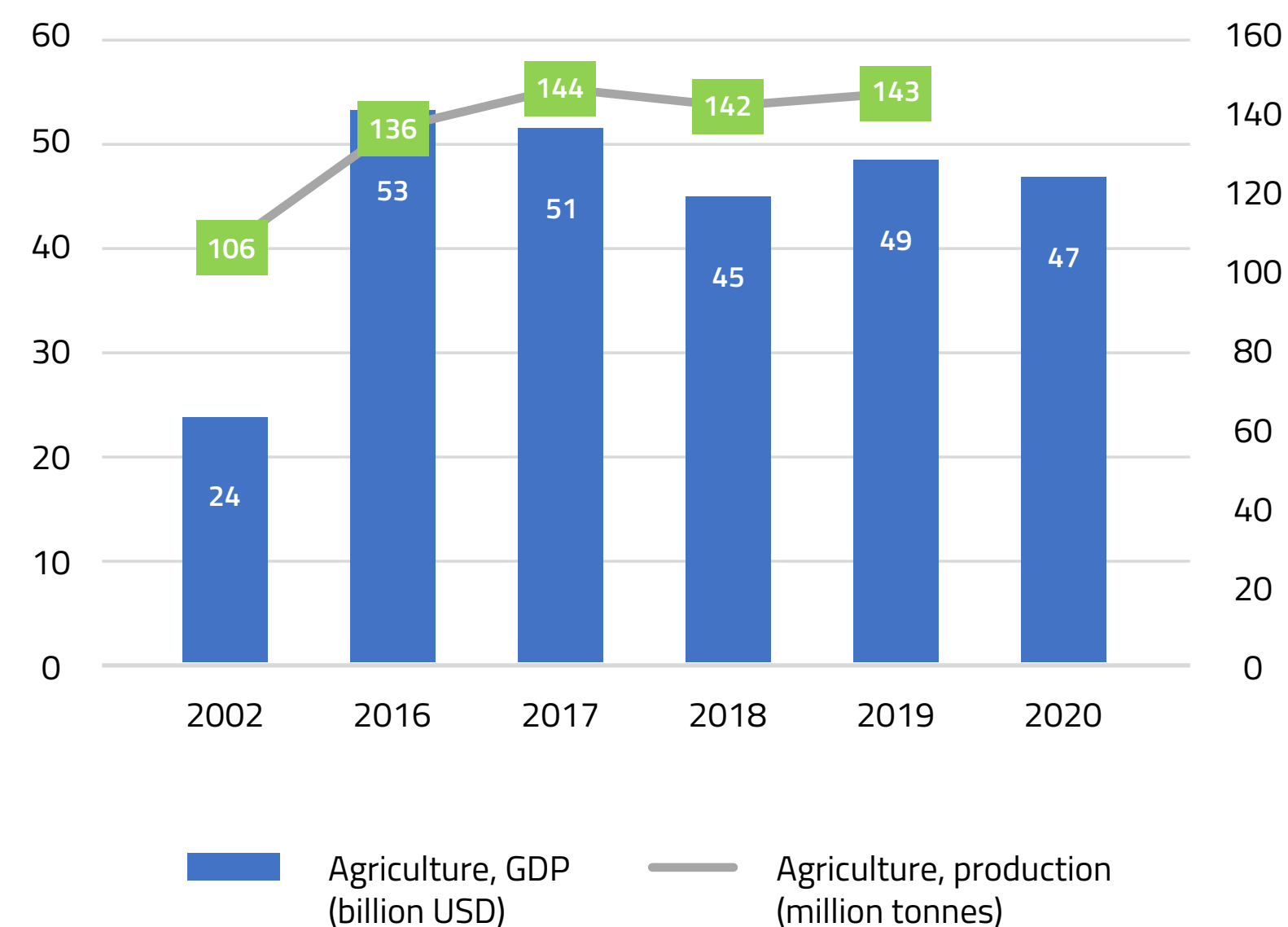
International investors accounted for 89% of the investment volume. In this case, Turkey was among the 10 countries that received the most investment in Europe. Moreover, Turkey's ecosystem has seen three unicorns and a decacorn recently. Meanwhile, Turkey's 2021–2023 FDI Strategy was published in the Official Gazette on June 22, 2021. We are working devotedly towards our goal of increasing Turkey's share in global FDI to 1.5%. This report includes news ranging from Investment Office activities to FDI news in 2021. The contents of these topics reflect the key areas that add value to Turkey's promotion as a global business centre. We hope that this report will inform the managers of institutions, individuals and companies interested in investing, operating or doing business in Turkey.

""Starting a business in Türkiye is relatively straightforward as the regulations and processes are accessible. The best sources of support available to startups and entrepreneurs are TÜBİTAK and KOSGEB. TÜBİTAK, The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye, works together with universities and technology transfer offices on providing incubation programs and further funding support for idea-stage tech entrepreneurs on a program called TÜBİTAK 1512 BIGG, The Individual Young Initiative Program. KOSGEB, the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Organization, also provides general entrepreneurship grants and further financial support to idea-stage entrepreneurs. Through developing a product or service, startups have several options to apply for acceleration programs and to reach out to investors. Türkiye's Agri-Food Ecosystem is growing with more startups entering the sector, and the industry is attracting more and more investments. Generally, the existing programs and investment organizations are sector agnostic, thus creating a competitive ground for startups to secure funding, especially in the verticals of the agri-food sector. In the coming years, I expect more startups to enter the sector, and investors will allocate more investments to the vertical. One of the main reasons for this is that Food Security has raised quite a lot of interest compared to recent years. Thus, I would expect more startups to enter the sector, and the investors will allocate more investments.""

Semi Hakim, Co-Founder & CEO at Kök Proje

1.2. Overview of the Turkish agrifood industry

The agrifood sector of Turkey, which is home to the main waters of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, today reflects the prosperity of ancient Mesopotamia. With its favourable geographical conditions and climate, large arable lands and abundant water resources, Turkey is considered one of the leading countries in the world in the field of agriculture and food. Turkey has a strong agricultural and food industry with a financial contribution of USD \$47.3 billion that accounted for 6.6% of the country's GDP in 2020. The agrifood sector employs almost 18% of the country's working population.



Source: TurkStat

The country's young population, a dynamic private sector economy, substantial tourism income and a favourable climate are related to Turkey's robust agrifood industry and market size. Turkey is the world's 10th-largest agricultural producer and is the world leader in the production of figs, hazelnuts, quinces and apricots. The country is also the number one global exporter of quinces, raisins and flour. Turkey boasted a production of 22.9 million tons of milk in 2019, making it the leading milk and dairy producer in its region. In addition, Turkey has an estimated total of 11,000 plant species, while the total number of species in Europe is 11,500.

This abundant production allows Turkey to maintain a significantly positive trade balance thanks to its position as one of the largest exporters of agricultural products in the Eastern Europe, Middle East and North Africa (EMENA) region. Globally, about 1,800 kinds of agricultural products were exported to more than 190 countries in 2020, and Turkey had an export volume of US\$18.8 billion.

Turkey has investment opportunities in the following agrifood subsectors:

- greenhouse production
- plant and animal-based proteins
- seeds
- walnuts and almonds
- pet food
- baby food
- aquaculture

Turkey is looking to position itself as the preferred option for being the regional headquarters and a supply centre for top global players as well as start-ups in the agricultural sector. Turkey offers a set of incentives for potential agribusiness investors to encourage investment in the sector.



2



MAIN STAKEHOLDERS IN THE LOCAL AGRIFOOD INDUSTRY

2.1. Food producers

Anadolu Efes Biracılık ve Malt Sanayii A.Ş.

<https://anadoluefes.com/>

Sales Revenue (2021): TL39.3B ~ USD4.55B (2021 average conversion rate)

Produces and markets beer and malt and non-alcoholic beverages in a wide geographical area comprising Turkey, Russia, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East.¹

Ülker

<https://www.ulker.com.tr/en>

Sales Revenue (2021): TL12.5B ~ USD1.44B (2021 average conversion rate)

Turkish multinational food and beverage manufacturer based in Istanbul, Turkey. Its products are exported internationally to 110 countries. Ülker's core products are biscuits, cookies, crackers and chocolates, although it has expanded to other categories.²

Dardanel

<http://www.dardanel.com.tr/>

Sales Revenue (2021): TL1.16B ~ USD134.32M (2021 average conversion rate)

Founded in 1984 as Turkey's first producer of tinned tuna fish, its products range from tinned tuna to other tinned foods and ready-made sandwiches.³

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Efes_Beverage_Group

² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%9Cker>

³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dardanel>

"A resilient, fast-growing economy, Türkiye offers business-friendly policies, a deep talent pool and global market access at the nexus of Europe, Asia and Africa. Home to the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, Türkiye's agricultural sector today is echoing the prosperity of ancient Mesopotamia. With its favorable geographical conditions and climate, large arable lands, and abundant water supplies, Türkiye is considered one of the leading countries in the world in the field of Agri-Food. Türkiye is the world's 10th largest agricultural economy, also boasting the top position in Europe. The size and depth of the sector provide many investment opportunities in Agri-Food subsectors, such as fruit and vegetable processing, animal feed, livestock, poultry, dairy, functional food, fisheries, and enablers (in particular cold chain distribution, greenhouses, irrigation, and fertilizer). In addition, the new Agri-technologies and applications are increasingly getting more popular among Turkish farmers. For this reason, Türkiye, with its huge domestic market, offers a dynamic environment for AgriTech companies, particularly startups with disruptive solutions, in the fields of precision farming, indoor farming, modern irrigation systems, sustainable proteins, among others. As Invest in Türkiye, we always welcome Agri-Food companies, interested in doing business in Türkiye."

Halit Duran, PhD, Agri-Food Industry Expert, The Investment Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye

Eti

<https://anadoluefes.com/>

Sales Revenue (2019): TL5.1B ~ USD898M (2019 average conversion rate)

Eti Food Producing and Trade S.A. is a Turkish food company that was founded in 1962. Eti's main products are biscuits, cookies, cakes, chocolate, wafers and breakfast food. The company is mainly known for Turkey's first fibrous biscuit Burçak and small-sized cake Eti Popkek. Eti also started producing milk products in 2014, and the company owns milk products such as Süt Burger, Pastamia, Sosbom and Mousse. In total, Eti has more than 150 different types of products.⁴

MADO

<http://mado.com.tr/>

Sales Revenue (2018): USD60M (only abroad stores revenue in 2018)

Turkish ice cream and pastry brand that has about 300 outlets in Turkey and 22 other countries around the world. The brand gets its name from two words: "Maraş", the former name of the city where the firm is originated, and "Dondurma", a Turkish sort of ice cream.⁵

Banvit

<https://banvitas.com/>

Sales Revenue (2021): TL5.32B ~ USD616M (2021 average conversion rate)

Feed and poultry producer based in Bandırma, Turkey. Starting as a feed producer in 1968, Banvit gradually moved into the production of broiler chickens. Today Banvit has the country's largest single broiler facility, which is capable of processing 16,000 birds per hour and 75 million per year. The company also has a facility in Romania, a poultry product factory in Bandırma and the Tadpi turkey product facility in İzmir [1]. Distribution is managed through sales offices throughout Turkey and a fleet of refrigerated trucks.⁶

⁴ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eti_\(company\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eti_(company))

⁵ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mado_\(food_company\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mado_(food_company))

⁶ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Banvit>



Tat Gıda

<http://www.tatgida.com.tr/tr>

Sales Revenue (2021): TL1.09B ~ USD126.2M (2021 average conversion rate)

Formerly Tat Konserve, Tat Gıda is a food company founded by Koç Holding in Bursa in 1967 that owns the Tat and Pastavilla brands. It produces tomato paste, ketchup, mayonnaise, tomato products and tinned vegetables in its facilities located in the Mustafakemalpaşa and Karacabey districts of Bursa province and the Torbalı district of İzmir province.⁷

Pinar

<https://www.pinar.co.uk/>

Sales Revenue (2018): TL2.68B ~ USD310.3M (2021 average conversion rate)

A subsidiary of Yasar Holding, Pinar is one of the largest dairy companies in Turkey and Europe. It produces yogurt, cheese, strained yogurt, cream, kefir, precipitate, butter, milk, juice and processed meat.

Sütaş

<https://banvitas.com/>

Sales Revenue (2021): TL6B ~ USD695M (2021 average conversion rate)

One of Turkey's largest dairy companies. Since 1975, Sütaş has been operating with a focus on milk and dairy products only. Today, the company processes 900 million litres of milk per year in its four production facilities located in Turkey, Macedonia and Romania and offers 78 different products to its consumers. Eight out of every 10 households in Turkey have at least one Sütaş package.

⁷ https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tat_G%C4%B1da⁵ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mado_\(food_company\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mado_(food_company))



TAMEK

<http://www.tamek.com.tr/en/>

Turkish food and beverage company founded in 1955. It is a pioneer in the Turkish food sector. It was the first producer of tomato paste and ketchup in Turkey. It was also the first Turkish producer of many other tinned foods.⁸

Apikoğlu

<https://www.apikoglu.com.tr/>

Brothers is a family-owned and -operated meat packing organization founded in Turkey. The company is renowned for its production of sujuk and pastirma.⁹ Apikoğlu was the first company to mass-produce meat products in Turkey and serve the demand of its entire national market.

Euro Gida

<https://www.eurogida.com.tr/en/>

One of the largest and most trusted brands of the food industry in Turkey, Euro Gida has a wide product portfolio ranging from pickles to tinned food and gourmet sauces. Euro Gida has the largest factory of its sector in Turkey, while it ranks in the top five in Europe.¹⁰

⁸ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamek>

⁹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apiko%C4%9Flu>

¹⁰ <https://www.eurogida.com.tr/en/>



2.2. Food research organizations

TAGEM

<https://www.tarimorman.gov.tr/TAGEM/Menus/32/Our-Vision-And-Mission>

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, General Directorate of Agricultural Research and Policies. TAGEM works to provide economic, social and environmental benefits to Turkey through conducting high-quality agricultural researches that meet the country's needs.¹¹

TUBITAK

<https://tubitak.gov.tr/>

The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey is a national agency of Turkey whose stated goal is to develop "science, technology and innovation" policies, support and conduct research and development, and to "play a leading role in the creation of a science and technology culture" in the country.¹²

EGE University – Department of Food Engineering

<https://food.ege.edu.tr/>

The department's mission is to train food engineers who apply different technologies in the processing and preservation of food, take an active role in ensuring food safety, follow and contribute to the developments in science and technology, use science for the benefit of humanity and the environment, and have professional and ethical responsibility.¹³

¹¹ <https://www.tarimorman.gov.tr/TAGEM/Menus/32/Our-Vision-And-Mission>

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific_and_Technological_Research_Council_of_Turkey

¹³ https://food.ege.edu.tr/eng-13072/mission_and_vision.html



Boğaziçi University

<https://www.tarimorman.gov.tr/TAGEM/Menus/32/Our-Vision-And-Mission>

Boğaziçi University is one of Turkey's leading universities. Regarding to agrifood topics, although there is no specific department for food engineering, departments of biotechnology and economics are the main departments working on agrifood topics. There are distinguished professors who have focused R&D work on agrifood. Boğaziçi University also has a separate platform called [BoUn Agriculture](#) that focuses on implementing agriculture projects.

Ankara University

Aydın Adnan Menderes University

Agrifood NGOs

Buğday Derneği

<https://www.bugday.org/blog/>

Buğday Foundation's intention is to create awareness of, and sensitivity toward, ecological life in individuals and in society as a whole; its aim is to offer solutions to the problems that arise as a result of the irreversible deterioration of ecological balances and to support a life in harmony with nature. Its activities include: dissemination of sustainable farming methods that do not harm the environment and human health; protection and maintenance of productions in the traditional process; redefining human needs in harmony with ecosystem cycles; creating areas of activity in order to inform the individual so that he can live in harmony with nature and his environment, and to develop his skills. It can be grouped under the headings of developing and applying an understanding of tourism that provides information and cultural exchange.

¹¹ <https://www.tarimorman.gov.tr/TAGEM/Menus/32/Our-Vision-And-Mission>

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific_and_Technological_Research_Council_of_Turkey

¹³ https://food.ege.edu.tr/eng-13072/mission_and_vision.html



2.3. Agricultural sales cooperatives and unions

Antbirlik

<http://www.antbirlik.com.tr/>

Antalya Cotton and Citrus Agricultural Sales Cooperatives Union

Marmarabirlik

<https://www.marmarabirlik.com.tr/>

Marmarabirlik is a Turkish olive production company. It was established on 28 June 1954 as a Union of Agricultural Sales Cooperative, cultivating, harvesting and marketing olives with mutual assistance and cooperation from the region's olive farmers.¹⁴

Çukobirlik

<http://www.cukobirlik.com.tr/>

Çukobirlik is a cooperatives union formed to evaluate the products of cotton producers in the Çukurova region in Turkey and to provide support to the producers, in accordance with the Agricultural Sales Cooperatives Law No. 2834 of 15.10.1940. It is a cooperatives union formed by Adana, Ceyhan and Tarsus Agricultural Sales Cooperatives with 275 partners.

Trakya Birlik

<https://www.trakyabirlik.com.tr/tr/>

Formed in 1966 in the Trakya region of Turkey, Trakya Birlik works to produce the best-quality and most economical oil by purchasing and processing sunflowers from its partners; to reach the consumer from the source of the oil; to produce the best-quality and most economical product by providing the best service to its partners; and to deliver the farmers' power to the consumer.¹⁵

¹⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marmarabirlik>

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific_and_Technological_Research_Council_of_Turkey



AGRIFOOD ECOSYSTEM



3.1. Funding opportunities for agrifood start-ups

In developing projects, financial support can be sought from various VC funds, as well as taking part in dedicated acceleration programmes organized by leading economic support agencies. Companies from all over Turkey can count on help, but the greatest emphasis is placed on the development of the eastern provinces of the country.

Please see the mapping document [here](#) for all funding and support opportunities for agrifood start-ups.

3.2. Local incubators and accelerators that support agrifood start-ups

Please see the mapping document [here](#) for all local incubators and accelerators that support opportunities for agrifood start-ups.

Name of opportunity/ investor/ organisation	Type of support (venture capital [VC] funding, angel investors, government funding, EU funding, startup loans, incubator/accelerator funding, competition with prize money, etc.)	Short description of opportunity, target group (vertical and stage), eligibility requirement, and funding amount or average ticket size	Link	Timeline (application deadline, important dates, etc.)
Boğaziçi University – BUBA	Incubator/accelerator funding	It is a start-up development and acceleration network within the scope of Boğaziçi University.	tto.boun.edu.tr/en/content/entrepreneurship	Start-ups can apply for support at all times.
INOVITA	Incubator/accelerator funding	Inovita Incubation Centre was established in 2012 under the leadership of Boğaziçi University Life Sciences and Technologies UYGAR Centre with the support of the Istanbul Development Agency. As Turkey's first thematically focused incubation centre, Inovita adopts a regional mission to support regional health focused on technologies and bio-entrepreneurship.	inovita.org/?lang=en	Start-ups can apply for support at all times.

**ODTÜ – Growth
Circuit Accelerator
Programme**Incubator/
accelerator funding

It is an initiative development and acceleration programme within the scope of METU.

gcaccelerator.co/Start-ups can
apply for support
at all times.**ITU – Çekirdek**Incubator/
accelerator funding

It is an initiative development and acceleration programme within the scope of Istanbul Technical University.

itucekirdek.com/Start-ups can
apply for support
at all times.**Koç University
–KWORKS**Incubator/
accelerator funding

It is an initiative development and acceleration programme within the scope of Koç University.

kworks.ku.edu.tr/Start-ups can
apply for support
at all times.**Sabancı University
Sucool Programme**Incubator/
accelerator funding

It is an initiative development and acceleration programme within the scope of Sabancı University.

sucool.sabanciuniv.edu/Start-ups can
apply for support
at all times.**Yıldız Accelerator
Programme**Incubator/
accelerator funding

It is an initiative development and acceleration programme within the scope of Yıldız University.

[yildizkulucka.com/tr/
boostup](http://yildizkulucka.com/tr/boostup)Start-ups can
apply for support
at all times.

**Acıbadem University
Accelerator Centre**Incubator/
accelerator funding

It is an initiative development and acceleration programme within the scope of Acıbadem University.

acibademkulucka.com/Start-ups can
apply for support
at all times.**Özyeğin University
Girişim Fabrikası**Incubator/
accelerator funding

It is an initiative development and acceleration programme within the scope of Özyeğin University.

[leanlab-project.com/https://
girisimfabrikasibigg.ozyegin.
edu.tr/](https://leanlab-project.com/https://girisimfabrikasibigg.ozyegin.edu.tr/)Start-ups can
apply for support
at all times.**Okan University**Incubator/
accelerator funding

It is an initiative development and acceleration programme within the scope of Okan University.

sucool.sabanciuniv.edu/Start-ups can
apply for support
at all times.**Garanti BBVA
Partners**Incubator/
accelerator funding

Garanti BBVA Partners Venture Base opened in Mecidiyeköy to host entrepreneurs, the entrepreneurship ecosystem and various events.

[yildizkulucka.com/tr/
boostup](https://yildizkulucka.com/tr/boostup)Start-ups can
apply for support
at all times.**IsBank Workup**Incubator/
accelerator funding

In Workup, start-ups are given a workspace where they can produce for six months in the Workup office in Kolektif House, and Kolektif House memberships are initiated first. In the programme, the first month is a trial period and the remaining five months continue according to the performance of the enterprise during the trial period.

acibademkulucka.com/Start-ups can
apply for support
at all times.

TİM TEB Entrepreneurship Centre	Incubator/ accelerator funding	TİM TEB Entrepreneurship operates in 10 different cities, namely Istanbul, Izmir, Denizli, Gaziantep, Edirne, Bursa, Konya, Mersin, Trabzon and Erzurum since 2015, in incubation and acceleration, and provides direction to the ecosystem with its unique programmes in the growth stages. To date, 935 technology-oriented entrepreneurs have been supported, and nearly 5,000 students have participated in the programmes. The start-up programme is opened twice a year. Six consultancy meetings are held with selected techno-entrepreneurs and experienced consultant staff over a period of four months. In the programme, studies are carried out to ensure the sustainability and rapid growth of the companies.	leanlab-project.com/https://girisimfabrikasibigg.ozyegin.edu.tr/	Start-ups can apply for support at all times.
Turkey Technology Team	Incubator/ accelerator funding	The six-month acceleration programme supports early-stage tech start-ups that are at the lowest working prototype stage. Start-ups selected for the acceleration programme are supported with investment opportunities of up to TL100,000, office space, training tailored to their needs and technical experts.	yildizkulucka.com/tr/boostup	Start-ups can apply for support at all times.

[SEE THE FULL LIST OF LOCAL INCUBATORS/PROGRAMMES](#)

3.3. Setting up a legal entity in Turkey

Below is the list of steps a foreign start-up needs to take in order to set up a company in Turkey.

There are corporate and non-corporate forms of companies under the Turkish Commercial Code. A joint stock company (JSC) and limited liability company (LLC) are the most common types chosen both in the global ecosystem and in Turkey. JSCs and LLCs differ from each other.

The listed steps are the same for establishing a JSC or an LLC.

3.4. Opening a corporate company (JSC & LLC)

Before you enter Turkey, you should visit evisa.gov.tr and apply for a Turkish visa. This is **not considered** to be a work permit. Check your nationality in order to see if there are other document requirements.

In order to apply for a residency permit, you need to have a bank account in Turkey. You can open an account by visiting any bank.

There are two main things needed to open an account:

- Passport and a photocopy of your passport
- A residence address in Turkey for deliveries of statements and other notifications. In some cases, in order to avoid unused debit bank accounts, the bank branch may ask you for a Tax Identity Number, which you can easily obtain from the nearest tax office, and for a deposit.

STEP 1 Residence Permit

If you plan to remain in Turkey for longer than your visa (usually more than three months) permits, you are required to obtain a residence permit. A short-term residence permit can be obtained for up to five years. In order to get a long-term residence permit, foreigners should have continuously resided in Turkey for at least eight years.

The required documents for a short-term residence permit are listed below:

- Visit e-ikamet.goc.gov.tr in order to fill in the forms online and set up an appointment. An appointment date will be given to you for an interview
- Residence permit application form
- The original and a copy of the passport or travel document
- Four biometric (passport-size) photographs
- Declaration regarding sufficient and sustainable financial resources for the duration of the stay (stated in the application form. The authority may request supporting documents.)
- Official document regarding the applicant's ownership of the residence if an immovable property in Turkey is owned
- Valid medical insurance (one of the following shall be sufficient):
 - Document facilitating health services in Turkey within the scope of bilateral social security agreements
 - Provisional document issued by the social security institution
 - Document regarding the application made to the social security institution to be covered by general health insurance
 - Private health insurance
- If you are bringing in foreign currency as an investor to Turkey, you may be eligible for longer-term residency. Please see details for that [here](#)

STEP 2

Applying for trade registry of your company

In order to establish a company in Turkey, you should submit the memorandum and articles of association online at MERSIS, which is the central trade registry system. The following documents are required for registry application at the relevant Trade Registry Office of Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, which are located in Perpa, Kadıköy and Giyimkent:

- Notarized articles of association (four copies, one original)
- If the foreign partner is a real person, for each real person shareholder, two copies of their passports
- If the foreign partner is a legal entity, the required documents are:
 - The Certificate of Activity of the legal entity designated as the shareholder issued by the relevant authority in the investor's country. The certificate must bear information regarding the current status and signatories of the company;
 - Resolution(s) of a competent corporate organ of the legal entity shareholder(s) authorizing the establishment; if there is any specific condition for the prospective company to be incorporated (name of the company, field of activity, etc.) it must be stated in the resolution for the sake of clarity.
- If a legal entity is going to be appointed as a member of the board of directors

of the prospective company to be incorporated, the name of the real person who will act in the name of the legal entity and the legal entity board member's appointment must be stated within the same or with a separate resolution for the sake of clarity

- If the process is going to be followed by proxy, a notarized copy of a power of attorney authorizing the attorney who will follow up the application before the competent Trade Registry Office and other official authorities in order to proceed with the application (where applicable)
- Notarized signature declarations (two copies)
- Notarized identity cards of the company managers (one copy)
- All the necessary documents that are issued and executed outside Turkey must be notarized and apostilled or alternatively ratified by the Turkish consulate where they are issued. The original executed, notarized and apostilled documents must be officially translated and notarized by a Turkish notary

STEP 3

Applying for the tax registry of your company

A tax registration certificate must be obtained from the local tax office soon after the Trade Registry Office notifies the local tax office.

The documents required by the tax office for establishing a company are as follows:

- Petition requesting registration
- Notarized articles of association (one original)
- Copy of the tenancy contract showing the registered address for the company
- If the process is going to be followed by proxy, a power of attorney must be issued specifically showing the authority to act on behalf of the company before the tax authority in order to obtain a tax identification number or potential tax identity number

STEP 4

Applying for social security registry of your company

You should register with the social security institution for a social security number. The Trade Registry Office notifies the relevant social security institution ex officio regarding the incorporation of the company.

If your company is a private company, the documents required are as follows:

- Original passport and a photocopy of your passport
- Announcement of your company in the Commercial Registry Gazette
- A signature circular

If your company is an equity company, the documents required are as follows:

- Original passport and a photocopy of your passport
- Announcement of your company in the Commercial Registry Gazette
- A signature circular
- Tax registration certificate

STEP 5

Getting a work permit for you and for your foreign employees

As a company owner or a partner, after the establishment of your company, you should get your work permit. For your work permit, the required documents are as follows:

- A copy of the residence permit issued for purposes other than education with a term of at least six months remaining as of the date of application (the document must be scanned and submitted during the online application)
- In the case of foreigners who are key personnel, the documents and information specified in Article 10/b of the Regulation on the Employment of Foreign Nationals with Foreign Direct Investments (the documents must be scanned and submitted during the online application)
- Copy of the passport (where the passport is not printed in the Latin alphabet, a sworn translation or an official certified translation must be attached. The document must be scanned and submitted during the online application)
- Sworn translation or an official certified translation of the diploma or provisional graduation certificate (the document must be scanned and submitted during the online application, as well as submitted in hard copy)
- In addition to the above-mentioned documents, foreigners who file an application for work permits within the framework of professional services and who hold a

degree from abroad must file a "Diploma or Provisional Graduation Equivalency Certificate" obtained in accordance with the "Regulation on the Equivalency of Diplomas from Foreign Higher Education Institutions" (the document must be scanned and submitted during the online application)

- For Turkish employees, a separate application has to be made following the registration of the company with the social security institution.
- For foreign employers, a separate application has to be made by the employee to the nearest Turkish Embassy in their country to get a work permit.
- The employer should apply to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security within 10 working days after the employee's application to the Turkish Embassy.

3.5. Opening a branch office

Branch offices are **not independent legal entities**; there are **no shareholders**. Their duration is limited to the duration of the parent company. There is no capital requirement, however it would be wise to allocate a budget for the operations of a branch office. Also, a branch office may be incorporated only for the same purposes as those of the parent company.

Repatriation of branch profit is allowed. The branch profit transferred to the headquarters is subject to dividend withholding tax at a rate of 15%, which may be reduced by double taxation prevention treaties.

The required documents, which are submitted to the relevant Trade Registry Directorate, for the registration of a branch office are as follows:

- Petition (must be signed either by an authorized signatory under the company seal or by proxy; if signed by the latter, then the original or the notarized copy of the power of attorney must be attached to the petition)
- The resolution of the competent organ of the parent company to open a branch
- A certified original copy of the parent company's articles of association
- Certificate of Activity of the parent company or any equivalent documentation that sets out the registration and current status of the parent company
- A power of attorney granted by the parent company in favour of its resident representative, assigning full representation and accountability
- Five copies of the Establishment Declaration Form (relevant fields must be filled in and signed by the authorized person)
- Two copies of the power of attorney stating the representative in Türkiye
- If the branch representative is a Turkish national, a notarized copy of his/her ID card. If not, a notarized copy of the authorized representative's passport translated into Turkish
- Two copies of the signature declarations of the branch representative under the branch title
- A letter of commitment (must be signed by authorized person)
- A Chamber Registry Declaration Form Statement to be obtained from the Trade Registry Directorate (including photographs of the branch representatives)

It should be noted that all the necessary documents that will be issued and executed outside Turkey **must be notarized and apostilled** or alternatively ratified by the **Turkish consulate** where they are issued. The original executed, notarized and apostilled documents must be **officially translated** and **notarized** by a **Turkish notary**.

3.6. Required permits for agrifood businesses

The most common licences a Turkish agriculture company applies for are:

- The grower licence, which enables it to cultivate seeds;
- The production licence, which enables it to grow plants;
- The distribution licence, through which it can supply seeds to other companies;
- Import and export licences for products destined for trading.

For food businesses, depending on the product, the permits needed change drastically. Hence it would be difficult to provide a simple list of required permits for agrifood businesses.

Depending on the volume of planned sales, a company looking to work in Turkey could work with specific distributors to obtain permits as well as establishing sales channel.

In order to receive additional guidance on this you can reach out to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry hotlines at ALO 174 or ALO 177 from a Turkish phone number, or email tarimveormanbakanligi@hs01.kep.tr

However, all companies producing any types of food products are required to register with the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. Here is the link for all required forms to be filled out. In addition to all the documents required to set up a company, for a food production business to start operating a Food Production Permit and a Food Business Registration Certificate are required.

“In Türkiye, the traditional agriculture and food economy is capturing 15% of the general economy. In 2020 the income of agriculture was €47.3 bn, corresponding to 6.6% of the GDP. The export income increased by 408% through agriculture. And today Türkiye has the 1st rank in Europe and 7th rank in the world for its agriculture economy. Almost 25% of Turkish land is used for agriculture. Especially nuts, bananas, corn, sugar beet, quince and tea are the leading products for Turkish agriculture export businesses. In terms of improving the ecosystem, the governmental supply will be €60 m to the agriculture industry in 2022-2023. There are also some private angel investors and VCs that are aiming to fund the ecosystem. Some of them are Letven Capital, Tarvenn, Aras Yatırım, Egeli Co, BNP Paribas TEB Portfoy. Moreover, there are many agricultural incubation centers for improving the ecosystem, such as Deniz Akvaryum NEOHUB, Türkiye İş Bankası Work Up Agri, Hackquarters Bayer G4E, İzmir Agriculture Technology Center. Long story short; Turkish agriculture technology ecosystem is improving day by day to revolutionize the local and global agtech and agrifood industry due to the needs generated by the population increase and inefficient field, fuel and chemistry usage.”

Çetin Kosifoğlu, Co-Founder & Chief Strategy Officer at MOVE ON

Food Production Permit:

This is an official document submitted to the Ministry that all companies that manufacture product groups within the scope of the law need to obtain (it ensures that the food is controlled during the production and consumption phases). It is required to register each product with different compositions of the food they will produce before starting the production.

- After the establishment of the company, it is required to register and receive permits from the respective municipalities within 30 days of starting operation. This permit is called a “Business and Working Licence”.
- After the necessary documents for the application have been completed and delivered, the workplace will receive an audit. If deemed appropriate, the necessary food production permit will be issued. [Please see the link here](#) for all documents necessary for registering the permit.

Food Business Registration Certificate:

Companies operating at any stage of food production, processing, preservation, storage, distribution, sale and service are called “Food Businesses” in accordance with the legislation. Companies operating in these areas are required to obtain a Business Registration Certificate.

The organizations listed below are **exempt** from this certificate:

- Places where primary production is done for personal consumption
- Places where food is prepared, processed and stored for personal consumption
- Places where food is prepared, stored and served temporarily by individual volunteers, such as bazaars and cultural events on a temporary, occasional and small scale
- You can find all the necessary documents for the Certificate [in this link](#).



3.7. Organizations providing support in setting up a company in the hub country

İlhanlı Başer legal agency

- <http://ilhanlibaser.com/>
- Contact name: Benan İlhanlı
- Email: benan@ilhanlibaser.com
- Legal office offering many services including setting up a company in Turkey. The office has specific experience in assisting foreign companies

KOSGEB – SME support organization of the government in Turkey

- <https://www.kosgeb.gov.tr/>
- kosgeb.baskanlik@hs01.kep.tr
- This entity does not necessarily support setting up a company but would be helpful in providing various incentives for new companies

Startup Hukuku – website and legal office for supporting specifically start-up-related topics including setting up a company

- <https://startiphukuku.com/>
- Contact name: Erdem Mumtaz Hacipasagolu
- Email: mumtaz@startiphukuku.co

3.8. Contact details for the hub organization

Fulden Gencel

Mail: fulden@foodback.co
Phone: +90 530 039 2779

Ayşe Sabuncu

Mail: ayse.sabuncu@impacthub.net
Phone: +90 533 560 7033

Tuğçe Ergün Cireli

Mail: tugce@foodback.co
Phone: +90 533 567 3984

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USEFUL LINKS

[A brief guide to Turkish agrifood offer, IO, 2022 »](#)

[Turkey Agrifood Overview, IO, 2022 »](#)

[Turkey Investment Guide, IO, 2022 »](#)

[Mapping the Turkish Agrifood Ecosystem 2021 – Part II: Turkey Food Ecosystem »](#)

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