GIZ in Turkey
Working to shape a future worth living
The cooperation between Turkey and Germany has a long history and continues to evolve. Most recently, our partnership’s focus has shifted in response to the global challenges we all face and has been spurred on by our shared goals of the 2030 Agenda. As G20 members, these countries have a significant responsibility in shaping the future in the region and the world.

The GIZ is a world-wide leading service provider in supporting efforts to reach the Sustainable Development Goals. As global solutions demand better cooperation between countries, the GIZ is here to contribute our extensive international expertise and contacts and to work hand-in-hand with German and Turkish ministries and municipalities, the private sector and civil society.

Yet we are also on site to support our partners in facing current challenges. We especially focus on the most pressing of areas in which GIZ can offer know-how and assistance.

For one, we have been supporting our Turkish partners in mitigating the effects of climate change - because environmental problems do not stop at national borders and affect all parts of society. GIZ actively fosters climate protection, sustainable production, consumption, increase of renewable energy systems and tapping the potential of energy efficiency.

Secondly, the forced displacement crisis triggered by the Civil War in Syria has prompted Germany and the European Union to work closely together with Turkey to strengthen the response to the needs of refugees and the host communities. Turkey has made tremendous efforts in coping with this task, and we at the GIZ are dedicated to offer our help in a range of areas, from developing community centres, to strengthening technical vocational training, social competencies and much more.

The experiences we have made together in the past 60 years of partnership is without a doubt a strong foundation to tackle the challenges we face today and that still lay ahead. I am thrilled about the opportunity and responsibility to lead GIZ’s cooperation in Turkey and am confident that the results of our successful cooperation will make great headway in achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

I hope you enjoy the following overview of our work in Turkey.

Rabeena Esmail
Country Director
GIZ Turkey
The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is Germany’s leading provider of international cooperation services, with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) as its main commissioning party. GIZ has been operating since 1 January 2011, when it brought together the long-standing expertise of three organisations: The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH, the German Development Service (DED) gGmbH and InWEnt – Capacity Building International, Germany.

As a federal enterprise currently operating in more than 120 countries in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development, we are dedicated to shaping a future worth living around the world. Our over 50 years of experience are in demand around the globe – from the German Government, European Union institutions, the United Nations, the private sector and governments of other countries.

Since we are a public-benefit federal enterprise, German and European values are central to our work. Together with our partners in national governments worldwide and cooperation partners from the worlds of business, academia and civil society, we work flexibly to deliver effective solutions that offer people better prospects. Moreover, we foster successful interaction between development policy and other policy fields and areas of activity.

The registered offices of GIZ are in Bonn and Eschborn. Our 20,726 employees, almost 70 per cent of whom are national personnel, work in around 120 countries.¹

¹Trended figures as at 30 December 2018
The German-Turkish partnership is based on a long-standing tradition. Germany’s technical development cooperation with Turkey began in the late 1950s, was formalised in an official agreement on technical cooperation in 1970 and has evolved into different modes of cooperation since 2008. From the start, the partnership has been approached on equal footing, as Turkey’s important geopolitical position and of course its vital role as a bridge between Europe and Asia added additional meaning to the relationship. Germany and Turkey’s close connections have continued to drive the partnership to this day.

The objectives and intended results have always been aligned with the objectives that Turkey has set itself. In the past, the key areas of the technical partnership implemented by GIZ focused on strengthening industry and agriculture, the transport infrastructure and protecting the environment (e.g. water treatment and supply).

From the 1980s onward, the focus shifted from mainly technical projects to improving vocational training and administrative capacities. The Turkish-German Vocational Training Centres (TAMEM), other cross-industry training measures and the introduced dual vocational education system helped develop a new corps of qualified skilled staff. Projects and investments also contributed to promoting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Furthermore, in so-called EU twinning projects, German specialists supported their Turkish counterparts in improving the range of administrative work, such as increasing investments, collecting taxes or advising a monitoring agency for capital markets. These efforts also focused on norming industrial and environmental standards – increasingly aligning Turkey with the EU.

The early 2000s saw the bilateral partnership complete various large-scale infrastructure projects, including supporting the Project Implementation Unit of the Bosphorus Railway Tunnel (Marmaray). The separate International Services (InS) business unit of GIZ was involved in this vital infrastructure project – connecting Europe and Asia by railway – by assigning advisers and specialists in the fields of engineering, risk management and more to the project and also offering external training for the companies involved.
Our projects in the past have ranged from large-scale industrial plans to other interesting endeavours such as introducing colour television to Turkey and for a time, even supporting Turkish football. With the transition to new modes of cooperation, a portfolio on climate and energy projects was initiated in 2010 and a portfolio on projects to support Turkey in dealing with the effects of the Syria Crisis took shape starting in 2015.

GIZ has operated its own office in Ankara since 1998 and an additional project hub in Gaziantep since 2014. We can still witness the lasting success of past projects and the continued fruitful partnership with Turkish public authorities, the private sector as well as civil society organisations.

GIZ in Turkey >>

2006
Support for the Bosphorus Railway Tunnel

2010
Launch of new energy and climate projects

2015
Start of projects in Turkey in response to Syria Crisis
Turkey - a member of NATO and G20 - is located at the geopolitical intersection between Europe, the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East. A candidate country for accession to the EU since 1999, it has combined economic development with important democratic structures. In just a few decades, it has evolved from a mainly agricultural to a diversified economy, transforming from a classical developing country to an emerging economy, that meanwhile acts as a donor itself.

Nevertheless, Turkey faces a series of challenges, such as mitigating the impacts of climate change as well as, most recently, the effects of the continued conflict in Syria that has put pressure on state and municipal authorities to provide public services to the large influx of refugees.

Today, the German government supports Turkey directly - in addition to its multilateral support channelled through the EU and various UN organisations - through bilateral measures of the BMZ in dealing with the effects of the Syrian crisis, namely forced displacement and migration. To support Turkish authorities, local partners and host communities, GIZ set up the Support to Refugees and Host Communities (SRHC) Cluster to coordinate project activities.

Furthermore, the cooperation between Germany and Turkey also focuses on the areas of renewable energies and energy efficiency. In this context GIZ is implementing projects on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) within the Energy and Climate Cluster. The focus is on responding to greenhouse gas emissions and improving the energy efficiency of public buildings. In addition, to promote sustainable employment combined with an active contribution to climate protection, a new series of measures funded by BMZ will bring together solar energy and Syrian and Turkish trainees.

Moreover, through the developPPP programme - an instrument of BMZ to provide companies investing in emerging economies with financial and professional support - GIZ implemented a partnership with Ferrero in Turkey to improve the working conditions and agricultural practices of seasonal migrant workers on small hazelnut farms. The deployed experts have provided advice and trainings on health and safety, legal work contracts and decent work practices.

The current portfolio of the GIZ in Turkey is contributing to the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

GIZ has been actively engaged in EU pre-accession assistance programmes through its separate InS business unit. GIZ InS has been active in Turkey since 2006, focused on the thematic areas of education, vocational training, health, human resources development, tourism, economic development, women’s empowerment and human rights. Since 2006, InS has implemented 8 large-scale technical assistance projects in Turkey. In addition to EU IPA funds, GIZ InS successfully implemented the Project Implementation Unit to the Bosphorus Tunnel Project, funded by the European Investment Bank.

InS provided high-quality technical assistance and consultancy services to various authorities in Turkey including but not limited to: Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen. The projects implemented by InS have been praised by the EU Delegation in Turkey as inspiring stories of EU-Turkey financial cooperation.
Forced displacement and migration
Responding to the Syrian Crisis

Since the beginning of the crisis in its neighbouring country Syria in 2011, Turkey has taken in over 3.6 million Syrians under Temporary Protection, as well as people from other countries in the region, like Iraq and Afghanistan.

Turkey has made tremendous efforts in handling the influx of refugees since the onset of the crisis. The government has shifted its efforts from emergency response to initiatives aimed at long-term improved service provision and integration while adapting the relevant legal framework. Despite these efforts, responding to the needs of such a large number of people remains one of the biggest challenges facing Turkey.

Working on behalf of BMZ and the EU, GIZ is assisting Turkey in responding to the refugee influx. The overall framework for this response is the UN-led regional support for the Syria Crisis through the development and implementation of the Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan (3RP). Within GIZ, the projects are coordinated through the Support to Refugees and Host Communities (SRHC) Cluster, constituting the largest section of GIZ’s portfolio in Turkey.

Though each project has a variety of specific instruments to achieve its indicators with respective partners, the Cluster promotes a common approach with aligned processes and ensures the measures are complementary. A joint monitoring of results and impact has been developed that allows holistic reporting on the achievements of the Cluster projects.

Partnerships are at the core of the SRHC Cluster’s work. Its projects are implemented through collaboration at various levels and in close cooperation with Turkish line ministries, local and municipal administrations as well as international and Turkish non-governmental organisations. GIZ’s contribution to these partnerships includes providing regular technical support, promoting participatory approaches and fostering transparency and accountability. GIZ also fosters dialogue and exchange between non-governmental and state actors to align standards and processes.

Key political partners in Turkey include:
- Presidency Office
- Ministry of National Education
- Ministry of Labour, Social Services and Family
- Ministry of Youth and Sport
- Ministry of Interior – Directorate General for Migration Management
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Turkish Employment Agency İŞKUR
- Chambers of Industry and Commerce
- Governorates
- Metropolitan, provincial and district municipalities across Turkey
Employment and skills development: The SRHC Cluster creates and improves employment opportunities for both refugees and vulnerable members of the host community. The Cluster projects facilitate access to labour market services, provide skills trainings and increase awareness about Turkish labour market regulations and employment opportunities.

Education: The SRHC Cluster contributes to improved learning environments in formal primary and secondary education for school-age Turkish and Syrian girls and boys by providing reliable transport, reducing architectural barriers, improving recreational and sports facilities and by carrying out comprehensive rehabilitation works and supplying state-of-the-art technical equipment.

Social cohesion: Fostering dialogue and social cohesion among communities is central to all activities of the SRHC Cluster. With its holistic and inclusive approach, the Cluster promotes equal access to services, while also aiming at strengthening the social solidarity and sense of community both within and between different groups. It strives to bridge interests and foster cooperation. The SRHC Cluster also offers various protection-related services, such as legal and psychosocial counselling.

Capacity development: Effective cooperation partnerships are at the core of GIZ’s work. They are key to ensuring long-term and sustainable impact. The SRHC Cluster empowers its partner organisations and institutions as well as concerned individuals by strengthening their knowledge, skills, capabilities and cooperation systems.
Energy and climate
Addressing global and local challenges

By means of its cooperation on behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany in emerging economies, GIZ not only works on raising the performance of individuals and industries, but also focuses on securing a better future for generations to come. As environmental problems do not stop at national borders, GIZ actively fosters climate protection, eco-friendly sustainable production, consumption, increase of renewable energy systems and tapping the energy efficiency potential of our partner countries.

Turkey's rapid economic growth in the last 20 years has led to a very high demand for fossil fuels and energy resulting in significantly higher greenhouse gas emissions. As a consequence, Turkey has become one of the 20 largest CO2 emitting countries in the world. But Turkey has taken the first steps to fight climate change. New national strategies and legislation aim at reducing overall energy consumption, strive to diversify the energy supply, and seek to roll out extensive energy efficiency and renewable energy measures in the building, industry and transport sectors.

The GIZ response

In this context, GIZ is implementing projects on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) to support the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization of the Republic of Turkey (MoEU). The Ministries meet and exchange on a regular basis through the Turkish-German Environmental Steering Committee and the Turkish-German Energy Forum.

Areas of intervention
- Organising trainings for civil servants, installation operators and associations, energy experts
- Monitoring plans and verified annual emissions reports
- Initiating International Summer Schools
- Developing a tailored, state-of-the-art, online monitoring system for greenhouse gas emissions in Turkey
- Retrofitting a pilot school for energy efficiency
- Gathering experts and policymakers through high-ranking policy dialogues and conferences
- Developing the first Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (nZEB) definition for Turkey
- Organising the first-ever energy efficiency Hackathon in Turkey
One of the ongoing projects under the Energy and Climate Cluster is the "Capacity Development for the Implementation of a Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) System for Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) in Turkey" project. Working closely with the MoEU, the project has established the necessary infrastructure for an MRV system for Turkey’s energy and industrial sectors.

Funded by the International Climate Initiative, the project has developed a state-of-the-art online data management system and respective guidelines for operators of industrial plants. Through this, approximately 700 companies accounting for more than 50% of Turkey’s GHG emissions submit verified emissions reports every year. The project also provides extensive training seminars to industry staff and civil servants. With the extension of the project in 2018, the MRV system will soon also cover the aviation sector. Furthermore, the project will work on improving the quality of the existing emissions data and benchmarks for potential Emissions Trading System sectors.

Working with MoEU, the "Energy Efficiency in Public Buildings" project addresses multiple fields of action, for example at the regulatory level, through international technological cooperation or by piloting concrete measures, such as the energy efficiency pilot school retrofit. The pilot retrofit encourages an active exchange and sharing of knowledge between experts and ministries and will also serve a basis for providing technically and economically viable recommendations for retrofitting all schools in Turkey.

Furthermore, GIZ has supported the Turkish government in diversifying its energy supply through a grid-connected renewable energy project. By balancing the grid with variable renewable energy, developing new standards for the grid, exchanging international best practices, and supporting the introduction of so-called energy auctions (public tenders for a certain output of electric energy), GIZ has contributed to increasing the production and consumption of renewable energy in Turkey.

Moreover, on behalf of the BMZ, the GIZ recently started implementing the "Renewables and Migration (REMI)" project. The project lies at the nexus between the refugee response and renewable energy. In three complimentary components, it aims at improving the energy supply infrastructure while promoting sustainable employment and strengthening social cohesion. Syrian and Turkish participants will be trained to become solar installers. To apply that acquired expertise, the project will work with the trainees to install solar panels onto 3 public buildings in Gaziantep. The project will also raise awareness about the importance of renewable energy through a series of roadshows in the region.