

Türkiye-Germany Roundtable Meeting

19 June 2026, Ankara, 11.05

Minister of Trade Prof. Ömer Bolat,

**Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy of Germany
Katherina Reiche,**

Ambassador of Germany to Türkiye Sibylle Katharina Sorg,

Deputy Minister of Trade Mustafa Tuzcu,

**Chair of DEİK/Türkiye-Germany Business Council Mehmet Ali
Yalçındağ,**

Honorable Participants,

Our German friends have a saying: **“Man muss das Eisen schmieden, solange es heiß ist”** (*Man mus das ayzen şmiden, zolange es hays ist*). It means, **“Strike while the iron is hot.”** Few words could better describe the moment our two economies find themselves in today. The conditions are right, the momentum is real, and the opportunity is now. On behalf of the Foreign Economic Relations Board — DEİK, I welcome our German friends and all participants.

Germany is Türkiye's largest trading partner, and last year our relationship reached a historic milestone: in 2025, bilateral trade climbed to its highest level ever — 52.3 billion USD. The leading sectors on both sides, automotive and machinery, show this is not one-directional trade but a deeply integrated, supply-chain-based relationship. Add Germany's cumulative direct investment in Türkiye and the nearly 3 million people of Turkish origin living in Germany, and the picture is one of extraordinary depth.

Yet we believe we are only scratching the surface. With Boston Consulting Group, our Business Council has mapped the future of this relationship, and the central finding is striking: we can grow our bilateral trade from around 50 billion euros today to 125 billion within five years, and 250 billion within ten. The report identifies ten concrete growth areas — from nearshoring production and the circular economy to start-up ecosystems, data centers, and joint projects in the Caspian region and Africa.

There is one more priority I want to place before this distinguished group: Türkiye's deeper integration into — and ultimately membership in — the European Union. Germany, as Türkiye's most important trading partner and a central voice within the EU, has a pivotal role to play.

As DEİK, this agenda has become our primary focus in 2026. Last November, we held the first EU-Türkiye Business Summit in Brussels, and we will hold the second on 13 October 2026, at the same venue. I warmly invite you all to join us.

In the 30th year of the Customs Union, Türkiye is the EU's fifth largest trading partner, with a record 233 billion dollars in bilateral trade in

2025 — a success led by the business communities even while politics stalled. It is we who must reignite this agenda.

Through this initiative, we penned an open letter to EU leaders in the Financial Times in January, and to the leaders of E6 member states — including Chancellor Merz, in Bildt, in May. The motivation is to emphasize the need for a paradigm shift in Türkiye-EU relations. Our German friends' support for this vision is very important for us to take this agenda further.

Before concluding, a few words on recent investment opportunities in Türkiye. First, HIT-30, our flagship High Technology Investment Program, aims to make Türkiye a global high-tech production hub by 2030, with USD 30 billion in incentives for strategic investments in advanced technologies. Second, a new investment program positions Türkiye as a global hub for manufacturing, logistics, and transit trade, offering tax incentives, investment facilities, and financial regulations to strengthen production, exports, high value-added services, and the attraction of international investment.

I extend my sincere gratitude to Minister Bolat, to Minister Reiche, and to all participants who made today possible.

Now I'll give the floor to private sector representatives. I have 13 names here in my list, seven from Türkiye and seven from Germany. Considering we should finish at 12.10, I'll ask each of them to use time preciously.

Private Sector Representatives

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And now we will give the floor to Minister of Trade Prof. Ömer Bolat to deliver their closing remarks.

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Thanks to Excellency Ministers.

And now we will give the floor to Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy of Germany Katherina Reiche to deliver their closing remarks.

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Thanks to Excellency Ministers.

With those, I'd like to extend my gratitude to Honorable Ministers also all participants as well as to all those who made this event possible.

Nail OLPAK

President of DEİK