



U.S. Chamber of Commerce

U.S. Chamber's U.S.-Turkey Business Council Launches Mentor Program for Young Women in Turkey Pursuing Careers in STEM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Chamber of Commerce's U.S.-Turkey Business Council today announced the launch of [Million Women Mentors/Milyon Kadına Mentor program](#) with the goal of providing mentorship opportunities to young women in Turkey who wish to pursue careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields.

"The U.S. Chamber is delighted to announce the Million Women Mentors/Milyon Kadına Mentor program which was inspired foremost by the many accomplished women who hold prominent leadership roles across U.S. companies operating in Turkey," said Khush Choksy, Senior Vice President for Middle East, Turkey and Kazakhstan Affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. "Building on the expertise of such partners as TOBB, STEMconnector and TurkishWIN, we are excited to implement this program that will not only contribute to the future of Turkey's economy, but the overall U.S.-Turkey relationship."

Turkish counterpart of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), also expressed enthusiasm for the initiative. "Women's empowerment via entrepreneurship is an issue that is dear to our hearts as manifested by our Women Entrepreneurs Council with approximately 7000 members," said M. Rifat Hisarciklioglu, TOBB's President. Highlighting the strength of TOBB's network of women entrepreneurs, Hisarciklioglu noted, "since this council represents entrepreneur women from Turkey's all 81 provinces, they will play an important role in reaching out to women mentors and mentees outside of big cities."

The Million Women Mentors/Milyon Kadına Mentor program is a key pillar of the U.S.-Turkey Business Council's new Women in Business Initiative led by co-chairs Umran Beba, co-founder at Beba Foundation and partner at August Leadership, and Canan Özsoy, CEO, GE Turkey. The program convenes STEMconnector's global expertise and TurkishWIN's wide network of mentors and mentees in Turkey to connect private sector leaders with young women for mentorship opportunities in STEM via a digital platform. The program aims to build 1 million mentorship connections over the course of next 10 years.

“We need more women in STEM fields, mentoring will support this mission and help innovation, growth and progress for Turkish economy,” said Umran Beba, Co-Founder of Beba Foundation, a founding circle supporter of the initiative, and Partner at August Leadership. “Empowering women and supporting young generation is critically important and beneficial for our country. Turkey has a young population and ambitious targets to grow as well as becoming more digitized,” said Canan Özsoy, CEO of GE Turkey and Co-Chair of the Council’s Women in Business Initiative. Özsoy added, “We’re glad to support “The Million Women Mentors” program, which is designed to address these needs, particularly increasing women in STEM roles. I strongly believe strengthening our community will help create sustainable change.”

“We are excited to be partnering with these exemplary organizations to expand the Million Women Mentors network and support young women in Turkey in their pursuit of STEM educations and careers,” said Dr. Jo Webber, CEO of STEMconnector. Echoing other program partners’ enthusiasm, Melek Pulatkonak, Founder of TurkishWIN said “We believe that the future of learning is social and distributed. Million Women Mentors program will enrich our STEM program and activate TurkishWIN’s diaspora mentor network. Furthermore, we are excited for the opportunity to connect Turkey’s strong STEM ecosystem to a global program.”

Million Women Mentors/Milyon Kadına Mentor is proud to recognize among its Founding Members the Beba Foundation, PepsiCo Turkey, Limak Holding and Logo Yazılım, whose generous support and leadership made the launch of Million Women Mentors/ Milyon Kadına Mentor possible. The U.S. Chamber’s U.S.-Turkey Business Council will be working with partners and private sector leaders to build a robust group of mentors and aims to host a formal launch event of its Women in Business Initiative with participation from U.S. and Turkish governments in 2021.

About the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world’s largest business organization representing companies of all sizes across every sector of the economy. Our members range from the small businesses and local chambers of commerce that line the Main Streets of America to leading industry associations and large corporations.

They all share one thing: They count on the U.S. Chamber to be their voice in Washington, across the country, and around the world. For more than 100 years, we have advocated for pro-business policies that help businesses create jobs and grow our economy.

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