



GÜN + PARTNERS
AVUKATLIK BÜROSU

UN GLOBAL COMPACT

COMMUNICATION ON PROGRESS
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GENERAL

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Gün + Partners is a full-service institutional law firm with a strategic international vision, providing transactional, advisory and dispute resolution services. It is one of the oldest and largest law firms in Türkiye and is internationally recognized among the top-tier legal service providers in the country. The firm is based in Istanbul, with working and correspondent offices in Ankara, Izmir and the major commercial centers in Türkiye. The firm advises a large portfolio of clients in numerous fields of activity, including life sciences, energy, construction and real estate, logistics, technology, media and telecoms, automotive, fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), chemicals, and the defense industries. All lawyers work in Turkish and English, and the majority also offer fluency in German and French.

Statement of continued support

23/06/2023

To our stakeholders:

I am pleased to confirm that Gün + Partners reaffirms its support of the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact in the areas of Human Rights, Labor, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

In this annual Communication on Progress, we describe our actions to continually improve the integration of the Global Compact and its principles into our business strategy, culture and daily operations. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely yours,

Mehmet Gün

Founding Partner of Gün + Partners

I. HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES

- **Principle 1:** *Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights*
- **Principle 2:** *Businesses should make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses*

Assessment, policy and goals

Gün + Partners prides itself on promoting and showing deference to international standards, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights. We believe that it is important to implement the principles that we passionately stand for in our statements and petitions. Therefore, we make sure that all our employees are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law.

Additionally, our founding partner Mehmet Gün founded the Better Justice Association and contributed to establishing the Istanbul Arbitration Association, supporting the principles of equal protection under the law and the right to a fair trial in Türkiye.

The Better Justice Association (BJA) was established to reform the legal and administrative structure of the Republic of Türkiye, strengthening the state of the rule of law, reinforcing the Turkish judiciary and thus ensuring that it has a positive impact on business and social welfare. The BJA publishes commentary on, and promotes ongoing discussion of, key legal issues and policies in Türkiye, including a “Proposal for the Establishment of a Higher Judicial Council Structure to Ensure the Independence of the Judiciary,” an “Opinion on the Draft Law on Court-Appointed Experts” and a call for “Full and Frank Disclosure in the Turkish Civil Procedure.” The idea for the BJA was first introduced in 2014 by Mehmet Gün in his autobiographical book *From the Steppes of Anatolia to the World of Global Law*. Subsequently, Gün revisited the ideas of judicial independence and accountability, as well as the need for reform in accordance with the Rule of Law, in the book *Turkey’s Middle Democracy Issues and How to Solve Them: Judiciary, Accountability and Fair Representation*, published in April 2018.

The BJA has also developed innovative proposals for a solution to Türkiye’s judicial problems from the ground up under nine key headings and presented them to the public in both Turkish and English under the title *Turkish Judicial Reform from A to Z*. The BJA believes that the root cause of Türkiye’s legal, democracy and economic problems is the judicial problem, that this problem is intertwined with the rule of law, and that the solution to all of the problems starts with the judiciary. The book examines the judicial systems and experiences of the 20 countries with the most advanced levels of democracy, rule of law and welfare in the world. The findings of this exploration were also shared separately with the public through a series of webinars entitled “Judicial Councils in the World.”

The Istanbul Arbitration Association (ISTA) was established as the only non-governmental organization in Türkiye with the focus on transforming the country, and especially Istanbul, into a reputable, reliable and effective arbitration center, fully recognized in the national and international arenas. To fulfill this aim, the ISTA works tirelessly to promote the advantages offered by using Istanbul as a seat of arbitration, to foster arbitration in Türkiye and to ensure that arbitration practices in the country are conducted in a fair, efficient and productive manner.

Following its establishment phase, the ISTA has shattered a record with the large number of founding members and the number of stakeholders who have participated in its work. Indeed, it has become a cause célèbre among lawyers, academics, experts and sectoral specialists. The advisory board of the ISTA, the High Advisory Council, comprises the pioneers of arbitration in Türkiye, ensuring that the ISTA is an expert association bringing together under its umbrella all jurists and non-jurists who are active in the field of arbitration. A key aspect of the ISTA's approach is its cooperation with third-party actors. An important recent initiative introduced by the ISTA with great vision and foresight is the introduction of the ISTA Arbitrator Ethics Rules—a reliable set of guidelines that contributes to the fair functioning of arbitration proceedings and sheds light on the qualities of self-independence and impartiality of the arbitrator.

Mehmet Gün has also co-authored the book titled *How Unconstitutional Is the Privileged Immunity of Experts?*, wherein he and his colleagues challenged the regulations concerning legal immunity and exclusion of liabilities as granted to the panel of experts and criticized the dominant position of experts as a legal institution in Türkiye.

Implementation

In order to promote an environment where employees feel their freedom of expression is protected, Gün + Partners implements the “speak-up” system, in which there are designated speak-up delegators and the lawyers of our firm can speak up to them about any matter they feel threatens their personal rights or rights as an employee. This setting of healthy communication is emphasized through the convening of meetings in which every employee of our firm, regardless of their seniority, is given a platform to share their views and comments regarding the upcoming policies and goals of our firm.

In 2022, Gün + Partners defined its vision for the next 10 years through mutual discussion and agreement among all our colleagues and employees. Our vision was determined to be an innovative and sustainable institution that is a leader in the services we offer to our clients and cares for society, the environment and our employees.

As a first executive step towards implementing the firm's vision, we created a system where employees from different functions throughout the organization and with different levels of experience have begun to attend board meetings. This way, the board meetings have become more diverse and employees can represent their generation's perspective. As well

as hearing about the company strategy and decisions, they are able to share critical company information with their peers and network. The management of the company has grown to become more transparent and accountable. The system has brought together younger employees and seasoned executives to develop a purpose-led and inclusive strategic vision, making Gün + Partners more diverse and more equal and fair in its decision-making.

As the Founding Chair of the BJA, Mehmet Gün made a presentation regarding the “Proposal for the Establishment of a Higher Judicial Council Structure to Ensure the Independence of the Judiciary” during a panel on the “Independence of Judiciary Following the Constitutional Amendment” on 15 November 2017. The presentation pointed out the de facto dependence of the Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSK) on the executive powers, such as the Minister of Justice, in performing its supervisory functions. It proposed an alternative to the competence of the executive by introducing a Supreme Authority of Justice. This proposed council was envisaged to have an inclusive election process, ensuring the representation of all segments of society. The BJA also published the informational notes “Progress Report of the European Union” and “Judicial Reform Strategy for 2019 and Better Judicial Priorities” in June 2019.

Gün + Partners employees established the BJA as a politically neutral think tank and civil society organization to identify issues in Türkiye’s judiciary and their root causes, in order to develop solutions and build a consensus among all relevant stakeholders in support for these proposals, in the belief that the judiciary is the main pillar of our democracy and that the rule of law is not only the path to the advancement of our country but also the means by which to increase its prosperity in a sustainable fashion. This has allowed employee participation and engagement with the proposal for establishing a higher judicial council and court to ensure the independence of the judiciary, as well as reforms in the unions for legal professionals. As a contribution to substantially reforming the rule of law and democracy to strengthen our country’s economy, the organization has formulated 80 concrete proposals, organized into eight chapters, and has already presented them for the attention of Lütü Elvan, the Minister for Treasury and Finance, and Abdülhamit Gül, the Minister of Justice. Moreover, the details contained in *Turkish Judicial Reform from A to Z* were announced to large audiences via live webinar conferences broadcast on the Association’s social media accounts as of September 2021. On September 8, 2021, Mr. Gün attended a webinar called “The Future of Judiciaries in Europe and Beyond,” hosted by the British Institute of International and Comparative Law (BIICL) with Mr. Gün, Hon. Sir William Blair (QMUL), Dr. Sara Razai (BIICL) and David Kosař (Masaryk University Brno) as the speakers.

In the past year The BJA has begun to organize a series of “Economy and Law Meetings” meeting series, which will be held in 22 cities in cooperation with the finance and business Newspaper *Dünya* . These meetings are a further opportunity to share our judicial reform proposals with the public. The first meeting was hosted in Denizli on March 1, 2022, the second on March 10, 2022, in İzmir. Further meetings followed in Bursa, Mersin, Edirne, Hatay, Kayseri, Çanakkale, Gaziantep, Konya, Antalya and Diyarbakır.

In order to obtain feedback on the draft proposal and to discuss possible collaborations, seminars have been held with the Unity in Democracy Foundation, the Turkish Journalists Association, the Association for Lawyers from Karatay, the Yalova University and Sakarya University Law Clubs, the Federation of Sectoral Associations (SEDEFED), TEMA (the Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats), Istanbul and the Association on Attorneys' Rights.

Our Association attended the World Justice Forum (WJF), organized by the World Justice Project (WJP), an independent non-governmental organization working to promote the rule of law around the world which convened in The Hague, Netherlands. Our judicial reform proposals were brought to the attention of lawyers from all over the world at the forum.

Association members visited London on May 23, 2023, hosting a roundtable discussion at the House of Lords and briefing UK parliamentarians, academics and business leaders on recent legal developments in Türkiye and how the presidential election in Türkiye was likely to impact judicial reform efforts in the country.

Members had been working on a number of important research projects and policy proposals analyzing how judicial reforms could enhance the Turkish economy and provide opportunities for great economic cooperation between Türkiye and the UK. The Association's presence in London ahead of the presidential election results being announced allowed senior UK politicians and policy-makers to hear first hand about what the legal and economic environment in Türkiye was likely to be in the months and years ahead.

Similarly, the BJA visited Brussels on June 6, 2023, met with senior officials at the European Parliament, European Commission and European External Action Service (EEAS) and briefed European parliamentarians and EU commissioners on the "rule of law outlook" in Türkiye after the presidential elections.

During the London visit, global experts from prestigious organizations including the International Bar Association, the Law Society of England and Wales, and the UCL Judicial Institute came to hear Mehmet Gün and a team of BJA researchers outline the Association's judicial reform proposals.

"We were deeply honoured to be hosted by Lord Iain McNicol at the House of Lords for this important and timely discussion. The main reason why societies do not defend the judiciary and, on the contrary, why judges can become easy targets for politicians, is that the judiciary has lost the trust of society by not producing sufficient and high-quality services," said Atty. Mehmet Gün.

While in London, the BJA representatives also met His Excellency Ambassador Osman Koray Ertaş at the Turkish embassy in the UK.

In Brussels, after being hosted by Their Excellencies Ambassador Faruk Kaymakci (Türkiye's Permanent Delegate to the EU) and Ambassador Bekir Uysal (Belgium), the group met with senior European officials including Nacho Sanchez Amor MEP (EU Rapporteur on Turkey), Bernard Brunet (EU Commission) and Dr Ferdinand Kopp (EEAS Türkiye Desk Officer). That evening, the BJA hosted a roundtable discussion with key European thought leaders

including representatives from the Brussels School of Governance, the European Policy Center (EPC) and the European Neighbourhood Council (ENC).

Mr Gün commented: “We believe that our innovative proposals, which ensure the full separation of the judiciary from the executive and legislative powers, are capable of building back the public’s trust. The BJA research team enjoyed discussing our ideas with senior politicians, policy experts and like-minded NGOs.”

Hande Hançar, board member of the BJA, noted: “We have identified many of the most pressing challenges surrounding the rule of law and hope our work will initiate important discussions that can bring about positive changes in jurisdictions around the globe. The valuable feedback the BJA team received in London and Brussels has further fueled our desire to improve and refine our judicial reform proposals.”

The BJA’s webinar series over the last two years, aiming to raise international awareness around some of the problems and solutions identified in *Turkish Judicial Reform from A to Z*, has included a diverse range of contributions from global experts on judicial reform, including:

- **Sir William Blair QC**—Professor of Financial Law and Ethics at Queen Mary University of London and Former Judge of London’s Commercial Court
- **Professor Cheryl Thomas**—Co-Director of the UCL Judicial Institute
- **Professor Tom Ginsburg**—Leo Spitz Professor of International Law at the University of Chicago Law School
- **Dr. David Kosař**—Head of the Judicial Studies Institute and Associate Professor of Constitutional Law at the Faculty of Law at Masaryk University
- **Professor Zoltán Fleck**—Professor of Law and Sociology at the Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) of Budapest.

We believe that an advanced level of prosperity for Türkiye can come only with the improvement of the judiciary. With this awareness, the BJA has been working with leading lawyers from Türkiye, academics from different disciplines and businesspeople since 2012. The proposed Supreme Court of Justice presented in *Turkish Judicial Reform from A to Z* is a model that will contribute significantly to increasing confidence in the judiciary and protecting the rule of law around the world. We continue to share our suggestions with experts in the international arena. We explain and discuss our suggestions via international webinars. To date, specific discussion topics have included “The Future of Judiciaries in Europe and Beyond,” “The Protection of the Judiciary and the Wider Ecosystem,” “The Role of Constitutional Courts in the Promotion of Domestic and International Law” and “The Importance of Judicial Training in Protecting the Rule of Law.” We stream these webinars on our [YouTube channel](#). Leading diplomats, academics and opinion leaders such as Sir William Blair QC, former president of the UK Commercial Courts, Professor Tom Ginsburg from the University of Chicago Law School, Professor Cheryl Thomas from the UCL Institute of Justice, Bernard Brunet, the head of the Turkey Unit at the European Commission, and UN Resident Coordinator Alvaro Rodriguez have provided highly supportive comments on our proposals. The experts considered our proposals to be promising in the way they combine traditional institutions with innovation and valuable in their capacity to contribute to the concept of judicial councils in Europe and beyond, as well as to the Future of Europe discussions.

At Gün + Partners we feel that a strong and independent judiciary is critical to delivering the rule of law, democracy and prosperity, ensuring that everyone—regardless of status or wealth—can have access to justice, something which is acknowledged as essential in Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16). The proposals in *Turkish Judicial Reform from*

A to Z ask us to rethink the judiciary as a civic institution whose core focus should be running a high-quality public service. SDG 16 articulates the key role that governance and the rule of law play in promoting peaceful, just and inclusive societies, and in ensuring effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels and sustainable development. Here at Gün + Partners we want to use our skills to support change for the better in the area we know best, the legal system, because it creates the all-important foundation for an inclusive society and economic growth. While *Turkish Judicial Reform from A to Z* focuses on issues in Türkiye, we hope that the model we propose can be used worldwide to help increase public trust in the judiciary, protect the rule of law and help many more countries achieve SDG 16.

As mentioned above, the ISTA focuses its activities on ensuring that arbitration practices in Türkiye are conducted in a fair, efficient, and productive manner, in conformity with high ethical values. For that purpose, the ISTA Arbitrator Ethics Rules were published on November 16, 2018, to bridge an important gap. Agreement to abide by these rules is a precondition for acceptance to the list of ISTA Arbitration Practitioners. Additionally, the ISTA has worked on establish a comprehensive list of arbitration practitioners to ensure visibility and credibility and has published “Arbitration Practitioners Qualification Criteria” setting out the qualifications arbitrators require in order to be included on the list. The criteria include committing to abide by the Arbitrator Ethics Rules. This list provides convenience for the parties to disputes in terms of appointing arbitrators and brings qualified practitioners to the forefront.

The ISTA carries out relevant activities through its Commissions, namely, “Arbitration and Training,” “Activities and Publications” and “Promotion and Cooperation.” All members are welcome to take part in Commission activities.

Aside from its aforementioned efforts in promoting arbitration in Türkiye, as per the ISTA Bylaws, the organization may collaborate with national and international non-governmental organizations; public, quasi-public or private institutions and agencies; and arbitration and other alternative dispute resolution centers that are engaged in similar areas of activity—to exchange ideas, experience and know-how for academic progress, in order to achieve its goals.

One of the ISTA's main partners in terms of fostering arbitration in Türkiye and ensuring the fair functioning of arbitration proceedings is, indisputably, the Istanbul Arbitration Center (ISTAC). The ISTAC Arbitration and Mediation Rules entered into force on October 26, 2015, and to date ISTAC has received more than 100 cases.

In line with the overlapping goals of the ISTA and the ISTAC, on July 18, 2018, the two parties signed a protocol to establish collaboration in developing arbitration in Türkiye, increasing the standard of professional qualifications required of arbitrators, expanding membership and connection networks, and most importantly, implementing ethics rules for arbitration. With this joint protocol in place, the two institutions plan to develop joint projects in order to ensure Istanbul's place as a preferred seat of arbitration in the international arena, the development

of arbitration expertise in Türkiye, and that arbitration practices in Türkiye are conducted in a fair, efficient and productive manner.

On July 30, 2020, Gün + Partners published a statement following continuing discussions with respect to the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. The statement firmly emphasizes that the Istanbul Convention should be fully and effectively applied in order to prevent domestic violence, protect victims of abuse and end the impunity of perpetrators. A copy of the statement can be found at this [link](#). Unfortunately, violence against women continues in Türkiye. Our colleague Atty. Dilara Yıldız was murdered by her ex-fiancée, and this is not an isolated event: it is a grim example of violence against women that we sadly witness every day. We issued statements both on International Women's Day and about this incident, which can be found [on our website](#) and [on Twitter](#).

Our firm also supports and collaborates with important associations that support the SDGs, such as Habitat Association, a non-governmental organization that provides social capacity-building and social-impact-oriented projects on the basis of strong partnerships that are compatible with the digitalized world and that aim for sustainable development; and Tohum Autism Foundation, a non-profit, for-public-benefit health and education organization established on April 15, 2003, to promote the early diagnosis of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), to ensure their specialist education in order to integrate them into the community and to disseminate this approach nationally.

TÜSİAD is one of the biggest non-governmental organizations in Türkiye, leading entrepreneurs and executives with a focus on Türkiye's global economic competitiveness, promoting democracy, social progress and inclusive growth. Our firm has been assisting TÜSİAD since 2019, for example in establishing the Digital Transformation in Industry Platform, which has been supported by the Ministry of Industry. Türkiye's largest companies have visited this platform as project attendees to ask for assistance for specific needs. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have the chance to respond to these requests, creating opportunities for collaboration. In 2022, the program was amended to become fully digitalized and we prepared the relevant legal documents (online user and subscription agreements, privacy notices, cookie policies, communication notices, agreements with relevant stakeholders and sponsors, etc.). More information can be found at <https://tusiadsd2.org>.

Along with providing legal services to the Business Council for Sustainable Development Türkiye (BCSD Türkiye), Gün + Partners became a member of this council, which is the local network for and partner in Türkiye of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD). The council shares knowledge on sustainability with its members and stakeholders through the activities of its working groups.

Gün + Partner is a founding member of Integrated Reporting Türkiye Network (ERTA), which aims to ensure that businesses report their non-financial information as well as their financial

information and to promote integrated thinking. ERTA has become Türkiye's official partner of the International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC) with the protocol signed in London on September 19, 2018.

Measurement of outcomes

Our employees report feeling that their freedom of expression is respected, owing to the meetings described above. These meetings not only raised awareness in creating a democratic model of business but also revealed the needs and requirements for our firm in an efficient manner. The speak-up system was also a great success both for employees and for the development of the firm. For example, it has propelled us to prepare and implement a firm policy with regard to holidays with pay to make sure that our employees enjoy their "right to respect for private and family life."

Gün + Partners has continued to deliver social responsibility projects to promote the protection of human rights such as the rights to education and health and the principle of equality and non-discrimination. As part of these activities, Gün + Partners employees raised donations for the Berdi primary and secondary schools in Şanlıurfa, Büyüktokaç village, and collected funds for the procurement of necessary class furniture, fixtures, stationery, electronics and a selection of 1,207 books and magazines. Our founder Mehmet Gün also continues to award the scholarships he has been giving out for a long time, to young students, especially girls, in his hometown experiencing financial hardship, in order to help them to attend their preferred high schools and universities. All of the students who have received these scholarships, who normally would not have had sufficient funds to participate in high school and higher education, have finished their studies and gone on to work in professions such as teaching and nursing.

On October 30, 2020, Friday afternoon, the western province of İzmir was hit by an earthquake of 6.6–7.0 magnitude on the Richter scale. The earthquake affected the Aegean Sea, causing a minor tsunami, and was followed by more than 2,000 aftershocks reaching a magnitude of over 4. Gün + Partners immediately established an educational trust fund for the purpose of providing grants to law school students in İzmir who were affected by the earthquake.

Gün + Partners has pledged our support to the people of Ukraine and will be making a significant donation to UNICEF to support humanitarian aid efforts. We are deeply saddened and disappointed by the latest developments in the country. Our immediate concern is the welfare of the Ukrainian people, and we commend them for their bravery, solidarity and heroic resistance. Security and peace must prevail domestically and internationally, and it can only be secured if countries are governed by the true will of their people in democracies where the rule of law is respected.

On February 6, 2023, we were devastated by the great loss of lives and the enormous moral and material destruction caused by another earthquake, this time in Kahramanmaraş but

affecting 10 provinces overall. Our firm decided to provide monetary and moral support with the aim of securing the future of the children in the affected region, and in doing so to help mend the great wound our country has suffered.

In this regard, our firm donated a sum of 50,000 euros to UNICEF Türkiye, a pioneering leader and expert in emergency humanitarian aid, which is familiar with the region and the activities of which are audited within the framework of international transparency and accountability principles accepted by the United Nations.

UNICEF has worked in the region since the day of the earthquake, in coordination with the Republic of Türkiye and the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD). It has delivered much-needed winter clothing, blankets and hygiene products for children; ensured the evacuation to safety of children living in affected areas; and provided protection for unaccompanied minors and emergency psychosocial support for children and their families.

In addition to this, we will be providing scholarships and mentoring support throughout their higher education to 50 university students with limited means from the 10 provinces that were adversely affected.

Every year, on International Women's Day, we convey our support to various women's support organizations. This year we decided to help the women in the earthquake zone. We purchased the necessary hygiene materials for the needs of women delivered them to the İBB Yenikapı warehouse to be sent to the region through Habitat Association.

In order to support the Lawyer Solidarity Campaign organized by the Union of Turkish Bar Associations, we reached out to many of our colleagues and informed them about the campaign. Mehmet Gün, representing our office, went live during the campaign and announced our cash donation of 300,000 lira.

Finally, Gün + Partners sponsored the “Destekbizden” project of Tridi, an İTÜ Ari Teknokent initiative, developed to eliminate the equipment shortage in hospitals during the COVID-19 outbreak. Our firm contributed to the production and supply of a total of 5,000 Decathlon “easybreath” diving masks that could be used by doctors as facemasks, to be delivered to hospitals in need.

When it comes to the ISTA, we are proud to say that it has effectively brought arbitration specialists under the same roof with the option of individual, institutional or international membership, and is now offering significant advantages to both its members and other arbitration practitioners. It also offers its members and other practitioners the opportunity to be among those who lead arbitration as a rapidly flourishing sector in Türkiye.

By raising awareness on the subject of ethics through the recently launched Arbitrator Ethics Rules, the ISTA has also contributed to the international credibility of the arbitration system in Türkiye and continues to play a very important role in making Istanbul one of the world's

leading arbitration centers. This difference created by the ISTA, and supported through its cooperation especially with the ISTAC, has surely placed it in a leading position in Türkiye. According to calculations made by the ISTA, the popularization of arbitration and bringing Istanbul to the fore as an arbitration center could bring back approximately US\$1 billion that is currently spent abroad on international arbitration.

II. LABOR PRINCIPLES

- **Principle 3:** *Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining*
- **Principle 4:** *Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labor*
- **Principle 5:** *Businesses should uphold the effective abolition of child labor*
- **Principle 6:** *Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation*

Assessment, policy and goals

Gün + Partners has continued to address labor rights within our internal policies. We are a firm that does not condone child labor or discrimination in any workplace. Although the legal sector is infamous for lengthy working hours, our firm gives the utmost importance to the separation between work and private life and the need to keep a healthy balance between the two. We know that our firm could not exist without our lawyers and other employees; therefore, we give the greatest priority to their social and economic welfare.

Gün + Partners embraces the value of equality, in the belief that everyone must contribute to the struggle for a society freed from any kind of gender inequality. Regardless of seniority of their position, the majority of our employees are female, and they are paid the same as their male colleagues at equivalent level. In addition, our firm is taking the necessary steps to make maternity leave and breastfeeding breaks as convenient and flexible as possible.

Implementation

In order to comply with the UN Labor Principles, we have implemented several models, systems and activities, examples of which are provided below:

- We have continued to implement a 360-degree feedback system for our performance evaluations, where employees are given performance reviews from their subordinates, supervisors and peers as well as providing a self-evaluation.

- We have introduced “Mutual Learning Interviews” where senior and junior associates are given the opportunity to reciprocally review each other’s work and inform each other regarding the files they are working on together.
- We provide a discount with a gym, which we have agreed on a yearly basis, to protect our employees’ health.
- We have expanded our Human Resources team within the firm.
- We have allocated responsibility for labor matters to two partners within the firm.
- We have continued to prepare outings and motivational events for all employees.
- We have provided occupational health and safety education to all our employees.
- We have arranged for an occupational doctor to be present at the firm one day a week.
- We have implemented a policy of scholarships within the firm, to support the lawyers in obtaining their master’s degrees.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, our firm took swift and effective action to protect the health of its employees and transitioned to a remote working system as early as March 16, 2020. Throughout the period, the Human Resources department provided our employees with all necessary work equipment, detailed information regarding the provision of health insurance and online support through certified psychologists and other experts.

Measurement of outcomes

Together with all of the improvements stated above, we have become one of the most popular law firms in Istanbul in terms of job applications; this shows that we are becoming one of the most favored law firms in Türkiye as an employer. Our employees have given positive responses to the systems and activities we have implemented, and we will continue to implement better systems and organize better projects. The 360-degree feedback and the Mutual Learning Interview systems have created further clarity and foreseeability in terms of career trajectory for our employees through their performance evaluations and overall healthy communication in the workplace. As a result of our inclusive hiring practices and the benefits provided to our employees, 59% of employees and 58% of Partners at Gün + Partners are female, almost double the figures quoted for the US and Britain. It is our belief in equality that led to us being awarded the IP Stars Prize of *Managing IP* magazine—published by Thomson Reuters, the leading publishing group in the world in the intellectual property field—for four successive years. Each year, this magazine assesses law firms in 81 countries, in areas such as specialization and expertise, workload, market reputation/follower records, results obtained for clients, and exemplary practices in terms of unmatched and unique cases. Gün + Partners has established a model based on gender equality and influence of women in management, standing as an example not only for other law firms but also for the wider business community.

As a result of the above practices, our firm participated in the “Great Place to Work” certification process for the first time this year, for which all our employees were surveyed

anonymously, and was recognized in this research-based list of Best Workplaces in 2020. Moreover, our firm has won Deloitte Turkey's Best Managed Companies Award, becoming the only law firm in the country to have received this recognition. The award recognized our firm for its clear principles of equality and diversity, providing fair opportunities for all, and, in particular, protecting and promoting women in the firm. The award also highlighted our innovative management processes, such as the use of automation and AI, as well as our self-developed Günce software and other software solutions which allow us to instantly monitor business intelligence, making forecasts and projections in real time.

III. ENVIRONMENT

- **Principle 7:** *Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges*
- **Principle 8:** *Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility*
- **Principle 9:** *Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies*

Assessment, policy and goals

GÜN + Partners continues to take the initiative to protect the global environment and prioritize environmental consideration and awareness. We are committed to meeting the necessary standards and we comply with any and all legislation in this regard. We understand that we must raise awareness among our employees in order to minimize damage to natural resources.

Implementation

During the 2021 Türkiye wildfires—a series of over 200 fires that burned 1,700 square kilometers of Türkiye's forest in its Mediterranean region in July and August, the worst ever wildfire season in the country's history—Gün + Partners worked and communicated closely with the regional bar associations (in Mugla and Antalya). We donated 50,000 lira to Mugla Bar's wildfire relief fund for immediate supplies such as food, water and shelter for people and animals in need. Also, Gün + Partners pledged to plant 1,853,250 acres to increase forest cover, working with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

We have trained all our employees in order to raise their awareness with regard to the environment. We have hired a professional team to calculate our employees' overall carbon footprint and have determined ways to reduce the footprint of our firm. Accordingly, we have reduced our electricity usage and compensated for our carbon footprint by financially supporting the Climate Volunteers-Yuntdağ Wind Power Plant. We have recycling points within our office and, with the help of the municipality, we give all our recyclable waste to

recycling facilities. Moreover, we have obtained additional glass disposal bins to further separate our recyclable waste and have informed our cleaning staff in detail on the use of these new recycling bins.

We meet and fully abide by all applicable regulatory standards on the environment. We provide training to all of our employees with the aim of increasing their environmental awareness. We take care to minimize any damage our activities might do to natural resources.

To this end, we participate in a planting program every year, instilling a love of nature in students as well as making plant donations. Our founder Mehmet Gün has so far planted approximately 10,000 saplings in the remote Anatolian village where he grew up, and he has created a small forest with 1,500 cedar saplings, which he planted to replace the trees that were sacrificed for his education when he was a young boy. He donates plants to this region every year.

This year Gün + Partners launched a new vision of creating a business culture that assimilates all dimensions of sustainability (environmental, social, governance), especially the reduction of carbon emissions and the efficient use of natural resources. We will build a comprehensive and holistic environmental management strategy to align the company's activities with an understanding of environmental sustainability. This strategy will be decided unanimously at the inclusive board meetings.

We understand that our profession is unfortunately still very much paper-based; however, we try to counteract this disadvantage by urging our employees to reuse paper and documents as much as possible. Moreover, our firm is proud to be leading the digitalization movement in the legal profession. In this respect, Gün + Partners, with its growing IT and software department, has developed customized law firm management software named Günce and launched it in the market for the use of lawyers this year. More information can be found at www.gunce.com/about.

Our firm has become a member of the Business Council for Sustainable Development Türkiye (BCSD Türkiye/SKD Türkiye), whose mission is to contribute to policy development and to increase the competitiveness of the business world through an approach of sustainable development. Our employees have become members of the "Transition to Low-Carbon Economy and Efficiency" and "Sustainable Industry and Circular Economy" working groups and have attended meetings of these groups, along with a meeting to discuss "Natural Disasters and the Role of Business from the Perspective of Sustainability" that included all members of the council.

Measurement of outcomes

Our carbon footprint has substantially decreased as a result of the above-mentioned measures. And since our training program was successful in significantly raising awareness,

we have planned to repeat the training more often, as well as extending it also to the firm's cleaning staff.

IV. ANTI-CORRUPTION

- **Principle 10:** *Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery*

Assessment, policy and goals

Accountability, efficiency and objectivity are our main principles, both within and outside of our firm. Our clients' success is at the heart of our own success, and therefore it is very important to be transparent with our clients. We have a zero-tolerance policy on corruption, bribery and extortion. As we act as intermediaries of our clients in Türkiye and we are subject to relevant advocacy legislation, all our employees are aware of the risks and sanctions. In the long run, our company goal is to minimize the risk of corruption, bribery and extortion in all areas.

In recent years, Gün + Partners has also expanded its Business Crimes and Anti-Corruption practice departments, which now consist, in total, of three partners, two managing associates and six qualified lawyers. These departments provide expertise in anti-bribery and corruption, anti-money laundering, white-collar crime, investigation, sanctions and compliance matters, and they deal with both internal and external investigations. Our firm has practice groups in Insurance and Reinsurance, Life Sciences, Energy and Natural Resources, Technology, Media and Telecoms, Construction and Real Estate, and Competition that deal with implementing and auditing regulatory compliance structures in more a specialized way.

Implementation

- We have a strict high-level policy on accountability, and as intermediaries of our clients, we sign US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and UK Bribery Act (UKBA) declarations showing that GÜN + PARTNERS is fully in compliance with the relevant legislation.
- We have implemented a billing system in which we send our statements together with spreadsheets showing how much time and expense were put into the relevant work/business in the most transparent way.
- We have implemented an expense reporting system in which it is not possible to show expenses without providing an invoice or other documents of a similar nature.
- We continue to provide training with regard to the above to all our employees.
- As part of our legal services regarding compliance, we assist our clients to carry out internal investigations, and more importantly, we give compliance training to raise

awareness within the organization. We also provide proactive legal assistance in order to comply with regulations in regulated markets, and insights into the extraterritorial effect of laws such as the FCPA and UKBA. Given our strong ties with reputable large law firms in Europe and the USA, we team up with UK- and US-based law firms to handle such matters.

Measurement of outcomes

As a result of our success in the practice area of Anti-Corruption, Gün + Partners has become a Tier 1 law firm under “Compliance” according to the Legal 500 rankings.

While the current implementation of our anti-corruption policies is valid, when it comes to fighting corruption, we know that taking measures is never enough, unless they are implemented to their core. Therefore, we repeat these trainings to every new employee of our firm and document the training.

