

# Turkish and Greek Business Worlds Convened Under One Roof in Athens

Having completed its establishment process, YUTİAD (Greek-Turkish Business Association) is preparing for major collaborations in numerous sectors, ranging from maritime to energy and from tourism to technology. President Mutlu Erkek explained the association's strategy for transforming investment opportunities between the two countries into concrete projects.



**M**utlu Erkek, the Interim President of the Greek-Turkish Business Association, provided information on how these two structures, along with the Greek-Turkish Business People Community (YUTİİT), should complement each other and spoke about its establishment. Erkek said, "The Greek-Turkish Business Association (Ελληνoturκικός Σύλλογος Επιχειρηματιών/Greek-Turkish Business Association-YUTİAD, GTBA, ETΣE) was established in May 2026, based in Athens, with the vision of gathering the Turkish business world in Greece and Greek companies doing business with Türkiye under a single roof to transform individual efforts into a corporate and sustainable power. We can list the primary goals of our association during its establishment process as: creating a strong ground for trust, solidarity, and cooperation among members; addressing the lack of information regarding the investment and business environment, legal processes, and opportunities in Greece; and establishing regular, structural, and long-term trade bridges between Türkiye and Greece."

Regarding the Greek-Turkish Business People Community-YUTİİT; as an ad hoc formation launched in 2023 under the auspices of the Turkish Embassy in Athens and in coordination with our Athens Commercial Counselor Hamid Tacı and Thessaloniki Commercial Attaché Dr. Gülcan İren, YUTİİT has actually been the first meeting and introduction point for most of our members. The aforementioned Community has emerged in recent years as the most active platform bringing together the Turkish diaspora in Greece. By communicating through a LinkedIn group with 750 followers and a WhatsApp group with 180 members under the umbrella of this Community, we have had the opportunity to bond through a total of 7 different events, such as meetings, iftar dinners, and cocktails over these past three years. Driven by the impact of this bonding, we finally rolled up our

sleeves in September 2025 to initiate the establishment process of YUTİAD in order to provide a concrete address for the business world diaspora in Greece. Now, we envision a clear division of tasks in our relationship with YUTİİT. While YUTİİT is positioned as a structure that mobilizes the business world through our trade representative offices, guides investors, channels Greece-based opportunities in line with the strategies and support programs of the T.R. Ministry of Trade, offers insights into the Greek market through the periodically published "Economy Bulletin" on LinkedIn, and strengthens corporate and diplomatic relations; YUTİAD will continue to operate as a dynamic organization that primarily finds the counterparts of these opportunities on the ground in Greece, activates local networks, and focuses on concrete business development. We foresee that the collaboration of these two structures will create a dual-track, living, and evolving active trade platform and economic bridge," he said.

Explaining the contributions they foresee this association—which brings together Turkish businesspeople in Greece—will provide in terms of commercial relations and investment opportunities between the two countries, Erkek said: "The fundamental mission of YUTİAD is to go beyond traditional networking and establish a permanent, trust-based, dynamic, result-oriented, and sustainable bridge between the business worlds of the two countries. The bilateral trade volume, which reached \$6.7 billion in 2025, remains at a low level considering the geographical proximity of the two countries, low logistics costs, and their complementary economic structures. In fact, we consider the \$10 billion trade volume target, announced through the shared will of the leaders of the two countries, Mr. Erdoğan and Mr. Mitsotakis, to be very concrete and realistic for this reason. As the Association, we aim to provide the following concrete contributions to realize this potential:

#### - Direct Business Development and

**Partnerships:** Bringing members from various sectors together with decision-makers through trade fair participation, sectoral visits, educational seminars, field visits, and goal-oriented B2B matchmaking events; creating not just contacts, but implemented collaborations and joint investments.

**- Acting as an Information and Facilitation Hub:** Providing guidance and consultancy regarding company formation, taxation, labor force, legal processes in Greece, and particularly EU funds (green transition, digitalization, energy, infrastructure).

**- Logistics and Supply Chain Optimization:** Reducing costs through Ro-Ro lines, port collaborations, and rapid customs processes by leveraging the advantages of the Aegean route, thereby creating new opportunities especially for SMEs.

**- Building Trust and Long-Term Relationships:** Establishing a transparent and sustainable trade foundation by strengthening the rational and solution-oriented approach of the business world, independent of political fluctuations.

**- Strategic Gateway Function:** Offering our member companies easier access to the European market by utilizing Greece's EU membership; similarly, making the production power and flexibility of Turkish industry attractive to Greek investors.

Erkek continued as follows: "The Posidonia Fair, as one of the most prestigious and influential meeting platforms of the global maritime industry, keeps a finger on the pulse of international trade and technological transformation. This organization, which brings Greece's deep-rooted leadership in shipping together with the world, gathers the entire ecosystem—from shipowners to suppliers, and financial institutions to innovative technology firms—under one roof. For YUTİAD, our participation in Posidonia is of great importance in terms

of strengthening regional collaborations, developing a vision for sustainable maritime, and creating new opportunities in global markets."

Subsequently, he listed the projects that YUTİAD will undertake as follows:

**• Maritime & Logistics:** The combination of Greece's leading position in the world maritime trade fleet with Türkiye's strength in shipbuilding, maintenance-repair, and sub-industry offers great opportunities. We aim for concrete collaborations through shipbuilding, maintenance services, logistics solutions, and platforms that open up to global trade, such as the Posidonia Fair. Approximately 20-25% of our members are directly or indirectly linked to the maritime sector, and we plan to increase this ratio in the medium term.

**• Energy:** We foresee joint investments and project development collaborations in renewable energy (solar and wind), LNG/natural gas infrastructure, energy efficiency, and electrical interconnection projects. We believe the experience and implementation capacity of Turkish firms can play a critical role here.

**• Tourism & Hospitality:** We observe significant potential in the tourism sector overall; instead of competition, we want to develop high-end, alternative tourism, and joint destination projects through a model of cooperation.

**• Other High-Potential Sectors:** Real estate development, cosmetics & healthcare, food, construction, manufacturing, technology, and service sectors.

"Our general approach is not merely to establish business connections among members, but to create a sustainable and growing economic ecosystem between Türkiye and Greece based on trust and the sharing of knowledge and experience. In this ecosystem, alongside trade, joint investments, technology transfer, and regional collaborations will also hold a significant place," he stated.