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#### Keynote Address:



Tarik Akin — Division Director (Islamic Finance), Finance Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey

#### **System Restart: Participation Finance in Turkey**

#### Panelists:



Fatma Cinar — Manager, International Relations, Participation Banks Association of Turkey (Moderator)



**David Testa** — Executive Director, DDGI



Fatma Gamze Sarioglu — Senior Country Manager, The Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit



Hüseyin Ünal — Head of Department, Department of Participation Finance (Insurance and Private Pension), Insurance and Private Pension Regulation and Supervision Agency of Turkey



Omer Çekin — Head of Participation Banking Unit, Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency



Rizwan Kanji — Partner, Akin Gump

IFN recognizes Turkey's position as a strong player in the global Islamic finance industry, especially with the strong commitment from the government, regulators and the participation banking industry.

To further progress in the areas of Islamic finance, the country has strategized to strengthen the market share of participation banks to 15% by 2025. Within the scope of the objective that was set, the actions to be taken for a healthy and sustainable development of participation banking in Turkey were planned under six main strategic objectives: communication; ecosystem; product range; standards and governance; digital; and competency-building. Overall, a holistic approach in financial inclusion with strong backing from the government would confirm the sustainable growth of the industry in the country for decades to come.



The contributions from the Islamic
Corporation for the Insurance of
Investment and Export Credit and the
Turkish panelists provided fascinating
insights into the legislative and regulatory
initiatives to support participation
banking and confirmed our views that the
sector's future has the necessary legislative
and institutional infrastructure to expand in

line with the ambitious targets set by the government. Additionally, the focused discussion on fintech outlined the strong potential for growth in this area with room for both disruptors as well as those with 'enabling' fintech.

David Testa is the executive director at DDGI.

Over the last couple of years, new participation banks were founded by the government such as Vakif Katilim, Ziraat Katilim and Emlak Katilim. These banks expanded very quickly by opening many branches throughout the country and became active by launching many banking products in such a short time.



According to Fitch Ratings, the participation banking sector's share has increased to 7.2%. Six years ago, the same was recorded at 5%; the difference indicating an increase of approximately 40% is very significant.

In the current COVID-19 pandemic, foreign trade activities have become a priority for participation banks, with them especially concentrating on exports. Other than international trade, participation banks have also started to take part in the financing of infrastructure and health sector projects such as public–private partnership hospitals and the Canakkale Bridge.

Fatma Gamze Sarioglu is the senior country manager at the Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit.



In his keynote address, Tarik Akin, the head of the Participation Finance Department at the Finance Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey (CBFO), expressed the strong desire of preparation for a robust takeoff of participation finance in Turkey. The governance of the participation finance ecosystem will be covered with a

holistic approach by the Participation Finance Department of the CBFO. The projected activities policies and strategic development goals will be directed to banking, capital markets, insurance and social finance institutions.

Participation finance architecture excels with newly established institutions in the central bank, the CBFO and the Insurance and Private Pension Regulation and Supervision Agency of Turkey.

The updated strategy report for the participation banking industry by the Participation Banks Association of Turkey is a significant initiative for the development of the sector. The five pillars of the national strategy report for participation finance are highlighted as follows: holistic transformation; infrastructure and enabling environment; Shariah governance; human capital; and perception and literacy.

A declaration for the participation finance industry in the new economic reform package will carry Turkey as the Islamic finance center. The progressive development of participation banks, adaptation to digitalization, highly qualified human capital and strong government support are mainly highlighted as the competive advantages of the industry.

The increasing market share of the participation banking industry in Turkey with its solid performance was acknowledged by the panelists. As real sector-driven institutions, participation banks actively engage in export and project financing deals.

With Turkey as a key market player in the Sukuk space, transaction efficiency and volume performance of Turkish participation banks are strongly emphasized.

In the insurance sector, Turkey's financial and legislative advantages will attract investors. A new draft law for participation finance is being studied actively by the Banking Regulation and Supervision Authority (BRSA) which will cover all institutions in the participation finance sector.

The BRSA is enhancing its activities to be compliant with international standards as much as possible. Liquidity management is one of the challenging issues of Islamic banks globally and the initiative by the president for the establishment of a megabank will relieve the sector players and contribute to the performance of Islamic financial institutions.

Turkey and the UK are closely connected with mutual collaborations in the fintech industry which will enable the solid and sustainable development of the sector to flourish.

Fatma Cinar is the head of international relations at the Participation Banks Association of Turkey.



The keynote speech focused on the grand strategy of participation finance from the lens of recent steps to carry participation finance forward to the next level.

It is important to understand the meaning and scope of participation finance, which covers all of the sectors, products and services that are compliant with the principles of Islamic

finance. This means policies and strategy development goals have to address all of these sectors in a holistic way by considering intersectoral interlinkages and synergies.

Despite the detrimental impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on economies, societies and Islamic finance, the year 2021 has been fruitful regarding the concrete steps taken for the development of participation finance in Turkey.

The Department of Participation Finance has started preparing the Participation Finance Strategy Document covering 2021–25.

Turkey's economic reform package declared that the Participation Finance Act will be prepared and the International Islamic Arbitration Mechanism, the National Shariah Board and the Participation Finance Rating Mechanism will all be established by the end of this year.

Tarik Akin is the head of the Participation Finance Department at the Finance Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey.



# **Turkey: Strong boost from regulators**

With Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan calling for more initiatives to push for Islamic finance in the country, the Republic of Turkey's participation finance sector has seen much progress in the last few years. NESSREEN TAMANO writes an overview of the thriving industry in a country with a Muslim population of 99.8%.

#### Regulatory landscape

The country's Islamic banking sector — widely known as participation banking — falls under the purview of the Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency (BRSA), which employs the Banking Law, and which published regulations for the operations of Islamic banks in 2018.

The Capital Markets Board (CMB) meanwhile first introduced Sukuk regulations in 2010. In 2012, sovereign Sukuk issuances were facilitated and the Capital Markets Law No 6362, which focuses on private lease certificates and asset-leasing companies, was implemented. The government soon allowed for lease certificates to be structured under various Islamic concepts and in 2015, a dedicated Islamic finance coordination committee was set up to focus on the development of the industry.

In early 2021, two dedicated Islamic finance units were launched: a participation banking division within the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey, and a participation finance department within the Finance Office of the Turkish Presidency.

The Ministry of Treasury and Finance first brought up the establishment of a central Shariah advisory board in 2018; in 2020, the regulators collaborated with the Participation Banks Association of Turkey (TKBB) to complete a legal infrastructure on Islamic banking, under which the formation of the advisory board is also outlined.

#### Banking and finance

There are 53 banks in Turkey, out of which six are fully-fledged Islamic banks, listed with the BRSA. According to the TKBB, the total assets of participation banks in Turkey held a 5.1% share of the market in 2012 and a 6.3% share in 2019, reaching 7.1% by the end of the third quarter of 2020.

National bank Halkbank announced plans a few years back to open a participation window, and the country is in talks with the IsDB and Indonesia about establishing an Islamic bank, which was supposed to have been launched in 2018 but has yet to materialize. Also in 2018, AlBaraka Turk launched Insha, a digital Islamic bank, in Germany.

In mergers and acquisitions, the Turkish Treasury has expressed interest in taking over a controlling stake in Vakifbank, and in 2019, the UAE's Emirates NBD acquired

99.85% of Russia's Sberbank's stake in DenizBank.

In 2021, President Recep, in a meeting with D-8 developing nations, called for the establishment of an Islamic megabank in the country to address the financing needs and requirements of Shariah financial institutions and infrastructure projects alike.

#### Sukuk

The first Sukuk facility issued was in 2010 by Kuveyt Turk Katilim Bankasi, which raised US\$100 million in lease certificates. The Turkish government made its sovereign Sukuk debut in 2012, raising US\$1.5 billion. It regularly auctions gold-based Sukuk and issues Islamic lease certificates as well.

In May 2020, in response to demand, the Turkish Treasury announced that local currency-denominated fixed rent rate lease certificates will be issued to Islamic banks through direct sales.

Turkey is one of the top jurisdictions leading global Sukuk issuances (the others being powerhouses Malaysia, the UAE and Saudi Arabia). Regular issuers include Turkiye Finans, Vakif Katilim and AlBaraka Turk. As at the end of 2020, Sukuk issuances by the Ministry of Treasury and Finance reached TYR75 billion (US\$8.89 billion), while Sukuk offerings by participation banks amounted to TRY43 billion (US\$5.1 billion), the TKKB said.

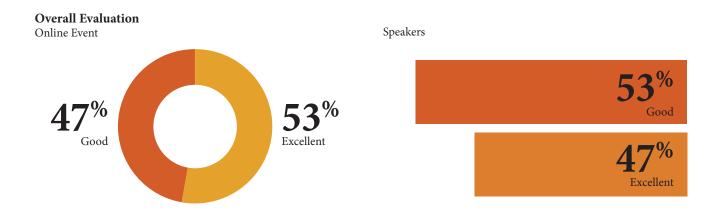
#### Asset management

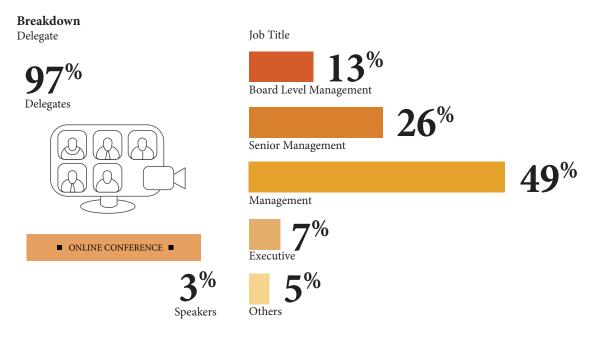
There are three fully-fledged Islamic asset managers in Turkey, but conventional asset managers are permitted to offer Islamic products on a window basis with no need to apply for separate Shariah approvals, making it difficult to ascertain the total number of Islamic funds in the country.

Popular in the country are Sukuk participation funds and participation pension funds, which are established and managed by portfolio management companies licensed by the CMB, and which together constitute around 5.5% of the total fund sector.

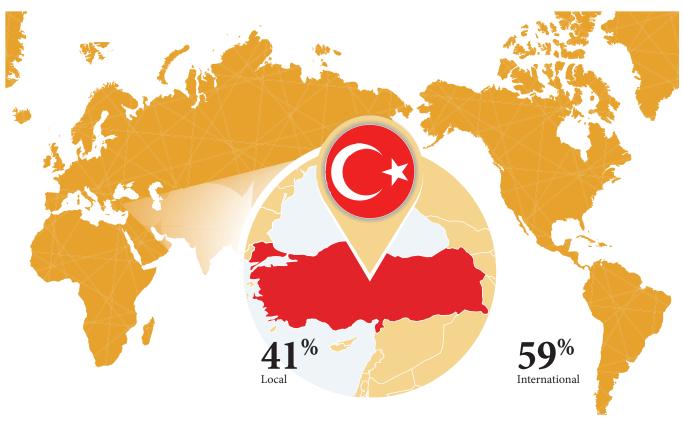
#### Outlook

Turkey is a key Islamic banking market that enjoys regulatory support, lending its Shariah compliant products resilience and allowing the industry to stay competitive despite economic challenges. Experts and industry players are optimistic about the participation finance industry's growth; Moody's Investors Service expects Turkish Islamic banking assets to double over the next five years, recording a 54% growth in 2020 that outpaced the conventional banking sector.



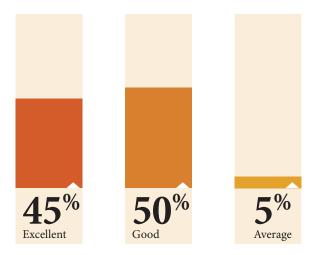


#### International & Local



#### **Session Evaluation**

System Restart: Participation Finance in Turkey



Delegates Who Would Like to Attend IFN Turkey OnAir Roadshow 2022







Viewership





# Banking with Principles















- INTEREST-FREE FINANCE PRINCIPLE
  - Participation banking offers an interest-free financing model. It is based on commercial activities, not earning money from money.
- **#2** TRADE PRINCIPLE
  - Participation banking adopts an ethical understanding of trade that will improve the economy. Clarity is essential in purchases and sales.
- SHARING PRINCIPLE Participation banking fairly shares the profit and loss of the financing provided through the methods of trade, agency, partnership and leasing among its participants as promised.
- SATISFACTION PRINCIPLE Participation banking aims to provide a high level of customer satisfaction with a people-oriented approach. Maximum effort is spent to offer the best and most qualified services.
- AUDITING PRINCIPLE
  - In addition to standard audits, participation banking is subject to audits for compliance with participation banking principles. Any product or commercial activity that does not match our values or is deemed

- **#6** HELPING PRINCIPLE
  - Participation banking utilizes some of its earnings in social responsibility projects to support and ensure social balance.
- FULL SERVICE PRINCIPLE
  - Participation banking has a wide range of products and services to meet all the needs and expectations of its customers. It offers products that are specific to the sector, as well as all instruments and facilities provided by traditional banking, which do not contradict participation banking values.
- CONTRACT PRINCIPLE
  - Participation banking maintains the validity of all its contracts initially agreed with its customers. Loyalty to the contract is essential.
- SOCIAL BENEFIT PRINCIPLE
  - Participation banking prioritizes the financing of projects that support social development. It contributes to economic growth and social welfare.
- **#10** PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE
  - Participation banking is aware of the fact that every customer is a partner and adopts an approach based on winning together.

#### Participation banking rises on top of strong principles and Turkey gets stronger with participation.

Those who understand participation banking invests their well-earned savings to the economy with inner peace.

As participation banking grows, both participants and Turkey succeed. As you get to know this rising value, that is devoted to its principles, you will participate wholeheartedly.

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