

**TURKCELL, THE PACESETTER OPERATOR OF  
DOMESTIC TECHNOLOGY ECOSYSTEM FOR  
DIGITAL TÜRKİYE**

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# TURKCELL, THE PACESETTER OPERATOR OF DOMESTIC TECHNOLOGY ECOSYSTEM FOR DIGITAL TÜRKİYE

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## **Abstract**

Continuing its rise in the international arena with its domestic and national technology initiatives it has realized in recent years as well as the geostrategic location advantage it has, Türkiye's role in the ever-developing digital world is momentous. Turkcell, the pioneer of the sector, has been endeavoring for years to protect Türkiye's "cyber homeland" borders and to increase the power of "Digital Türkiye". It considers the development and support of a wide range of domestic solutions, especially communication technologies, from cybersecurity to data centers, from digital services intended for individuals to corporate technological services, as strategically important with a "national issue" approach. Taking innovative steps towards this with its entire ecosystem, Turkcell continues to realize the necessary new infrastructure investments. Besides this, it continues its pioneering R&D activities with the mission of always being one-step ahead of the society on the way to the future with the aim of making its leadership in the industry sustainable.

Turkcell, the first company to introduce Türkiye to mobile "hello", has been working incessantly for our country to have a say in this field with the domestic and national technologies it has developed since its inception of its operations as well as the deep-rooted corporate experience it has attained. In this context, it makes the lives of its customers easier with its strong communication infrastructure and new generation digital services offered together with changing technologies. Today, Turkcell has turned into an innovative technology company that produces international quality domestic solutions in many different fields from entertainment services to techfin solutions, from instant messaging platforms to search engines, and even exports some of them to more than 40 countries in the world, contributing to the national economy.

Thanks to the strong infrastructure it has established, Turkcell not only provides conventional communication services, but also offers domestic products and services to its corporate customers in many sectors, from education to health, from finance to production as well today. Thus, while contributing to the more efficient use of the country's resources, it continues to increase its contribution to the national economy with domestic technological production. Besides, Turkcell, which goes beyond these and realizes renewable energy investments with the sustainability approach it has integrated into all its corporate processes, also assumes responsibilities for the manufacture of the future automobile with domestic and national resources, as in the Togg (*Türkiye's Automobile Enterprise Group*) project.

## **Keywords**

*National Technology, Communication, Digital Access, Data Center, Cloud, Cybersecurity*

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## **Introduction**

In a rapidly digitizing world, communication technologies and data security have become one of the most important issues of our time. Especially during the Covid-19 pandemic period, which took hold of the entire world in a short time, virtual universes, Blockchain technologies, NFT, crypto and digital money systems, e-mobility, smart cities, and new concepts that will create the world of the future are mentioned frequently. We all together experience and eyewitness the transformative effects of artificial intelligence (AI), the internet of things (IoT), augmented reality (AR) and other developing technologies on all business processes or every stage of life.

In terms of the sustainability of these new technologies, digital communication systems have a critical function like the vascular or nervous system of the human body. Accordingly, the needs of countries in the field of digitalization and the development of domestic technologies to meet this rise to a much more critical position. At this point, we need to determine what, how and with which stakeholders we can produce for a better future with the awareness we have and the responsibility we assume and transform it into social benefit.

I will herein speak of the works Turkcell has done in line with these goals in our field of activity, which has triggered the interaction in many sectors in terms of technology in general terms. The subjects mentioned here are concrete examples of the steps to be taken together for Türkiye's growth in the high value-added technology arena. Domestic and national transformation in technology can only be achieved together with the strength arising from unity.

### **The power of digitalization should be used for a better world**

The world, which has transitioned to the information age with the spread of mobile communication and the internet after computers entered our lives, has experienced a great change especially in the last 35-40 years. In this process, the interaction between people and countries has increased rapidly in every aspect in the world, which has become a "global village" as defined by Marshall McLuhan. As a result of all these, the development of technological opportunities has led to a rapid transformation in people's lives and ways of doing business. We are already seeing the signs that the impact of technology on our business and social life in the next ten years will be many times greater than in the past 40 years.

When we started our operations as Türkiye's Turkcell in 1994, we aimed at establishing the best communication infrastructure in our country. We achieved this goal in a short time and became the leader of our industry. We have continued to expand our efforts to go beyond a GSM operator with a view to offering at all times the most innovative technologies to our customers, never considering the point we have reached to be sufficient. For this purpose, we brought in one of the world's best infrastructures to our country, which supports speeds of 1.6 Gbps in mobile and 10 Gbps in fixed network, even without a 5G infrastructure. As the "world's first digital operator", we are leading the digitalization of Türkiye by means of the technological solutions we have focused on in recent years.

In today's world, where the importance of data security is increasing gradually for all countries, we have made strategic contributions to Türkiye's "naturalization" goals in technology with our services such as BiP communication platform and Yaani search engine while at the same time we have created digital brands that are used around the world. The total number of downloads of our BiP application, Türkiye's domestic communication

platform, approached 100 million as of 2022. BiP, which has been downloaded and used in 192 countries and is rapidly gaining popularity around the world, attracts great attention all over the world, especially in countries with high populations such as Indonesia, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Malaysia. We aim at making BiP an application that reaches wider audiences with new international operator collaborations and technology export. The number of users in Türkiye's digital television platform TV+ and our cloud storage service Lifebox, which have continuously increased their market share since 2017, has exceeded 1 million. We continue to create value for our customers, our industry and our country by means of Dergilik, one of the most successful examples of technology's contribution to sustainability, digital music platform Fizey and gaming platform GAME+, Blockchain-based digital identity management application Proov, and Paycell, a new generation techfin solution that brings technology and finance together, as well as our other digital solutions along with our products such as BiP Meet, Lifebox Business and YaaniMail we offer to our corporate customers.

In the 28<sup>th</sup> year of our journey that we set off on as a telecom operator within the borders of the country, Turkcell's consolidated revenues reached TL 35.9 billion by the end of 2021. Turkcell, which contributes significantly to employment with more than 25 thousand employees in total, together with its foreign subsidiaries, has become a large ecosystem with more than 55 thousand people in total with its dealers and business partners. In addition to this, we have turned into a technology company exporting innovative digital services and applications developed by our more than 1,300 R&D engineers to more than 40 countries around the world. As Turkcell, we have invested more than TL 75 billion in our country since our establishment, including license fees, tower and base stations, fiber equipment and excavations, data centers and domestic and national digital products, and our new investments continue to increase.

As announced in an international research<sup>(1)</sup> in August 2021, we are not only one of the fastest internet providers in the world, but also a technology company that develops and offers all the digital applications and services our customers need in the best way possible. With these competencies of ours, we support the digital transformation journeys of thousands of our corporate customers, including Türkiye's leading brands, with the rightful pride of being one of the first companies to initiate digital transformation in a way that sets an example to many sectors.

We, as Turkcell, are among the companies that invest the most human resources along with the technology. We maintain and develop our human-oriented business approach for the purpose of developing the talent pool related to the technological competencies that will carry Türkiye into the future.

Apart from all these, we ensure that whatever technologies and developments are to be needed in the world of tomorrow, Turkcell continues to operate and lead in those areas. For this purpose, while we closely follow the developments in the world, we also lead the sector with the domestic and innovative technologies we produce.

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<sup>1</sup> In the latest Global Status Report published by the Global Mobile Suppliers Association (GSA) in August 2021, it became the operator with the fastest 4.5G network in Europe. According to the report, which ranks the operators with the fastest LTE networks in the world, Turkcell became one of the three fastest operators in the world with the speed of 1.6 Gbps in the LTE network, while achieving the leadership in Europe.

## **R&D activities that add value to Türkiye's future**

I would like to express that we continue our efforts with the awareness of our responsibility in the production and use of domestic technology. As Turkcell, we interpret the National Technology Initiatives as developing solutions that will contribute to the provision of products that will provide fast, equal, and ready access to information for all citizens in our country with an increasing rate of usage of domestic and national resources. In line with Türkiye's vision of "being a producing country, not a consumer in technology", we regard the development of a domestic and national ecosystem as our most important task. We are proud to contribute to the growth of our country with the advantages of digitalization by making maximum efforts in this field.

In the naturalization program, which is sensitively followed by our management team, we take care to prioritize the domestic supplier and cooperate with other ecosystem stakeholder operators and companies in every possible category.

R&D operations stand in a critical position in domestic and national technology mobilization. With Turkcell Teknoloji, our affiliate company, which was established in 2009 to develop competitive services and products in field of communication technologies, we have been proudly maintaining our leadership in this field as "the company with the highest number of patent applications in Türkiye" in recent years.

By also closely following artificial intelligence technologies that are developing rapidly all over the world and used effectively in many fields such as health, transportation, finance, communication, city or environmental planning, Turkcell Teknoloji has reached the competence to use the latest technologies simultaneously with its counterparts in the world. In this way, we continue to produce domestic and national technologies to add value to Türkiye with the support of artificial intelligence, mainly focusing on people, society, and the environment.

We develop company solutions with the state-of-the-art capabilities thanks to the artificial intelligence-oriented products of Turkcell Teknoloji, which has accomplished important projects within the scope of future-oriented technologies. These products are in-house developed platforms compatible with their own custom themes. For example, our FOYA application has the capabilities to detect fake cases and samples in identity documents using artificial intelligence models. Celly, another artificial intelligence application of ours, is a chatbot product that enhances engagement and provides customized customer experience. Our SIMA application, on the other hand, is a platform the main capability of which is human face demographic analysis and combines many different capabilities such as user verification, fake user detection, age and gender detection, emotional state (mood) detection.

All these throughputs of our R&D team in field of artificial intelligence are of critical importance for human-oriented data analytics. Turkcell continues to expand its artificial intelligence-oriented platforms and product pipeline by means of applications such as speech-to-text and text-to-speech conversion, suggestion engines, sentiment analysis, extracting from text/topic determination, within the framework of its technological know-how in this field.

Apart from these, with a view to adding value to the technological development in our country, evaluation of joint operation opportunities and cooperation proposals with the stakeholders in our ecosystem is of great importance for the development of different sectors

and technologies. In this context, the “start-up” culture has become one of the vital resources of large corporate companies and one of the biggest driving forces of the global economy. Turkcell Teknoloji develops collaborations by researching such start-ups in field of technology and expands the ecosystem by supporting these companies to grow their products and maintain their businesses in the long run.

In today’s world, a new digital economy comes into existence, transformed by the impact of technology. Therefore, we are of the belief that it is necessary to focus on software, which is one of the most important areas, in order for Türkiye to be ahead of the competition in field of global technology. In order to invest more in Türkiye’s own resources in field of software and to support the employees in this field, we started a local and national software campaign and established Atmosware, our new software company, in 2021. Atmosware was established to train qualified software developers and produce quality code. First of all, we prepared our roadmap to cover the software needs of our Turkcell group companies. Then, we aim at meeting the software needs of other companies in our country as well as Turkcell.

Again, within this context, the Women Who Write the Future Project, which we started in cooperation with TOBB in 2017, opens the doors of employment for our women in the technology and software sectors while providing the opportunity to apply their technological ideas in different fields such as climate change. Besides, the ‘Those Who Write the Future - Investing in Youth, Software for the Future’ Program, which we put into practice with the protocol signed with the Ministry of National Education in November 2021, is an important step that started a new education and employment mobilization in field of technology.

### **Guiding individuals and institutions on their digital Türkiye journey**

With the Covid-19 pandemic, which entered the world’s agenda in the autumn of 2019, rapid and important changes occurred in our lives. Many technological transformations we normally foresee to be realized in the next 5-10 years have suddenly become the new normal in our lives during the global pandemic process and have now turned into a daily need. There has been a rapid change and digitalization process as a result of pandemic dynamics in every field from grocery shopping to distance education, from online meetings to remote diagnosis and treatment in the health sector. Moreover, most of these changes have settled in our lives to a large extent to be permanent.

In this process, the number of people and institutions that have seriously integrated technology solutions into their lives and now prefer digital solutions has increased exponentially. There has been a significant increase in the time spent at home, from e-commerce shopping to digital media consumption. The consumption of many digital contents on TV series, movies, documentaries, magazines, news, music and education has increased rapidly through internet channel. Digital payment methods have started to be used more frequently and intensively. We have witnessed the acceleration of digitization of individuals as well as institutions.

As Turkcell, we have been investing heavily in the development and production of domestic digital services since 2013. We have had the chance to experience the advantages of our efforts and experience how valuable the results were during the global pandemic period that suddenly took hold of the entire world. With the advantage of being the world’s first digital operator in this regard, with this experience we have and our strong network infrastructure, we, as Turkcell, have made significant contributions to Türkiye’s rapid

development of technological solutions by meeting the pandemic process in a prepared way.

Today, we design and develop services that compete intensely with the big OTT (Over the Top) players in many areas, from the e-mail platform to the search engine and digital advertising, from instant messaging to TV and music services. In this process, our aim can be summarized as not only to offer benefits to the lives of our users by making our existing telecommunication services more qualified by always being one-step ahead in technology, but also to add economic value to the world from our country by holding onto data security.

We are making significant investments in data centers so that Türkiye's data remains in Türkiye. Since this alone is not enough, we both design domestic services and work to contribute to the economy by preserving the data produced by these services in our country. It is very valuable to see that we have worked in the right areas at the right time and that these services are beneficial to our country.

As a matter of fact, since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, all our usage rates have increased significantly and reached users from all over the world. We develop our services not only for Turkcell customers, but also for subscribers of other operators in our country and technology users all over the world without practicing any favoritism. We aim at further enhancing our cooperation with global operators and reach millions of users in tens of countries.

The services we have offered to individuals to date have become corporate platforms where institutions in our country may safely protect and manage their data. Institutions and organizations can now receive digital services from our data centers, which we pioneer in Türkiye, from these platforms, which serve on the cloud and are highly secure against cyber-attacks.

Pioneering the end-to-end digitalization of public institutions and the private sector, our company Turkcell Digital Business Services has become the leader of the information technology services market in its third year thanks to the investments it realized and its strong performance since the end of 2018. Turkcell Dijital İş Servisleri, which has carried out more than 7 thousand projects with a contract value of TL 4.5 billion in the 3-year period since its establishment, has risen to the first place in the information technology services market according to the sector report by IDC, the international market research company. With the aim of guiding the digital transformation of its customers in a wide range from SMEs to large holdings and public institutions, Turkcell Digital Business Services guides the digital transformation journey of public institutions and organizations in many areas from the defense sector to transportation, from city hospitals to energy. In addition to above, the Company offers digital access, data center, and cloud and cybersecurity services for companies from many sectors such as transportation, finance, health, education, logistics, manufacturing, retail, energy, and tourism. Besides, it continues to create and offer value-added solutions to companies and institutions that will make a difference in competition with advanced technologies such as sectoral solutions, artificial intelligence, internet of things, big data analytics.

Our biggest and foremost goal is to turn these solutions of ours into world-class brands that create value for Türkiye, provide added-value by converting the income earned in Türkiye to our country, offer social benefits by being taxed in our country, and create employment for Türkiye's engineer human resources. As Turkcell, we believe that we can achieve this goal and create useful outputs around the world and reflect this on our determination.



## **Türkiye’s data now remains in Türkiye**

As Turkcell, we are a company that produces, transports and processes data. Most importantly, we ensure that the data is kept domestically. The ability to protect and manage data is becoming more and more important every day. The security, privacy and protection of our information is also becoming a strategic priority. It is this priority which lies at the basis of our understanding of “Let’s Keep Türkiye’s data in Türkiye”.

Türkiye, which has become a transit point for international internet traffic as well as for oil, natural gas and transportation routes, has a strategic and critical importance in the transportation and storage of data. As Turkcell, our aim is to contribute to making our country the world’s leading ‘data and cloud technologies base’ in this field by using the advanced and innovative technologies of our company with this geographical superiority. For this purpose, one of the important parts of our investments is data centers. We are building new generation data centers at different points in Türkiye with international quality, domestic technology and which can serve the countries in the region, especially Türkiye.

After our Gebze, İzmir and Ankara data centers, we opened Turkcell European Data Center in 2021. Thus, as Türkiye’s largest data center operator, we have completed another big step on the journey of a strong digital infrastructure.

In this direction, we have reinforced our leadership in field of data storage and cloud technologies with the commissioning of Turkcell European Data Center, which is the data center with the highest locality rate in Türkiye. Equipped with the state-of-the-art technology, our European Data Center is constantly monitored at 40 thousand points with 6 thousand sensors and was built with an architecture that is resistant to an earthquake of the magnitude 9. This data center also has the ‘Leed Gold’ certificate, which certifies that it is compatible with green buildings and the environment. Turkcell Europe Data Center in Tekirdağ, which stands out with its 75 percent locality rate and is equipped with world-class technology, has 7,200 square meters of white space. With the investments we have made in new generation data centers since 2016, we have increased our white space size to 40 thousand square meters.

With the acceleration of digital transformation, it is undeniable that the need for cloud technologies and the data centers that form the infrastructure of these technologies has increased even more. It is seen that the regulations made by our regulatory authorities in this area require that this need be met from data centers with the capacity to offer high-level security. In this context, we act with the responsibility of keeping the data of our citizens and institutions safe and confidential, as well as increasing the capacity of these data centers.

## **Supporting the Domestic Ecosystem in Technology is a Matter of Country**

Having leverage role in the development of countries, the communication technologies sector is also of strategic importance in terms of removing the limits of access to information. In this way, while opening the way for digital transformation, it contributes to the economy on the one hand, and new opportunities for high value-added services come into existence on the other hand.

However, in order to ensure sustainable development, uninterrupted and intensive infrastructure investments are required to meet the ever-increasing demand. However, our sector, which is developing at a dizzying pace, has to provide a significant part of its new technology investments from abroad, even though the rate of locality has increased in recent years. This situation has many negativities such as the risks posed by our information assets, which are of vital value for our country, in terms of protecting the national security, foreign dependency in the continuity and development of critical infrastructure, and the effect of additional foreign exchange deficit. The investment of nearly TL 55 billion <sup>(2)</sup> made in the telecommunication sector between 2016 and 2020 reveals how much great this effect is.

Countries that can integrate communication technologies into both social and economic life thanks to domestic and national solutions have begun to gain significant competitive advantages in the global game. We believe that this action which is directly compatible with the main purpose of the National Technology Initiatives should be considered as a “country issue” rather than an operational obligation. It is very important for all of us that all stakeholders know the requirements of this understanding as a national duty in order to ensure technological independence.

As a matter of fact, in the concession agreements regarding the establishment and operation of IMT2000/UMTS and IMT/LTE-A infrastructures, which were put into practice in our country in 2009 and 2016, and the provision of services, various steps that serve the focus of the National Technology Initiatives had been determined. In this regard, within the scope of the project initiated in 2013 under the leadership of the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure and the Presidency of Defense Industries, ULAK A.Ş. was established with a view to developing the national / domestic base stations supporting 4.5G technology. Within the framework of our cooperation with this company, we also carry out joint studies in field of 5G which is very critical for the development of our country in every field along with the support we provide to domestic production with the supply of 2,900 pieces of 4.5G equipment.

In addition to the above, with the support of the Information Technologies and Communications Authority, we are also included in the Communication Technologies Cluster (HTK) consisting of SMEs. This formation aims at increasing the share of locality in communication technologies and meeting the investments to be made in this field with a higher rate of domestic opportunities in the process that started with 4.5G.

We, as Türkiye’s Turkcell, consider the development of the domestic and national ecosystem in field of digital technologies as a priority national task, and we fulfill our responsibilities by making maximum efforts in this regard. In this context, we support all projects that will increase the share of domestic infrastructure products and solutions in our sector, especially the “Domestic 4.5G Base Station” and “End-to-End Domestic and National 5G Communication Network” projects. With the awareness of our leading role in our sector, we make our contributions at many stages such as creating the necessary technical infrastructures, reflecting the technological and sectoral needs at the design phase of the products, and carrying out laboratory and field tests. With our academic

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<sup>2</sup> Investments made by Turkcell, Türk Telekom, Vodafone and other operators according to the 2020 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter “Türkiye Electronic Communications Industry – Quarterly Market Data Report” published by the Information Technologies and Communications Authority.

collaborations in this field, we support graduate and doctorate students' studies in field of communication technologies.

### **E-mobility journey with Türkiye's car Togg**

While the digital transformation process reveals new sectors, it also causes radical changes in existing sectors. We observe that the difference between traditional manufacturers and technology companies in the automotive sector, where this change is experienced, is rapidly disappearing, and companies that successfully implement mobility and smart transportation solutions stand out in the competition.

We bear the responsibility of being a pioneer in domestic technology production, not only in our sector, but also in all critical areas that we consider will add value to our country. As one of Türkiye's companies that invest in domestic and national technologies, we are extremely proud and happy to take part in the Togg project.

Togg offers innovative solutions in line with global trends in this field by transforming data into controlled and safe autonomous driving. While differentiating the driving experience of its users with the ecosystem it will create around the smart vehicle, we, as Turkcell, anticipate that we will contribute to this ecosystem with our technological competencies. With Turkcell's experience in field of artificial intelligence, we develop in-car passenger analysis systems such as facial recognition and emotion analysis for Togg's e-mobility ecosystem. We are working on the integration of Turkcell digital services and techfin services. For this purpose, we continue our work with other stakeholders without interruption.

In-vehicle software plays an important role in customers' purchasing tendencies. Especially in the upcoming period, I think that together with 5G, both in-vehicle applications and the interaction of vehicles with each other and their surroundings will make life easier for users. At this point, the Togg project, which is an important breakthrough that will guide Türkiye's automotive industry, means much more to us than a financial or technological investment.

E-mobility forms an important part of the smart cities and digital universe of the future. It is possible to say that e-mobility has passed a turning point with the implementation of government incentives and legal regulations in Europe. Furthermore, climate change, zero carbon vision, and the environmental plan put forward by the European Green Consensus reveal the importance of this. In fact, electric vehicles are expected to account for 27 percent of new automobile sales in 2025.

We are pleased to increase our share in Togg from 19% to 23%, taking into account the potential offered by the domestic initiative in Türkiye for Turkcell and the synergy created with our technological competencies in field of e-mobility, where the world's communication technologies industry is heading. With the mass production expected to start at the end of 2022, we anticipate that this potential will become reality and create value for all our stakeholders.

### **Carbon Net Zero Target by using Renewable Clean Energy**

In line with our vision of "Superior digital services for a better future", we are working to clear negative impacts off and increase our positive impact in every field by using the compensating and supportive power of technology. By including our entire ecosystem in this transformation, we have determined our sustainability strategy with the motto

“Positive-Footprint”. In this context, we are investing in renewable energy to reduce our emissions to zero by 2050, with the objective of 'carbon net zero'.

As the operator that invests the most in renewable energy in Türkiye, we acquired the Karadağ Wind Power Plant (RES) in İzmir in 2021. With its 18 MW power, Karadağ RES produces 71.83 million kWh of electricity annually and alone meets the annual energy needs of approximately 2,500 base stations. In addition, we install solar energy (GES) panels on the roofs and parking lots of all our data centers at different locations in Türkiye.

We buy clean energy for locations too where our production is not sufficient and therefore identify Turkcell as an operator using 100% renewable energy. We care about the efficient use of energy as well as it is renewable. For this purpose, in addition to realizing the artificial intelligence-based energy storage system at our base stations, we also install solar panels next to our base stations in order to provide uninterrupted service with solar energy.

### **It is Important to be One-Step Ahead When Preparing for the Future**

In the upcoming period, another important leap in our industry and in our country will be experienced with the transition to 5G. We will see the massive transformational impact of 5G in industry solutions and manufacturing.

However, fiber infrastructure for 5G is a “sine qua non” requirement. Fiber infrastructure is essential not only for fixed internet access, but also for Türkiye’s transition to new generation mobile communication technologies such as 5G and accelerating its digitalization in all areas. As Turkcell has been stating on this subject for years, we regard the “common fiber infrastructure” as the most correct option for the correct and efficient use of Türkiye’s resources. We think that the competition should be in the service and services in the superstructure, not in the infrastructure, in order for our country’s people to receive the best service.

With this understanding, we continue our preparations for new generation technologies. We support the creation of a domestic 5G solution ecosystem in Türkiye with the products and services we have developed. We believe that it is possible to increase the share of domestic products and solutions in 5G technology which will bring in a different dynamism and vision to the industrial sectors with the experiences created in the 4.5G process in line with the target of a producing Türkiye.

Thanks to all these technological investments, products, and services of ours we have tried to explain briefly in the Turkcell example, we aim at maintaining our ongoing leadership in the industry since 1994 by developing value-added domestic products and services in the field of communication technologies for Türkiye in the digitalized world.

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## **About Author**

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Having graduated from the Department of Business Administration of Istanbul University, the medium of instruction of which is English, in 1996, Bülent Aksu has a professional management experience of 25 years in the fields of finance, accounting, taxation and management in the telecom, energy, petro-chemistry, textile and auditing sectors. Aksu, who started his career as an Inspector at Kuveyt Türk A.Ş., served as the Finance Manager and Group Finance Director at Çalık Holding since 2003, and then became the Vice Chief Financial Officer (CFO) at Akfel Grup between 2008 and 2012. Between 2012 and 2016, he served as CFO at Petkim and STAR Refinery, the subsidiaries of SOCAR. Having started to work as a CFO at Turkcell in 2016, Aksu made it to the list of “50 Most Influential CFOs in Türkiye” published by Fortune Türkiye magazine in 2016 and 2018. Bülent Aksu became Deputy Minister of Treasury and Finance in August 2018. In this period, along with his international representation missions, he served as a Member of the Board of Directors of Türk Telekomünikasyon A.Ş. (2018-2019), Member of the Board of Directors of Turkcell (2019-2020) and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Türk Eximbank (2019-2021). Aksu has been serving as the Chairman of the Board of Turkcell since March 2020.