



TÜRKİYE'DE İSVİÇRE TİCARET ODASI DERNEĞİ
SCHWEIZER HANDELSKAMMER IN DER TÜRKEI
CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE SUISSE EN TURQUIE
SWISS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN TURKEY

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Swiss Chamber of Commerce in Turkey



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Editorial

Director Emerging Markets, Switzerland
Tourism

Federico Sommaruga

**Dear readers, Dear friends of
Switzerland in Turkey,**

**Gruezi. Bonjour. Buongiorno.
Allegra.**

As representative of Switzerland
Tourism for the Emerging
Markets, I have the privilege of
writing a few words in this
edition of the newsletter of your
chamber of commerce.

As you may know, Switzerland
owes much of its appeal as a
holiday destination to the fact
that it offers a greater diversity of
experiences and adventures on a
small territory than many much
larger countries. It packs in an
exceptional variety of landscapes
and climatic conditions – so that
glaciers, palm trees, snow fields,
and lakes warm enough to swim
in lie remarkably close together.

Travelling to Switzerland is easy
with the three international
airports of Zürich, Geneva and
Basel. Within Switzerland, the
public transport system is
exceptionally extensive, and
renowned for its legendary
punctuality. The network of the
Swiss Federal Railways (SBB) and
of the numerous private railway
companies extends to around
5,500 kilometers in all.

Travelers from abroad can take
advantage of this dense network
with the Swiss Pass, a public
transportation ticket tailored to
their needs and the length of their
stay, which also grants free
entrance to some 470 museums.

Switzerland's landscapes have
fascinated and inspired countless
artists, musicians, painters,
novelists, philosophers and
photographers. And this
fascination with spectacular
countryside continues unabated –
in fact, it is one of the strongest
sources of motivation for visitors
who come to our country from all
over the world.

This summer, Switzerland Tourism
invites travelers to take a
panoramic voyage of discovery
through Switzerland: majestic
peaks, unexpected cityscapes,
hotel rooms with astonishing
views, panoramic trains and cable
cars that offer truly magical
journeys – Switzerland brims over
with inspiration to scale the
heights and step back from
everyday life.

Last year, overnights in Swiss
hotels of Turkish residents
increased by 7.4% reaching over
100'000. We hope that Swiss
panoramas will inspire you this
summer and look forward to
welcoming you in our country.

To find out more about the many
spectacular views of Switzerland
and to prepare your visit, I
recommend going to
www.MySwitzerland.com and
www.swisstravelsystem.com.

Sincerely yours,

Federico Sommaruga



Interview with...

Name: Alp Göçmen

Position title: Partner (Attorney at law / Notary) at Zwicky Windlin & Partners

Date/Place of Birth: 6 April 1969 in Zug /Switzerland

Education:

Fribourg University (Law School)

Bilkent University (Management and Tourism)

Mr Göçmen, tell us a little bit about your background?

As the son of native Turkish parents, I was born in beautiful Zug, Switzerland. I was raised and educated both in Turkey and Switzerland. After I finished High school in Istanbul I earned a bachelor degree in Management and Tourism at Bilkent University in Ankara. Later I attended the law school at Fribourg University in Switzerland and following the usual number of internships, in 2002 I took the bar exam and became a member of the Bar association as an attorney-at-law and civil notary. The same year I started working at the law firm Zwicky Windlin & Partner in Zug where a few years later I became a partner.

What kind of services does your company offer?

We are a law firm that provides legal services in corporate, commercial and private client related matters. We work both as advisors and/or litigators. Our clients usually have inbound international work and this

results in almost all of our cases having an international component. Due to my Turkish background many of my clients have cases relating to matters involving Turkey and Switzerland. I am also still the only Swiss civil law notary that is able to offer services in the Turkish language. Very regularly my notary seal is added to deeds that are entirely and exclusively in the Turkish language, or I notarize signatures and other documents in Turkish.

Which services do Turkish companies especially ask for?

Primarily I offer advisory and litigation services both to Turkish companies and Turkish citizens connected to legal issues in Switzerland and also act as a legal consultant to Switzerland domiciled companies of Turkish investors. After the ratification of the double taxation agreement between Turkey and Switzerland there's a growing demand from the side of Turkish investors on matters of corporate and tax law.

What future plans does Zwicky Windlin & Partners hold and what are your upcoming projects?

In just a decade we have grown into one of the three largest law firms in Zug, where we still are the youngest and the one with the most international outreach. This growth has led to many structural changes in our own organization, and our prime plan therefore is to consolidate this success. As Switzerland and Turkey have both undergone fundamental changes in their economic structures, we are carefully monitoring these changes not only for the sake of our clients, but also to remain a leading service orientated law firm. We take pride in having sensed, earlier than some Swiss banks and other companies, that times have brought significant structural changes. We always strongly believed that Switzerland, and especially Zug is and will be attractive for foreign investors and corporations for reasons far beyond tax concerns.

What role does the Chamber of Commerce play in your business life?

I have made acquaintances with numerous Chamber members and I am confident that thanks to the very professional efforts of the current president of the Chamber and his team, I will have the opportunity to further enhance my contacts with the Turkish and Swiss business community from whom I can still learn from their professional experience and to whom I can offer my professional competences.

We heard you are a passionate alpinist. What is so special about your hobby?

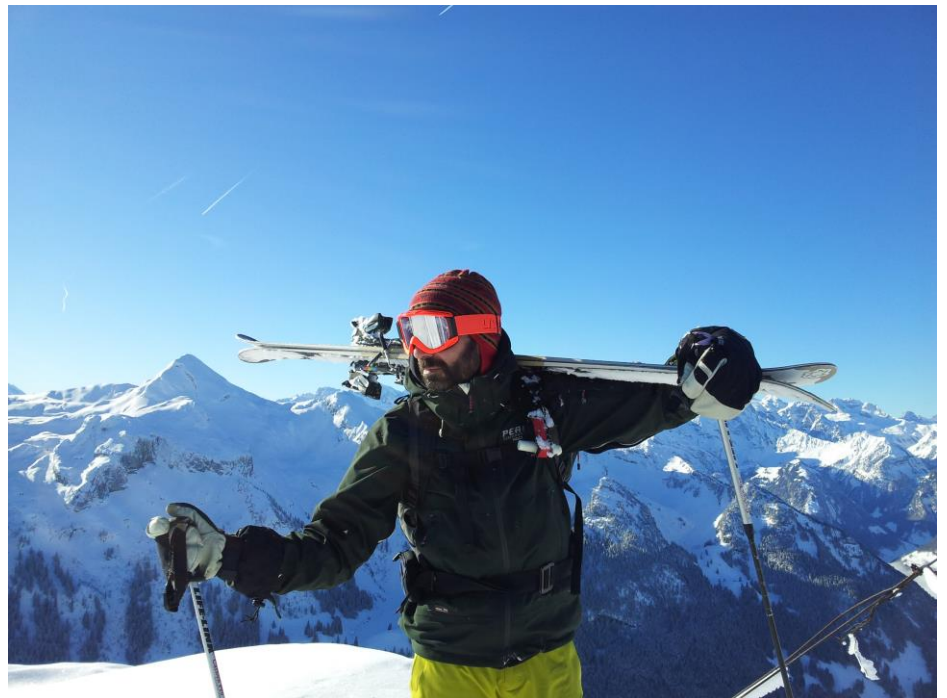
Having grown up in Switzerland, my passion for the mountains and the nature has always been strong. As I grew older, this passion prompted me into practicing extreme forms of winter sports in the Swiss Alps such as backcountry skiing, heli-skiing and ski-touring. Apart from the pure joy of sports these activities have thought me to feel a deep respect both for the harmony and beauty of the nature and its might and power. The unpredictability of the weather conditions and the hidden dangers of the mountains have helped me develop a capacity for hazard recognition, minimizing risk, instant and fast decision taking etc. It goes without saying that such faculties have undeniable positive consequences in my professional and private life.

What is your favorite skiing place in Switzerland?

Engelberg, Andermatt and generally the beautiful Engadin region are my favored spots.

Is there any advice for beginners?

Good skiing and a good physical condition are prerequisites. Furthermore adequate equipment, a professional guide and unconditional respect for the environment and the nature are required ... Backcountry skiing in deep snow is totally different than on regular slopes. It's not only much more demanding but also offers extreme peace and closeness to the nature. Once you have witnessed the beauty of deep snow backcountry you will hardly ever go back to prepared and crowded slopes.





Memories from a Swiss Education

Name:
Buğra Modoğlu

Company:
Modteks, Mod Consulting

School:
TASIS - The American School in Switzerland (1997-2002)

Place:
Lugano

How come you went to Switzerland? Whose influence was behind this idea?

I had already done two summer school programmes in Switzerland before enrolling full time. It was my family who really wanted me to study in Switzerland.

Do you have any special memories?

Studying both middle and high School in Switzerland, I have way too many special memories. The one amongst them I never forget happened during my tenth grade. The horror movie "Scream" was just out, I asked one of my roommates who was from Taiwan to purchase few of those complete horror uniforms of the creatures from the movie from the far east. He came back from Christmas break with the complete uniform sets which all had the glowing scary faces. We dressed up after the lights went out and scared our other roommates in the dark. It was very funny and entertaining, although we had to sleep with the lights on for a week because one of our roommates was too scared.

Please give us a brief insight on your personal experiences during that time.

I definitely had the time of my life when studying in Switzerland. It was the toughest but the best five years of my education life. I had many ups and downs, many struggles and challenges, which grew me into a much stronger and independent person than I would have probably become.

Describe briefly the Swiss school life in comparison to the Turkish one.

The school life back in Switzerland is quiet more disciplined and definitely require much more dedication comparing to other countries. Part of this is due to the local rules and system as well as the school being a boarding school. But all

in all, Turkish private schools have a competitive well-structured system nowadays. At a boarding school agenda, when you have time to have fun and enjoy yourself, you usually end up enjoying too much due to the routine programme and strictness you always have to follow.

What is so special about studying in Switzerland?

There are many special aspects of studying in Switzerland including, safety, landscape beauty and opportunities, a very good solid education system, as well as getting to know a lot of the international crowd. It is much more than the best chocolate and cheese.

What do you appreciate most having studied in Switzerland?

Without a doubt the most appreciation I have for studying in Switzerland is my good friends from all around the world. We have been through so much together and even though most of us are living in different parts of the world, we always have the best contacts no matter where we go, and I am pretty sure we will keep it that way all our lives.

What would you recommend Turkish parents who want to send their children to a Swiss boarding school?

I would recommend them to go through all the different schools around Switzerland and find the one most suitable for their children. This has to do with the previous education system their children are receiving before enrolling to a school in Switzerland, as well as the language and the region they are interested in. All of the schools in Switzerland are very good but it is very important to find the right one for each individual. I was very happy with my choice.

News from Members

İstanbul Technical University (İTÜ) rising on its 241-year-old tradition of being at the forefront of technical progress in Turkey, and İTÜ's Science Park "İTÜ ARI Teknokent" is situated at the heart of business life of İstanbul, brings in various opportunities for its tenant R&D companies.

Mr. Kenan Çolpan, General Manager of İTÜ ARI Teknokent Management and Planning Office, states that "Over the last decade Turkey has become a lively hub for technology companies and İTÜ ARI TEKNOKENT has been in the center of this technology movement. Established in 2003, today ARI provides for 159 companies and 4800 staff with opportunities such as synergy of the region, geopolitical advantages and a cost-benefit environment."



R&D companies applying to work within İTÜ ARI Teknokent are expected to show distinctive technical expertise, capability, potential to contribute to Turkey's competitive advantage in global markets and show a sustainable performance in their R&D operations.

✓ **Focal Point of Research, Development and Innovation Activities in Turkey**

Since its establishment, İTÜ ARI Teknokent has been supporting technology based innovation and entrepreneurship for the formation and development of high-tech R&D companies in order to enhance Turkey's R&D potential. İTÜ ARI Teknokent, being one of the focal point on R&D and innovation activities in Turkey and İstanbul, aims to strengthen national technology infrastructure; support, improve and orient the synergy, arising from a combination of R&D companies and İTÜ's academic knowledge, to the proper channels including İTÜ's national and international networks.

✓ **Support for Technology-Based Innovation and Entrepreneurship**

İTÜ ARI Teknokent also acts a great pillar for R&D companies and technology-based innovation and entrepreneurship. İTÜ ARI Teknokent aims to ensure Turkey's national development, to increase the number of research companies by fostering the development of new technology companies including micro and small as well as medium and large-scale. ARI Teknokent presents numerous opportunities to entrepreneurs such as İTÜ's vast technologic infra and superstructure, pre-incubation/incubation/accelerator services, tax exemptions, consultancy services, continuous education and social facilities.

İTÜ Çekirdek Project is the most prominent example showing ARI's noticeable support for entrepreneurs. According to Mr. Çolpan, İTÜ Çekirdek is a social responsibility project that is carried out by İTÜ ARI Teknokent to contribute to "national technologic development" vision, and is embraced by many valuable supporters who are walking in the same path with İTÜ and ARI Teknokent. Therefore İTÜ Çekirdek Project owes its sustainability to its supporters including Mr. Doğan Taşkent.

News from Members

(continues)

✓ **Advantageous Development and Synergy Environment for Various Sectors**

İTÜ ARI Teknokent, as being the major science park in Turkey; provides technology and sectoral based clustering, synergy enriched, advantageous and innovative environment. İTÜ ARI Teknokent is hosting firms from various sectors; IT, ICT, Electrics and Electronics, Energy, Mechanics and Automotive, Genetics and Biology and Material and Nanotechnology are one of the main fields of İTU ARI Teknokent's entrepreneurial firms.

İTÜ's vast research facilities, combined with the synergy of ARI Teknokent region and tax exemptions provides competitive superiority for both national and international entrepreneurial companies.

✓ **Collaboration and Investment Opportunities**

İTÜ ARI Teknokent invites all companies searching for efficient investments and collaboration opportunities in a favorable environment. İTÜ ARI Teknokent and its tenant companies have the priority of being an the "go-to" address for many local and foreign governments/guests, international networks, delegations, high-level public and private sector managers, institutions and organizations seeking information looking for cooperation and so on.

To find more about İTÜ ARI Teknokent, visit: www.ariteknokent.com.tr, www.facebook.com/ariteknokent, www.twitter.com/ARI_Teknokent



News from Members



Dr. jur. Mehmet Köksal

FRAGEN UND ANTWORTEN

**ZUM TÜRKISCHEN ARBEITS-
UND ARBEITSSICHERHEITSRECHT**

Praktischer Ratgeber für Geschäftsführer
zum Umgang mit dem Gesetzestext

SCCT Member Dr.jur Mehmet Köksal published his book "Questions and Answers concerning The Turkish Labour Law and Labour Safety Law"

The book covers some of the most important aspects for expansion oriented and or interested companies from Germany. It answers important questions concerning foundation of an enterprise and focuses namely on the rights and obligations of labour legislation. It serves as a guideline for the operational practice, because it not only includes the base elements of the labour law, but also explains the new developments in the legislation and bases them on practical examples. This helps the reader by giving a rapid orientation. The book contains samples of labour contracts and offers administrative assistance on problems in companies concerning labour law. The book is a current information source for legal advice. Companies with aims to grow or who are already in Turkey can find a problem orientated tool for guidance.

About the author

Dr. jur. Mehmet Köksal has graduated from Ankara University Law Faculty in 1986. After his graduation Dr. Mehmet Köksal has worked at the university as a research assistant until he was awarded with a scholarship for a PhD degree in Germany. In 1995, Dr. jur. Mehmet Köksal completed his academic studies at Konstanz University Law Faculty. In 1996, Dr. jur. Mehmet Köksal founded Köksal Attorney Partnership in Istanbul.

Dr. jur. Mehmet Köksal is the Representative in Turkey for the German Economic Council of the Christian Party (CDU) e.V., Working Group "German-Turkish Economic Relations".

News from Members



ÖZDİREKCAN BİLGİÇ DÜNDAR

INDEPENDENT AUDIT OF COMPANIES

With the entry into force of the new Turkish Commercial Code No. 6102 on 1 July 2012, one of the major impacts on Turkish corporate life relates to the auditing of certain types of commercial companies, which shall now be carried out by independent auditors (Articles 397 *et seq.* of the Turkish Commercial Code).

Article 397/4 provides that companies affected by such an independent audit requirement shall be determined by the Council of Ministers. In this respect, in early 2013 the Council of Ministers set forth the criteria applicable to determine which companies shall be subject to such a mandatory independent audit.

In a decision published in the Turkish Official Gazette on 13 March 2014, the Council of Ministers amended the thresholds of the above-mentioned criteria with retroactive effect as from 1 January 2014. Accordingly, companies which fulfill at least two of the following criteria during two consecutive financial years shall be subject to mandatory independent audit:

- companies whose assets value amounts to TRY 75,000,000 (previously TRY 150,000,000);
- companies whose net sales proceeds reach TRY 150,000,000 (previously TRY 200,000,000); and
- companies which employ at least 250 employees (previously 500 employees).

To determine whether the above thresholds have been reached, the financial statements of the relevant companies as well as their average number of employees within the past two years shall be taken into account.

As regards companies which hold subsidiaries and affiliates, the above-mentioned thresholds shall be assessed in light of the sum of (i) all relevant financial figures (i.e. assets value and net sales) of such group companies and of (ii) the average number of all their employees.

It should be noted that other specific companies (e.g. listed companies, newspaper companies, companies regulated by the Information and Communication Technologies Authority or by the Energy Market Regulatory Authority, etc.) shall also be subject to a mandatory independent audit upon fulfillment of slightly lower thresholds relating to the same criteria.

In addition to the above, and regardless of any of the aforementioned criteria, the following companies shall in any case be subject to a compulsory independent audit: (i) companies subject to the supervision and control of the Capital Markets Board or of the Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency, (ii) insurance, reinsurance and pension companies, (iii) companies allowed to perform their activities within Borsa Istanbul (the recently unified Turkish stock exchange); (iv) licensed and general warehouses subject to the Agricultural Products Licensed Warehousing Law and General Warehousing Law and (v) press companies holding television channels.

As regards companies that do not fulfill the criteria for mandatory independent audit, the Turkish Commercial Code provides for the principle of an alternative audit obligation.


The terms of such an audit are expected to be determined in a secondary legislation, still to be issued. Accordingly, the exact scope of such an audit, the qualifications, duties and authorities of the relevant auditors, the procedure to be applied for their appointment and dismissal, the contents of the audit reports as well as the procedure for submission of the audit reports to the general assembly still remain unclear at this stage.

In compliance with Turkish bar regulations, opinions relating to Turkish law matters included in this client alert have been issued by Özdirekcan Bilgiç Dündar Avukatlık Ortaklığı, a Turkish law firm acting as correspondent firm of Gide Loyrette Nouel in Turkey.

CONTACTS: MATTHIEU ROY roy@gide.com

ARPAT ŞENOCAK senocak@obdavukatlik.com

Culture & Art

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra


Consulate General of Switzerland in Istanbul

 Elgiz
Çağdaş Sanat Müzesi
Elgiz
Museum of Contemporary Art

Classical music piano concert by a young Swiss artist

In cooperation with Elgiz Museum of Contemporary Art, the Consulate General of Switzerland invited the young Swiss pianist Raphaël Sudan to hold a concert on Saturday 26th of April in the premises of Elgiz Museum. The mixture of excellent classical music from Mozart, Chopin and Liszt in a contemporary surrounding delighted the 70 invited guests who attended the event.



 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Consulate General of Switzerland in Istanbul

7th – 10th May, International Symposium on violence and civility in today's world

This philosophical conference is due to a Swiss-French initiative and will take place in the French Cultural Institute and the University of Galatasaray. Amongst the numerous international speakers there will also be experts from Switzerland. The working languages are in French and Turkish with simultaneous translation, whereas the Consulate General of Switzerland is sponsoring this event and will be making the opening address of conference.

Culture & Art

12th-14th May, 12th International German Studies Conference at Kocaeli University

The Consulate General of Switzerland, together with Swiss International Airlines, is supporting the 12th International German Studies Conference at Kocaeli University between 12th and 14th of May and has invited a renowned lecturer from the University of Berne, Prof. Dr. Ernest W.B. Hess-Lüttich to participate. On the 12th of May the Professor will hold a conference on "Migration as a media theme in multicultural Switzerland".

Avusturya Büyükelçiliği Ankara

DAAD
Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst
German-Academic Exchange Service

avusturya kültür ofisi

SWISS

XII. Türkischer Internationaler Germanistik Kongress

XII. Uluslararası Türk Germanistik Kongresi

12 - 13 - 14
Mai / Mayıs
2014

Universität Kocaeli
Fakultät für Natur- und Literaturwissenschaften
Institut für westliche Sprachen und Literaturen
In Zusammenarbeit mit
dem türkischen Germanistenverband (GERDER)
MIGRATION UND KULTURELLE DIVERSITÄT

Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi B Blok Umuttepe Yerleşkesi

www.kocaeli.edu.tr

Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi
Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları Bölümü



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Consulate General of Switzerland in Istanbul



20th May, official launch of Swiss Festival

One of the leading organization companies in Turkey, Dream Design Factory, is planning to organize for the very first time a "Swiss Festival" at the end of September 2014 in Istanbul. The Consulate General of Switzerland as well as the Swiss Chamber of Commerce in Turkey are endorsing this initiative, the aim of which is to raise Switzerland's profile in Turkey and to provide a platform for Swiss businesses, enabling them to promote their products and services. The Festival will be supported and hosted by Quasar Istanbul and plans to become a traditional annual event. The official launch of the Swiss Festival will take place on 20th May in the home of the Deputy Consul General.

New Board of Directors

Principal Board Members 2014-2016

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President



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Güldem Berkman
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ÖZDİREKCAN BİLİÇİ DÜNDAR

Substitute Board Members 2014-2016

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UNION BANCAIRE PRIVÉE

Fatoş Kutay
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ITÜ ARI Teknokent



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Demirer Holding



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IWC Schaffhausen



Sandra Haerberli
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New Board of Directors

Auditors and Substitute Auditors 2014-2016

Auditors

Nedim Karako
Karako Law Office



Yılmaz Yıldız
Zürich Sigorta



Stefan Milovic
TEKA Teknik



Substitute Auditors

Mehmet Köksal
Köksal Attorney Partnership



Hakan Sebükcebe
SGS



Güniz Atıs Azrak
İstanbul Lütfi Kırdar - ICEC





Annual General Meeting 2014

Date: 26th March, 2014

Location: Mövenpick Hotel Istanbul, 4. Levent



Please click here to read the full report of the Annual General Meeting 2014

→ [AGM 2014 Report](#)



Swiss Innovation Series: Biotechnology

Date: 3rd April, 2014

Location: Bahçeşehir University, Beşiktaş



Seedstars World, the Swiss Chamber of Commerce in Turkey, the Consulate General of Switzerland and Aktifbank jointly organized a reception which took place at the Bahcesehir University right after the winner of the Istanbul competition had been announced. This was a good opportunity for attendees to meet with the different ventures that pitched during the competition, as well as the winner and other key players of the Istanbul entrepreneurial ecosystem.

About Seedstars

Seedstars World is a Swiss initiative that travels to emerging markets and fast-growing entrepreneurial ecosystems to organize competitions and find the best Technology startups. In 2013 Seedstars World traveled to 20 cities around the world and brought 20 entrepreneurs from around the world to meet European investors in Geneva. In 2014, the competition will make startups compete in 30 cities around the world. Istanbul is the kick-off event of the 2014 tour around the world.



Swiss Boarding School Fair

Date : 5th April, 2014

Location: KG&CC, Kemerburgaz



The Swiss Chamber of Commerce in Turkey supported a Swiss Boarding School Fair, organized by Clarte Consulting at Kemerburgaz Golf & Country Club. Deputy Consul General Mr. John Ruhoff attended the event together with his wife. Parents and potential students visited the fair in order to get detailed information about the schools.

The following Swiss Boarding Schools were present at the fair:

- + **Le Rosey**
- + **Brillantmont International School**
- + **Institut auf dem Rosenberg**
- + **Lyceum Alpinum Zuoz**



Swiss Innovation Series: Biotechnology

Date: 14th April, 2014

Location: Morođlu Arseven, Beyođlu



As part of the **“Swiss Innovation Series”**, the Swiss Chamber of Commerce in Turkey jointly organized with MIT EF Turkey a seminar regarding Biotechnology on 14 April 2014. The meeting was hosted by Morođlu Arseven. The Series aimed to support the climate of innovation and success between the two countries, as well as analyze structures and key elements which contribute to this success. More than 25 participants from the biotechnology sector attended and took actively part in a fruitful round table.

Two experts in the biotechnology sector gave presentations during the seminar:

- ❖ Dr. Christopher Hentschel, Partner at Ulysses Advisory Group, U.K., and former Chief Scientific Officer at Bio Istanbul - *“Policy Successes and Failures in the Biosciences 1972-2014”*
- ❖ Prof. Dr. Murat Özgören, Vice Rector at Dokuz Eylül University, İzmir – *“2014 – What to do next, how to create critical mass?”*



Breakfast Business Seminar: Protection of Intellectual and Industrial Property Rights in Turkey

Date: 17th April, 2014

Location: Gide Loyrette Nouel, Levent

The Swiss Chamber of Commerce in Turkey has organized a Breakfast Seminar with the cooperation of its member Gide Loyrette Nouel. The aim of this seminar was to present to attending members the characteristic features of Intellectual Property (IP) Rights and the overall protection of IP Rights under Turkish legislation relating to copyrights, trademarks, designs, patents and utility models.

The seminar was introduced by the Deputy Consul General of Switzerland in Istanbul Mr. John Ruhoff and Board member Mr. Arpat Şenocak. Detailed presentation of this topic was then delivered by Att. Esra Dündar Loiseau, partner at Özdirekcan Bilgiç Dündar Avukatlık Ortaklığı (corresponding law firm of Gide Loyrette Nouel in Turkey) and Att. Aysun Yiğit Chevillard, associate with the same firm.

SCCT members very much enjoyed this informative presentation, which will be followed in the coming weeks by another presentation organized in cooperation with Gide Loyrette Nouel.





SCCT & UNICEF Turkey "Children's Day"

Date: 27th April, 2014

Location: Mövenpick Hotel Istanbul, 4. Levent

The Swiss Chamber of Commerce in Turkey jointly organized with **UNICEF Turkey** a "Children's Festival" on 27 April 2014, Sunday, at the **Mövenpick Hotel Istanbul** where children from 6 to 12 will had the chance to participate in exciting workshops such as chocolate making course, robot designing or t-shirt painting and also enjoyed a delicious lunch. Best of all, the proceeds obtained from the event have been donated to UNICEF Turkey for Pre-School Education Project.

Sedef Avci, Pascal Nouma, Deniz Berdan and Wilma Elles participated in the event as special guests.



News from Switzerland

Study abroad still possible for Swiss students

Swiss students will be able to continue studying abroad despite the European Union excluding Switzerland from the Erasmus+ exchange programme. Swiss voters in February approved controversial immigration curbs stalling bilateral relations with Brussels

The cabinet on Wednesday approved replacement funding, reinstating a system that existed before 2011. It provides direct funding to students and projects rather than via the EU.

Funds will be equivalent to those earmarked for Erasmus+, CHF22.7 million (\$25.8 million) for this year.

This should also partially cover the costs associated with foreign students coming to Switzerland, which had been funded by Brussels until now. However, there will be less money available.

The transition solution approved by the cabinet is squarely aimed at student mobility, with 90% of the funds going to exchanges. The remaining 10% is attributed to “excellent” projects according to a statement by the education ministry.

Earlier Erasmus projects had been criticized for not being submitted to what specialists called “minimum criteria.” What shall exactly be funded in the future remains to be seen.

A spokeswoman for the Swiss Students Association welcomed the cabinet move as generous from a financial viewpoint. Speaking to RSI public radio, she criticized that it has taken the government a long time to find a solution and that it cuts the funding for research programmes.

The aim of the funding project is to ensure that if Switzerland is accepted back on board Erasmus+, it should happen as smoothly and with as little fuss as possible.

Last month, Education Minister Johann Schneider-Ammann said the goal was to keep the doors open before Switzerland can eventually rejoin the EU in Erasmus+ and the Horizon 2020 research programme from which the Swiss had also been suspended.

According to Schneider-Ammann at the time, Brussels had signaled it was prepared to review its decision to block cooperation with Switzerland once the government presents plans to break an impasse over access to the Swiss labour market to citizens from Croatia.

Source: swissinfo.ch

Latest Members

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