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## Turkey

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### Turkey Will Establish a Halal Accreditation Authority

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**Report Highlights:**

The Turkish Ministry of Economy prepared a draft law for the establishment of the Halal Accreditation Authority which will provide halal accreditation services to halal conformity assessment institutions.

The "Halal Accreditation Authority" will be established independently from the Turkish Accreditation Authority.

## **General Information:**

### **Turkey Will Establish a Halal Accreditation Authority**

As a term, “Halal Food” has been gaining importance among food and foreign trade sectors in Turkey over last ten years. While ‘Halal’ is an Arabic word that means lawful or permitted, “Halal Food” has been prepared according to Islamic dietary law, as defined in the Koran and is free from pork products, alcohol, and other certain ingredients. For more information about “halal food”, please refer to [The General Guidelines for Use of The Term “Halal”](#) prepared by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Certification and standards for Halal food are a prominent part of trade with Muslim countries. Halal certification is a document given by a trustworthy, competent, and impartial institution to a food manufacturer to confirm production compliance with halal standards, in accordance with an approved method.

From an economic aspect, the growth in exports to Muslim countries and the increase in tourists coming to Turkey from those countries are the driving forces for improving Halal regulations in Turkey. For instance, Turkish wheat product exporters need certification for exports to some countries which demand “halal label” on products imported from Turkey, even though Turkey does not require such certification for the domestic market. Therefore, the Turkish Standards Institution (TSE), the sole authorized body for standardization in Turkey, started Halal Food Certification in 2011 as a result of activities for development of Halal Standards, initiated with the foundation of the Standards and Metrology Institute for the Islamic Countries (SMIIC). TSE is one of the founders of the SMIIC.

The following certificates are provided within the scope of Halal Certification:

- Halal Food Certification
- Halal Service Certification

The following link in the Turkish language details procedures and principles of halal certification:

<https://www.tse.org.tr/tr/icerikdetay/2361/6899/helal-belgelendirme-usul-ve-esaslari.aspx>

Another governmental organization currently dealing with Halal issues is the Turk Accreditation Authority (TAK), which provides halal accreditation services to halal conformity assessment institutions in Turkey. However, the Government of Turkey plans to establish a new independent body as an accreditation authority.

The Turkish Ministry of Economy prepared a draft law for the establishment of the Halal Accreditation Authority, which will certify halal products, and asked the relevant sectors for their views and opinions in May 2017.

The Halal Accreditation Authority (HAK) will be established in order to certify halal products. The aim is to meet the demand of halal products for Muslims populations around the world and also to provide "halal certificate" for these products. In addition, HAK ensures that Turkey is represented as the

operating body in this field. Currently, TSE represents Turkey in international institutions, such the Standards and Metrology Institute of Islamic Countries (SMIIC).

According to the Ministry of Economy, establishment of the Halal Accreditation Agency is necessary to meet the demand for halal product and documentation for the growing population of Muslims worldwide, which currently is estimated at 1.8 billion people. The Halal concept is primarily associated with food products, but it also addresses a wide range of sectors such as textiles, cosmetics, logistics, and services. According to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) data, the potential global trade volume of the sectors subject to halal certification is currently about US\$ 2.3 trillion.

The Ministry of Economy states that there is no common language among the Muslim countries in the field of halal certification. Differing halal standards and documentation systems result in obstacles to trade. As an effort to address these problems, Turkey advocated for the establishment of the Standards and Metrology Institute of Islamic Countries (SMIIC), which has 36 members, and is based in Istanbul under the umbrella of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. SMIIC works on developing a reliable certification system based on worldwide common halal product standards and interstate accreditation should be carried out within the Institute. On the other hand, the accreditation system is not yet functional, although some progress has been made in the establishment of a common halal accreditation and certification system within the Institute.

It is envisaged that the Halal Accreditation Authority will be affiliated with the Ministry of Economy, subject to the provisions of private law, and have nonprofit legal structure and administrative and financial autonomy.

According to the Ministry, Turkish Accreditation Authority (TÜRKAK) cannot carry out the halal accreditation transactions in Turkey because of concerns that it may have difficulties with the European Accreditation Alliance (EA). TÜRKAK declares that halal accreditation is not within the field of its duties because it is not based on the European Union's common standards. Furthermore TÜRKAK has concerns about that the European Accreditation Union might evaluate the requirement "being a Muslim halal Certification Institute", which is mentioned in the SMIIC standards, as discrimination.

Therefore, Turkey aims to establish a separate halal accreditation institution apart from TÜRKAK in order to operate in halal accreditation in Turkey and to represent Turkey in the field of halal accreditation not only in SMIIC but also other international platforms and to undertake the pioneering work.

### **Duties and Authorities of the Institution**

According to the Draft Law on the Establishment and Duties of the Halal Accrediting Authority prepared by the Ministry of Economy, the duties and authorities of the Halal Accreditation Agency are as follows:

- 1- Providing halal accreditation services to halal conformity assessment institutions established in our country and abroad, determining the criteria and measures related to halal accreditation and implementing them.
- 2- Within the scope of functions, representing Turkey in international and regional accreditation unions and organizations, becoming a member of them, participating in management or serving as the center of these organizations, signing bilateral or multilateral mutual recognition

agreements, getting in contact and cooperating with institutions and organizations related to halal accreditation in countries which do not have accreditation bodies and accreditation bodies.

- 3- To protect the confidentiality of information obtained in relation to the application, evaluation and accreditation of organizations that applies for halal accreditation.
- 4- Performing all kinds of scientific and technical studies on halal accreditation. Carrying out activities that increase the importance of halal accreditation; in this context, serving education, providing research and publications or organizing national and international congresses, seminars and similar meetings.
- 5- In order to run the institution operations; service purchasing; acquiring, selling, renting and having built the movable or immovable properties.

According to the draft law, the decision body of the halal accreditation institution will be a board of directors consisting of 11 members. The board will have both federal and private sector representatives. According to the draft, each of the government and private sector partners “Ministry of Science Industry and Technology, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock, Ministry of Development, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Health, Presidency of Religious Affairs (DIYANET), Council of Higher Education (YOK), Turkish Exporters' Assembly (TIM), Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), Association of Turkish Travel Agencies (TURSAB)” will offer a representative to the board and the members of the board will be appointed by the (Economy) Minister. The mandate will be 3 years.