

## New Turkish E-commerce Trust Badge in Use

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Originally published in the Inside Turkey blog of Norton Rose Fulbright

February 18, 2020

*The Communiqué on the E-Commerce Trust Badge, which has been in force since June 2017, now bears fruit: The first batch of online businesses start placing the trust badge on their websites in January 2020.*

A trust badge, or trust seal, is a sign placed on websites guaranteeing to customers that the website is legitimate and that all their personal data is collected securely. In a world of increasing cyber risk, online trust badges serve to provide comfort to customers that their personal data and credit card information will be protected a certain level of industry standard.

Turkey has great potential to increase the volume of transactions in the online sphere. At an [event](#) launching the new trust badges, the Turkish Minister of Commerce Ruhsar Pekcan underlined that as of 2019 only 34% of the Turkish population had ever purchased goods or services online, while the corresponding figure in EU countries is 70%. Similarly, online sales make up only 5.3% of the entire retail volume in Turkey whereas it is over 9% in the EU. The Minister added that there is a lot of room for growth and that Turkish consumers shy away from online shopping due to fears about online fraud. The new e-commerce trust badge, pictured below, aims to bridge this gap and increase the Turkish consumers' trust in online transactions.



The Turkish Minister also highlighted the importance of regular inspections of the websites that hold the trust badge. Each applicant website is required to comply with the relevant legislation on consumer protection, personal data and payment systems. Furthermore, once qualified, websites will be inspected for security deficiencies through leak tests to be conducted at regular intervals. Another novelty is that qualified businesses are required to have an online complaint system, which will log consumer claims, keep consumers updated about the status of their claim and quickly resolve claims. Article 10 of the Communiqué stipulates that the Ministry of Commerce will have access to monitor these online complaint records.

The Ministry of Commerce is collaborating with The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) in the implementation of the trust badge. TOBB has been appointed by the Ministry of Commerce as the sole e-commerce trust badge provider. As such, TOBB is the sole authorized entity to review the e-commerce trust badge applications and is responsible for monitoring compliance with the statutory requirements. Articles 7 and 8 of the Communiqué outline measures to be taken should a trust badge holder fail to comply with the requirements of the Communiqué or other relevant e-commerce and data privacy legislation. In such circumstances, the trust badge may be suspended or withdrawn depending on the nature of the non-compliance and a list of suspended/cancelled trust badges will be published on TOBB's website.

As of the date of this article, there are currently 12 online businesses that have qualified to place the Turkish e-commerce trust badge on their website.<sup>1</sup>

For more information on the Turkish e-commerce trust badges and a list of qualified businesses, please visit: <https://www.guvendamgasi.org.tr/index.php>

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<sup>1</sup> As of November 19, 2020, this number has increased to 20 online businesses.