

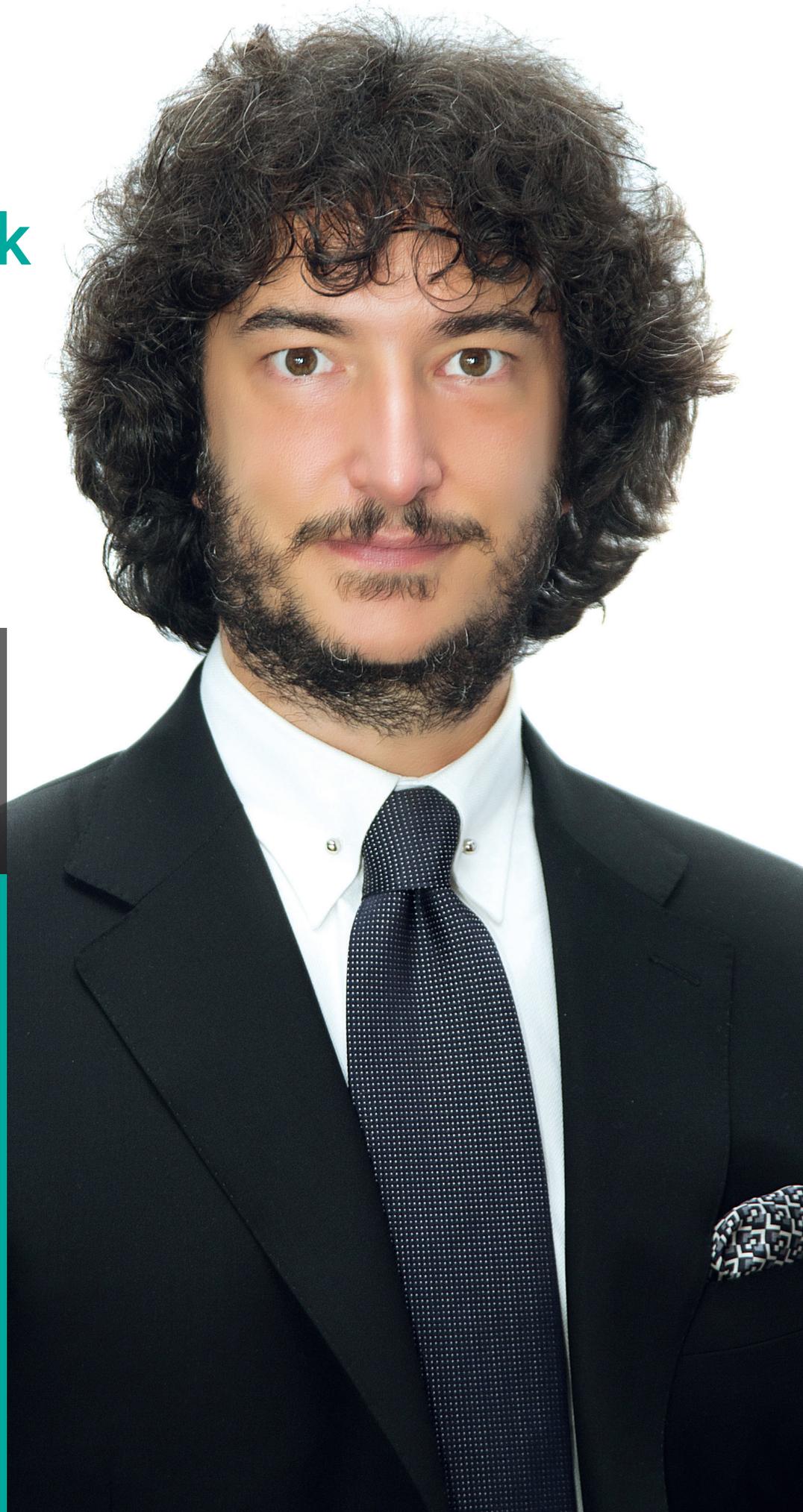
Gönenç Gürkaynak

*ELIG Gürkaynak
Attorneys-at-Law*
Istanbul
www.elig.com

gonenc.gurkaynak@elig.com
Tel: +90 212 327 17 24

Biography

Gönenç Gürkaynak is a founding partner of ELIG Gürkaynak Attorneys-at-Law, a leading law firm of 90 lawyers based in Istanbul. Gönenç heads the competition law and regulatory department of ELIG Gürkaynak, which currently consists of 45 lawyers. He has unparalleled experience in Turkish competition law counselling issues with more than 20 years of competition law experience, starting with the establishment of the Turkish Competition Authority. Gönenç frequently speaks at conferences and symposia on competition law matters and has published more than 150 articles in English and Turkish by various international and local publishers.



What drew you to competition law as a specialty?

During my years at Harvard University, I was a research assistant to Professor Louis Kaplow. While I was in Brussels, I also reported to Ian Forrester QC, now the UK's designated judge at the EU's General Court of Justice. Both were extremely influential in my decision to focus on competition law, along with many other mentors I have had throughout my career. It is a fascinating field of law.

What expertise do you need to succeed as a competition lawyer?

Competition law requires a solid legal background, analytical thinking and an in-depth understanding of economics. It particularly requires complex knowledge of precedents, doctrine, trends and markets and always questioning the legal policy implications.

What has been your proudest achievement to date?

I am proud to be a founding partner of ELIG Gürkaynak Attorneys-at-Law. The firm has grown from strength to strength and we have a very talented team of 90 lawyers now. I share my passion for all areas of law with them. We also have the pleasure of working with many highly respected multinational companies and law firms from around the globe. In terms of the local community, we place great importance on our support of non-governmental and environmental projects within Turkey as part of an ongoing commitment.

How does your significant academic work interact with your role as the head of competition law at ELIG Gürkaynak Attorneys-at-Law?

Competition law, like all regulatory fields, relies primarily on knowledge. My academic work has been devoted to processing, finding and creating knowledge. To that end, academic effort does feed professional development, and professional experience does render academic work more relevant and interesting.

What is the greatest challenge facing competition practitioners at the moment?

Compliance programmes are fast becoming the heart of what a competition lawyer does

and I anticipate that preventive measures will also gain more value. Reactive competition lawyers will have to adapt to a proactive action expectation of clients.

How does ELIG Gürkaynak Attorneys-at-Law distinguish itself from the competition?

ELIG Gürkaynak Attorneys-at-Law was established in 2005 and we have the largest competition law team in Turkey with 45 dedicated competition law specialists, led by four partners and three counsel.

We keep investing in our talent and continue to promote from within. In addition, and as a first-time initiative in Turkey, we recruited a competition economics counsel in 2016, and he is providing economic analysis support to our legal analyses.

To mark the 20th anniversary of competition law practice in Turkey, we wrote an academic publication aiming to contribute to the global discussion and study of competition law issues. This was a collaborative effort of our team of lawyers, including junior associates and novices in the field. The book was published in March 2018.

ELIG Gürkaynak also has highly respected and internationally ranked media and entertainment, IT and telecoms, anti-corruption and compliance, intellectual property, dispute resolution, commercial, corporate and M&A, and employment teams.

What advice would you share with other lawyers who hope one day to be in your position?

Focus on client interests with passion and integrity. Seek knowledge and experience.

How do you think the competition practice area will evolve going forward?

The Turkish Competition Board has shifted its focus from standard merger control cases to the fight against cartels and to challenging certain types of unilateral conduct. The Authority is likely to maintain its well-earned reputation of being one of the most active competition enforcement agencies in its region. Meanwhile, globally, it seems obvious that the growing isolation trends in the global economy will also test competition law enforcement harmonisation efforts.