

# Strong Demand for Turkish Logistics Managers

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Adi Consult's Wolfgang Wanja welcomes the arrival of a new generation of Turkish cargo and logistics managers

**Whether in Baku, Doha, Tashkent or Dushanbe – logistics executives educated and trained in Turkey are increasingly in demand in the CIS countries and the Middle East predominantly by internationally operating forwarding agents. This, because Turkish top managers are meanwhile on an international level.**

Wolfgang Wanja is quite impressed: “The times when Turkish air freight and logistics managers were hardly speaking any English and lacking international experience are over,” states the expert. Wolfgang has been based in Istanbul for some time now where he heads the local representation of sourcing specialist Adi Consult. “We increasingly place younger managers in states like Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, or Azerbaijan because there is an increasing demand by logistics firms for capable executives keen to work there.”

This also indicates a new and growing trend, Wanja points out. While in the past it was mainly Europeans or sometimes Australians that were willing to become country manager at one of the CIS countries for some years, the wind has changed lately with more and more Turkish nationals taking on those tasks.

## **Burgeoning Turkish economy**

Logistics has become a key industry in Turkey, offering lots of jobs and great career prospects for those willing to go the extra mile in education and vocational training. Despite the growing political and social gap between liberals and conservatives, the latter represented by the ruling political party, Turkey's national economy remains largely unimpressed by the disputes and clashes and keeps on outgrowing most of the EU economies. This goes for international companies as well that keep pouring money into Turkey's economy. “Meanwhile, 37,000 foreign enterprises have invested in Turkish firms, acquiring equity stakes, of which 5,500 are German companies,” Wanja states.

Among the Adi Consult manager's clients are a number of world class firms like Austrian crystal, jewelry and home décor producer Swarovski or the Japanese freight agent Nippon Express, to name only two. “In addition to staffing we also assist them in building up their business in Turkey.” This includes consultancy, accounting services, and all sorts of organizational matters to provide the required official documents and permits for the clients to commence doing biz.

## **Ongoing qualification gap**

Speaking about the qualification of Turkish cargo and logistics managers Wolfgang admits the existence of clear differences. Supervisors of divisional heads working for international companies are generally highly qualified.

However, the picture is different when it comes to medium-sized Turkish forwarders, handling agents or general sales agents. “Usually, there is still a clear quality gap compared to the big boys engaged in air or ocean freight and the logistics sector in general,” he admits.

Not only from the CIS states, but also within the domestic Turkish market the demand for well qualified cargo managers grows constantly, he notes. “Although it's predominantly Istanbul with its high business concentration where the logistics and air freight music is playing. So when speaking of sourcing in Turkey we should rather say that our activities focus mainly on the greater Istanbul region, with their almost 16 million inhabitants.”

Because of the growing demand, wages in logistics have leaped lately. “There are applicants coming from an educational institution having some diploma in their pocket that demand extremely high starting salaries and promotion opportunities,” Wanja wonders. “Then it's our job at Adi Consult to convince those candidates to commence working first to gain experience and practical knowledge before demanding excessive wages.”

Heiner Siegmund