HALUK BAYRAKTAR

Haluk Bayraktar is the CEO of Baykar, Turkey's premier autonomous technology company. Haluk began his tenure at Baykar in 2004 as an engineering manager when Baykar's autonomous technology efforts were still nascent. He has since been involved in every aspect of the business: from engineering to project management to logistics support and business development.

In addition to his leadership at Baykar, Haluk Bayraktar has expanded his role into the European aerospace sector. He serves as the Chairman of Piaggio Aerospace, where he is committed to revitalizing one of Italy's most historic, 140-year-old aviation brands, preserving its legacy while steering it into a new era of excellence in business aviation and advanced engineering. Furthermore, he is one of the founders of LBA Systems, a strategic 50/50 joint venture between Baykar and Leonardo. In this capacity, he leads the integration of Baykar's world-leading unmanned platforms with Leonardo's advanced mission systems and European certification expertise, overseeing the development and production of next-generation systems in Italy for European and international markets.

Haluk is also one of the founders, a Trustee and Former Chairman of the Board of the Turkey Technology Team (T3) Foundation, an initiative intended to foster technology education among Turkish youth through entrepreneurship, competitions, and supplementary technology education.

Additionally, Haluk is one of the founders and the Chairman of the Board of Turkey's Aerospace and Defense Cluster (SAHA Istanbul), which includes over 1300 companies.

Haluk Bayraktar took an active role in the private sector in the fight against the COVID-19 epidemic that started in 2019 in Turkey. With the SAHA Istanbul Cluster Association, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Board of Directors, he led the execution of various projects and also took part in domestic intensive care ventilator projects developed by Baykar, Aselsan, Biosys, and Arçelik. Intensive care respirators produced in domestic and national facilities were delivered to the Ministry of Health in as little as a month. Turkey exported these devices to the countries in need, and they donated them to those that did not have enough funds.

Haluk is a graduate of Middle East Technical University in Industrial Engineering and Columbia University in Financial Engineering. He is an avid fisher, frequently appears on Turkish television and at university conferences, but above all he enjoys spending quality time with his wife and three children.

Medals and awards

- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky presented the Order of Merit Third Class to Haluk Bayraktar on 25 August 2020 for his contributions to elevating Türkiye's relations with Ukraine to the strategic level.
- Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev presented the Order of Karabakh to Haluk Bayraktar during his visit to Shusha on 15 June 2021 for his contributions to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

- Haluk Bayraktar received the Antonov Medal on 14 September 2021 for his contributions to the aviation industry on the 75th anniversary of the Antonov aircraft factory's establishment in Ukraine.
- On 23 August 2022, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky awarded the State Order of Merit First Class to Haluk Bayraktar for his major contributions to strengthening intergovernmental relations, promoting individual values and state sovereignty, Ukraine's territorial integrity, and popularizing Ukraine worldwide. Mr. Bayraktar was the first Turkish national to receive this top-level honor in the history of Ukraine.
- Ukraine's Air Force Command presented Haluk Bayraktar with the Medal of Mastery, Honor and Courage on 6 April 2023.
- Haluk Bayraktar was presented the Ordre de L'etalon Officier, Burkina Faso's highest national honor, at a ceremony on 25 April 2023 by Grand Chancellor Sem Andre Rock Compaore, on orders from the country's president, for his superior and exceptional contributions to Burkina Faso's peace, security and fight against terrorism.
- On 1 September 2023, Haluk Bayraktar received a medal from the Ukrainian Border Guards Command for his contributions to securing the country's borders.
- The President of Mali, Assimi Goita, awarded the National Order, the country's highest honor, to Haluk Bayraktar on 18 October 2023 for his contributions and service to Mali.
- On 28 October 2023, Haluk Bayraktar received the Daneker State Order from Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov for his contributions to the security and technological development of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan.
- Haluk Bayraktar became the first civilian to receive the Medal of Superior Service, Kosovo's highest military honor, from Kosovar Defense Minister Ejup Maqedonci on 6 November 2023.
- Haluk Bayraktar was awarded the Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic Honor Medal on December 16, 2023, for his valuable contributions to enhancing and developing the national and air force capabilities of Ethiopia. The medal was presented to Bayraktar during a ceremony in Addis Ababa, as part of the 88th anniversary celebrations of the Ethiopian Air Force, in the presence of Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali, by Chief of General Staff Marshal Birhanu Jula and Air Force Commander Lieutenant General Yilma Merdasa.
- On December 26, 2023, he was awarded the "Star of Military Brotherhood Medal" by the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine.
- On May 22, 2024, he was awarded the "1st Degree Order of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine" by the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine for his significant contributions to Ukraine's national security and defense, and for enhancing its defense capabilities under martial law.
- Bayraktar was awarded a medal by the Ukrainian defense minister Rustem Umerov in recognition of his significant contributions to strengthening Ukraine's defense capabilities on August 22, 2024.

CEO, Baykar Technology

- Grew employee headcount from under 10 to over 7000, converting Baykar from an automotive SME to a world-class leader in developing unmanned aerial technologies
- Co-developed all unmanned systems, handling multiplicity of functions in the product development lifecycle from design to build

- Organized investment and business development activities
- Established digital transformation and supply chain system for Baykar

Chairman, SAHA (Turkish Defense Cluster)

- Co-founder and Chairman of the Board since 2017
- Largest industrial cluster in Turkey, including more than 1300 companies and 30 universities
- Biggest cluster within the European Aerospace Cluster Partnership
- Coordinated top tier aerospace and defense companies with many subsidiary companies for business development. Established programs for B2B meetings and organizations
- Organized SAHA EXPO defense exhibition in Istanbul, hosting over 13,000 registrants
- Started Industrial Competence Evaluation and Support Program (EYDEP), Mini MBA for professional sector leaders
- Initiated many industrial innovation network hub projects

Chairman, Black Sea Shield

- Co-founder and Chairman of the Board
- Established venture between Baykar and state-owned Ukrspecexport to enhance and to create synergy between the aerospace & defense sectors of Turkey and Ukraine
- Strategically directs technology efforts across a variety of systems from engines to missiles and more

Co-founder, Turkey Technology Team (T3)

- Co-founder and Former Chairman of the Board
- Established Maker Technology Workshops (Deneyap) for Turkish youth.
- Initiated the vision to ensure all Turkish cities (today at 12 and counting) had high schools with kits to enable supplementary learning in robotics, coding, artificial intelligence, electronics, cyber security, internet of things
- Established Teknofest 2019, the world's biggest aerospace & technology festival that was attended by over 1.72 million people in just the second year
- Crafted the vision for Bilim Usküdar, the first science center in Istanbul, which opened in 2018
- Worked on "1001 Technology Teams", designed to provide resources for aspiring teams in high school and university to ensure their projects see the light of day
- Established T3 Startup center program to promote budding entrepreneurs in Turkey

Co-Founder, Cezeri AI

- Artificial Intelligence startup focusing on civilian tech from autonomous vehicles to flying tech
- Providing leadership to ensure Turkey gets a head start in the next industrial phase of automation

Chairman, Piaggio Aerospace

- Committed to revitalizing one of Italy's most historic, 140-year-old aviation brands
- Preserving its legacy while steering it into a new era of excellence in business aviation and advanced engineering

Co-Founder, LBA Systems

- Leading the strategic 50/50 joint venture between Baykar and Leonardo.
- Focused on integrating Baykar's world-leading unmanned platforms with Leonardo's advanced mission systems, sensors, and European certification expertise.
- Overseeing the development and production of next-generation unmanned systems (such as Bayraktar Akıncı, Bayraktar TB3 and Bayraktar Kızılelma) in Italy, targeting the European and international markets.