



ORDEN POUR LE MÉRITE
FÜR WISSENSCHAFTEN UND KÜNSTE

Özlem TÜRECI

Doctor

Born on 6 March 1967 in Lastrup

Prof. Özlem Türeci, M.D., is a trained physician, academic researcher, and entrepreneur. As a Professor of Personalized Immunotherapy at the Helmholtz Institute for Translational Oncology (HI-TRON) and Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Türeci's research focuses on leveraging patients' immune system to fight cancer and prevent infectious diseases. Her early work made contributions to identifying human tumor antigens, developing monoclonal antibody therapies against novel targets, and creating clinical-stage personalized cancer immunotherapies based on non-synonymous mutations identified through next-generation sequencing.

Türeci's contributions to the mRNA vaccine field include scientific groundwork, discoveries, technology development, translational and clinical research, as well as the development of the first ever approved mRNA drug. She and her partner, Prof. Ugur Sahin, M.D., overcame the challenge of poor mRNA potency through independent optimizations of structural elements in the mRNA scaffold and pioneering nanoparticulate mRNA vaccines, improving their potency and enabling their successful use in humans.

As a co-founder of multiple entrepreneurial ventures, including Ganymed Pharmaceuticals (acquired by Astellas Pharma) and BioNTech, she has translated science into medical applications. As Chief Medical Officer at BioNTech, Türeci leads the clinical development of various oncology approaches and oversees over 30 international clinical trials across the company's oncology and infectious disease pipeline.

Remaining deeply rooted in academia, she serves as a speaker, lecturer, and mentor. Türeci has received dozens of prestigious awards for her work and holds over 540 international patents.

Acceptance into the Order



Özlem Türeci