



**Prof. Dr. Baki TOPAL**

Prof. Dr. Baki Topal is a Professor of Surgery at the KU Leuven Faculty of Medicine and serving as Clinical Head in the Department of Visceral Surgery at the Leuven University Hospitals (UZ Leuven). He is an internationally renowned expert in the field of hepatobiliary and pancreatic surgery (HPB), particularly specializing in minimal invasive surgical techniques, translational cancer research, and the structural improvement of complex oncological care. His clinical and academic endeavours focus on the integration of advanced surgical applications with scientific research. Prof. Topal completed his medical education and his residency in general and visceral surgery with high distinction at KU Leuven. In 2003, he obtained his PhD in Medical Sciences with a dissertation focused on colorectal liver metastases and the dissemination of cancer cells. His advanced clinical fellowships at leading European centres in Hamburg, Villejuif, and London established him as a pioneer in minimal invasive liver and pancreatic surgery. With strong academic productivity, Prof. Topal maintains a current H-index of 43 on Web of Science. His research spans the fields of surgical oncology, tumour biology, and immunology, with a specific focus on pancreatic cancer. He has served as a principal or co-investigator in numerous projects supported by competitive funding bodies such as the FWO (Research Foundation – Flanders), Kom op tegen Kanker, Stichting tegen Kanker, and the Special Research Fund (BOF). Furthermore, he has supervised or co-supervised many doctoral students. In 2013, he designed and managed a national multicentre randomized clinical trial in the field of pancreatic surgery. Published in *The Lancet Oncology*, this study marked a first in Belgium and demonstrated successful collaboration between university and nonuniversity hospitals. In 2020, he founded the Pancreatic Cancer Fund within KU Leuven to promote translational research and increase public awareness regarding pancreatic cancer. In addition to his clinical and academic responsibilities, Prof. Topal has held active roles in leadership and health policy. He has served as the President of the Belgian Section of Hepatobiliary and Pancreatic Surgery and is the founder and president of the Belgian Pancreatic Cancer Group. He has also served as an expert member of the Belgian Superior Health Council and the FWO Evaluation College. His long-term advocacy for the centralization of complex pancreatic surgery resulted in the signing of the national centralization agreement in 2019—a policy step aimed at improving quality of care and patient survival. Due to his scientific and

societal contributions to pancreatic surgery and pancreatic cancer research, Prof. Dr. Baki Topal was honoured by King Philippe of Belgium in 2014 with the title of Commander of the Order of the Crown.