

EU enlargement

Turkey continues to make progress, EU must offer real membership perspective

The European Commission today presented its progress report, assessing Turkey's progress towards EU accession. The Greens welcomed the report, which acknowledges the continuing progress being made by Turkey, but called on the EU to demonstrate political will and give Turkey a real membership perspective. French Green MEP and chair of the European Parliament's Turkey delegation **Hélène Flautre** stated:

"Turkey should rightly be praised for continuing on the path of democratic and constitutional reform, with a view to joining the EU, and it is welcome that today's report acknowledges this real progress. Clearly, the focus is now on the implementation of these reforms and the process of building consensus in the development of a new constitution.

"Concerns remain that Turkey's fight against terrorism is being pursued with scant respect for human rights, or used as an excuse to criminalise any social, environmental, political or cultural activism. Freedom of expression and the freedom of the media seem to be particularly compromised in this context. This makes the opening of the EU accession negotiating chapters on 'judicial affairs and fundamental rights' and on 'justice, freedom and security' all the more urgent.

"Clearly, today's progress report is overshadowed by the situation of overall EU-Turkey relations. It is simply unacceptable that there is a core of EU member states (notably Germany, France and Cyprus) that wants to block Turkey's EU perspective, regardless of the reforms it implements or its progress with regard to respecting the 'Copenhagen Criteria'. This incoherent approach is a real threat to the efforts being made in Turkey as regards democratic reform but is also inimical to the long-term interests of the European project. It is high time for these member states to drop their hypocritical approach to Turkish accession."

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