Press release | 11.05.2016

# Turkey

## Rule of law concerns cannot be ignored by EU in visa liberalisation

The European Parliament today debated the situation in Turkey and the proposed visa liberalisation with the EU. In the context of the debate, Greens/EFA co-president **Rebecca Harms** stated:

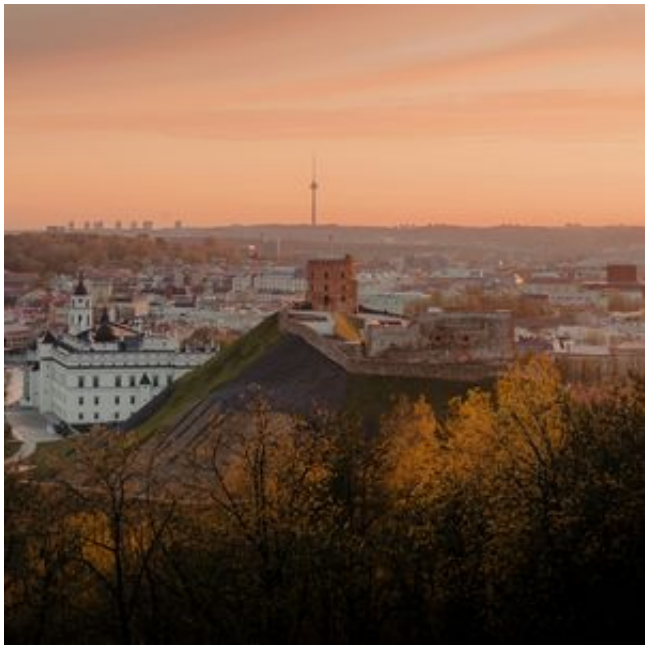
*"The clamp-down against all opposition by the Erdogan regime has reached new level. The sentencing of the journalists Can Dundar and Erdem Gül to long prison terms for criticising the government is the latest worrying development; the attack on Dundar in particular shows the deep division President Erdogan has created in Turkey. The expected lifting of the immunity of the chairs of the opposition HDP party and a large part of its parliamentary delegation would be a further blow to the rule of law. The shooting of Syrian refugees at the border and the forced resignation of Prime Minister Davutoglu must lead the EU to carefully scrutinise the direction of politics in Turkey.*

*"The Greens have always supported visa liberalisation for Turkish people but the fulfilment of the 72 criteria set out by the EU must be a precondition for this. The EU-Turkey agreement on the refugee crisis cannot lead to the central conditions of visa liberalisation being abandoned.*

*"The recent developments make clear that the EU cannot rely on Turkey alone for its refugee policy. Ensuring legal routes for refugees to come to Europe remains the only solution. The recognition by all EU member states of their responsibility to take in refugees and a fair distribution system is key to this. The management of the EU's external borders can also not be delegated to Turkey."*

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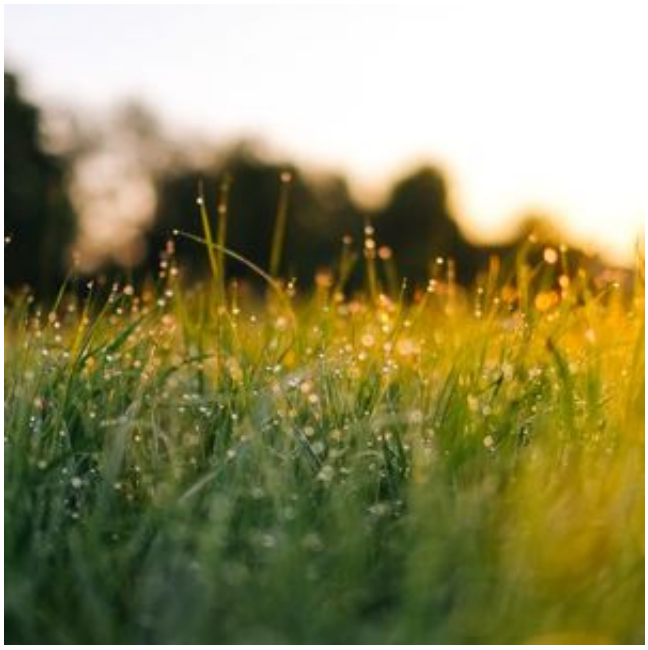
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**Responsible MEPs**



Rebecca Harms

Member

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