

Question for written answer E-001451/2025
to the Commission
Rule 144
Petra Steger (PfE)

Subject: Authoritarian restructuring of the Turkish state without consequences for EU candidate status

On 19 March 2025, Ekrem İmamoğlu, the Mayor of Istanbul and opponent of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and some 100 other opposition figures were arrested on flimsy charges of corruption and terrorism. Just a few days later, on 23 March 2025, İmamoğlu was placed in pre-trial detention and ‘temporarily’ removed from office as Mayor. In response to these undemocratic actions, hundreds of thousands of people across Türkiye took to the streets, with more than 2000 people critical of the government being arrested since the beginning of the protests. Similarly, on 27 March 2025, a 10-day broadcasting ban was imposed on the opposition television channel ‘Sözcü TV’. In doing so, Erdoğan is ushering in a new level of authoritarianism in Turkey and proving that Turkey is a very poor partner for the EU. It is therefore all the more surprising that since the end of 2023, the Commission has been seeking a renewed deepening of relations with Türkiye, rather than withdrawing its EU candidate status, as it should have done long ago.

1. Why is the Commission seeking a renewed deepening of relations with Türkiye since the end of 2023, even though Turkey had already drawn attention to itself in the preceding years through its numerous anti-democratic measures?
2. What is the Commission’s assessment of developments in Türkiye since 19 March 2025?
3. Why is Turkey not finally being stripped of its EU candidate status, which entails substantial financial support?

Submitted: 9.4.2025