

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001429/24
to the Commission
Loucas Fourlas (PPE)
(26 July 2024)**

Subject: Turkey — an unreliable acceding country

In view of the ugly incidents in the Turkish National Assembly, and with Ankara once more centre-stage, I again raise the issue of Turkey's reliability as a country acceding to the EU. For some time now, Turkey's stance has been undermining the uniform approach of the EU to the, unfortunately, ongoing wars in the Gaza Strip and Ukraine. While Europe unanimously condemns Russian aggression in Ukraine, Turkey is playing a double game. It supports Ukraine by selling it military equipment but, at the same time, maintains close economic and political ties with Moscow.

In view of this:

1. What comment does the Commission have to make on the actions of an acceding country that maintains ties with both Ukraine and Russia in order to serve its own interests?
2. To what extent do these actions affect the sanctions imposed on Russia and the unity of the Member States, since they help to circumvent them?
3. In what ways and by what means does the Commission propose to address the conflicting policy pursued by Ankara which affects the cohesion of the Union?

Submitted: 26.7.2024

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Borrell i Fontelles on behalf of the European Commission
(20 September 2024)**

Türkiye is a candidate country, a key regional player and a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) member. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has highlighted Türkiye's relevance as a regional actor, especially in the Black Sea.

Türkiye has supported the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, voting in favour of the relevant resolutions at the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, engaged politically, economically and diplomatically, facilitating the export of Ukrainian grain and prisoner exchanges.

In August 2024, Türkiye ratified the free trade agreement with Ukraine ⁽¹⁾. While a strategic partner for Ukraine in the defence sector, Türkiye maintains strong trade, economic and political relations with Russia.

Türkiye has refrained from aligning with the EU's restrictive measures against Russia, keeping its position of not supporting those adopted outside the UN framework.

As the EU and Türkiye share a customs union, the EU has called consistently on Türkiye to implement additional measures to effectively prevent the circumvention of EU restrictive measures and this has led to some progress.

Türkiye took some measures throughout 2023 to prevent the transit and re-export of sanctioned goods to Russia notably what concerns the items in the common high priority (CHP/battlefield) list of 50 harmonised system (HS) codes.

The Commission continues to actively monitor the trade data and exchanging with Türkiye. The EU Sanctions Envoy leads the cooperation efforts, latest discussed with Türkiye at the High-Level Dialogue on Trade (8 July 2024) ⁽²⁾.

In its 2023 enlargement report ⁽³⁾, the EU called on Türkiye, as a candidate country, to align with the EU's restrictive measures against Russia.

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2024/08/20240802.pdf> (Türkiye's Official Gazette, Law no. 7523).

⁽²⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_24_3684

⁽³⁾ https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/eb90aefd-897b-43e9-8373-bf59c239217f_en?filename=SWD_2023_696%20T%C3%BCrkiye%20report.pdf