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E-002049/2026

Answer given by Ms Kos
on behalf of the European Commission
(21.8.2026)

Türkiye is a candidate country and key partner for the EU. As reiterated by the Council of the European Union and the European Council¹, the EU has a strategic interest in a stable and secure environment in the Eastern Mediterranean, and in the development of a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship with Türkiye. The Commission engages with Türkiye in areas of joint interest, while also addressing concerns.

The accession negotiations with Türkiye have been at a standstill since 2018, due to backsliding on the rule of law. As a result, the EU has reduced pre-accession support to Türkiye and has reoriented funding towards civil society, people-to-people contacts, and EU priorities. In line with European Council conclusions of April 2024², the Commission is pursuing engagement with Türkiye in a phased, proportionate, and reversible manner.

The EU has underlined on numerous occasions that Türkiye must avoid threats and actions that damage good neighbourly relations and respect the sovereignty of all Member States over their territorial sea and airspace as well as all their sovereign rights, including the right to explore and exploit natural resources in accordance with EU and international law, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The EU remains committed to defending its interests and those of its Member States as well as to upholding regional stability.

¹ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-16933-2025-INIT/en/pdf>.

² <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/m5jlwe0p/euco-conclusions-20240417-18-en.pdf>.