

EN

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Answer given by Ms Kos
on behalf of the European Commission
(17.9.2026)

The Commission has reiterated on numerous occasions that citizens' participation, including through peaceful protest, is essential to the functioning of an open and democratic society. As regards individuals arrested in connection with demonstrations, the Commission has consistently called for the full respect for due process, access to legal assistance, and an individual assessment of each case on the basis of credible evidence. Peaceful protest must not in itself lead to prosecution or punitive measures.

The Commission recalls that Türkiye, as a candidate country, a member of the Council of Europe and a party to the European Convention on Human Rights, is expected to uphold the highest democratic standards and to ensure an enabling environment in which people can express their opinions freely and without fear of repression. While the authorities have a duty to ensure public order and safety, any intervention by law enforcement must be strictly proportionate, based on the rule of law, and respectful of human dignity and fundamental freedoms.

As noted in the 2025 enlargement report on Türkiye¹, legislation governing the right to assembly and demonstration, along with its practical implementation, remains inconsistent with European standards. The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers had urged the authorities to amend the Law on demonstrations and meetings in line with the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and the Constitutional Court.

¹ https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/turkiye-report-2025_en.