

Freeze EU accession talks with Turkey until it halts repression, urge MEPs

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MEPs want a temporary freeze on EU accession talks with Turkey. In a resolution voted on Thursday, they say Turkey should nonetheless remain “anchored” to the EU. They also pledge to review their position when the “disproportionate repressive measures” under the state of emergency in Turkey are lifted.

“Turkey is an important partner of the EU”, say MEPs. “But in partnerships, the will to cooperate has to be two-sided (...) Turkey is not showing this political will as the government’s actions are further diverting Turkey from its European path”, they add.

A temporary halt of the negotiations would entail that no new negotiating chapters be opened and no new initiatives be taken in relation to [Turkey’s EU Negotiation Framework](#).

Capital punishment, a red line not to be crossed

The re-introduction of the capital punishment by the Turkish government would lead to a formal suspension of the accession process, say MEPs, pointing out that “the unequivocal rejection of the death penalty is an essential element of the Union acquis.”

MEPs strongly condemn the “disproportionate repressive measures” taken by the Turkish government since the failed coup attempt in July 2016. These “violate basic rights and freedoms protected by the Turkish Constitution” itself, they say.

The resolution was approved by 479 votes to 37, with 107 abstentions.

Background

The procedure for suspending EU accession negotiations is set out in article 5 of the [Negotiating Framework for Turkey](#). This stipulates that “ in the case of a serious and persistent breach in Turkey of the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law on which the Union is founded, the Commission will, on its own initiative or on the request of one third of the Member States, recommend the suspension of negotiations and propose the conditions for eventual resumption”.

The resolution voted by the European Parliament is not legally binding, because Parliament has no formal role in the initial triggering of such mechanisms, but it has to be informed once this has been done.

Procedure: Non-legislative resolution

Further information

- Adopted text (2016/2993(RSP)) will soon be available here (24.11.2016)

: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/texts-adopted.html>

Press release

- Video recording of debate (click on 22.11.2016)
: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/plenary/search-by-date>
- EbS+ (22.11.2016)
: <http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/ebs/schedule.cfm?sitelang=en&page=3&institution=0&date=11/22/2016>
- Press release on the debate with EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini and Commissioner Johannes Hahn: Freeze EU accession talks with Turkey, urge MEPs (22.11.2016)
: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20161122IPR52487/freeze-eu-accession-talks-with-turkey-urge-meps>
- EP Research note: Turkey since the failed July 2016 coup (September 2016)
: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS_BRI\(2016\)589776](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS_BRI(2016)589776)
- Audiovisual material for professionals:
:
: http://audiovisual.europarl.europa.eu/Page.aspx?id=2491&utm_source=webcomm&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ep_media_network
- Negotiating Framework for Turkey (3 October 2005)
: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/turkey/st20002_05_tr_framedoc_en.pdf

Political groups

- Press release by the EPP group
: <http://bit.ly/2gcS0IH>
- Press release by the S&D group
: <http://bit.ly/2gpvBJo>
- News pages of the ECR group
: <http://bit.ly/1Y0YF7j>
- News pages of the ALDE group
: <http://bit.ly/1XbSQs6>
- News pages of the GUE/NGL group
: <http://bit.ly/1UrAIM9>
- News pages of the Greens/EFA group
: <http://bit.ly/1TV9vvr>
- News pages of the EFDD group
: <http://bit.ly/1TUnDFU>
- News pages of the ENF group
: <http://bit.ly/2cxzxcR>

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