

Question for written answer E-005204/2014
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)

Subject: VP/HR - EU reaction to recent problems in the field of democracy and the rule of law in Turkey

In 2012 and at the beginning of 2013 some of the most reluctant Member States indicated that they would be prepared to open at least one new negotiating chapter (Chapter 22, on regional policy and coordination of structural instruments) as part of the negotiations on Turkey's accession to the EU. Talks were due to commence in June 2013.

Enthusiasm on the part of the EU quickly waned in May and June 2013 as wide-spread anti-government protests were met with disproportionate force by the police. Nevertheless, on 5 November 2013 the EU announced that it had agreed to open Chapter 22 (although postponing the resumption of accession negotiations until late autumn 2013). Furthermore, a readmission agreement and the Roadmap Towards a Visa-Free Regime with Turkey were launched on 16 December 2013. At the same time, the Government of Turkey was faced with massive corruption allegations, which led to further protests throughout the country.

1. Why did the EU – despite the huge corruption allegations – decide to go ahead with accession negotiations and arrangements for visa liberalisation?
2. What is the Vice-President / High Representative's evaluation of the municipal elections of March 2013? Were they free and fair?
3. What future action has been planned in terms of Turkish integration into the EU and have these plans changed as a result of the issues which the current government has in terms of basic compliance with democratic norms and the rule of law?