



TEXTS ADOPTED

P8_TA(2019)0200

2018 Report on Turkey

European Parliament resolution of 13 March 2019 on the 2018 Commission Report on Turkey (2018/2150(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Turkey, in particular those of 24 November 2016 on EU-Turkey relations¹, of 27 October 2016 on the situation of journalists in Turkey², and of 8 February 2018 on the current human rights situation in Turkey³,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 17 April 2018 to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on EU Enlargement Policy (COM(2018)0450), to the Turkey 2018 Report (SWD(2018)0153), and to the revised indicative strategy paper for Turkey (2014-2020) adopted in August 2018,
- having regard to the Presidency conclusions of 13 December 2016 and the Council conclusions of 26 June 2018, and to the previous relevant Council and European Council conclusions,
- having regard to the Negotiating Framework for Turkey of 3 October 2005 and to the fact that, as is the case for all accession countries, Turkey's accession to the EU depends on full compliance with the Copenhagen criteria,
- having regard to Council Decision 2008/157/EC of 18 February 2008 on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the Accession Partnership with the Republic of Turkey ('the Accession Partnership')⁴, and to the previous Council decisions of 2001, 2003 and 2006 on the Accession Partnership,
- having regard to the joint statement following the EU-Turkey summit of 29 November 2015 and to the EU-Turkey Action Plan,
- having regard to the declaration issued by the European Community and its Member

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0450

² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0423.

³ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2018)0040.

⁴ OJ L 51, 26.2.2008, p. 4.

States on 21 September 2005, including the provision that the recognition of all Member States is a necessary component of the negotiations, and to the need for Turkey to fully implement the Additional Protocol to the Ankara Agreement in relation to all Member States, by removing all obstacles to the free movement of goods, without restrictions or discrimination,

- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- having regard to Article 46 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which states that the contracting parties undertake to abide by the final judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in any case to which they are parties, and, therefore, to the obligation of Turkey to implement all judgements of the ECtHR,
- having regard to the 2018 World Press Freedom Index published by Reporters Without Borders, which ranks Turkey 157th out of 180 countries,
- having regard to Resolution 1625(2008) of the Council of Europe regarding property and inheritance rights of the Greek Orthodox population and its foundations on the islands of Gökçeada (Imbros) and Bozcaada (Tenedos),
- having regard to its resolution of 13 November 2014 on Turkish actions creating tensions in the exclusive economic zone of Cyprus¹, and its resolution of 15 April 2015 on the centenary of the Armenian genocide²,
- having regard to the opinions of the Council of Europe’s Venice Commission, in particular those of 10-11 March 2017 on the amendments to the constitution to be submitted to a national referendum, on the measures provided for in the recent Emergency Decree-Laws with respect to freedom of the media, and on the duties, competences and functioning of the criminal peace judgeships, of 6-7 October 2017 on the provisions of Decree-Law No 674 concerning the exercise of local democracy, of 9-10 December 2016 on Emergency Decree-Laws Nos 667-676 adopted following the failed coup of 15 July 2016, and of 14-15 October 2016 on the suspension of the second paragraph of Article 83 of the Constitution, focusing on parliamentary inviolability,
- having regard to the statement by the Council of Europe’s Commissioner for Human Rights of 26 July 2016 on measures taken under the state of emergency in Turkey,
- having regard to the findings and conclusions of the OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission on the early presidential and parliamentary elections of 24 June 2018,
- having regard to Resolution 2156 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) of 25 April 2017, entitled ‘The functioning of democratic institutions in Turkey’ and resulting in the reopening of the monitoring procedure,
- having regard to the EU-Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 2 March 2017 to the European Parliament and the Council on the First Annual Report on the Facility for Refugees in Turkey (COM(2017)0130), to the Commission communication to the European

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2014)0052.

² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0094.

Parliament and the Council of 14 March 2018 on the Second Annual Report on the Facility for Refugees in Turkey (COM(2018)0091), and to the Commission's Fifth Report of 2 March 2017 to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council on the progress made in the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement (COM(2017)0204),

- having regard to the Commission recommendation of 21 December 2016 for a Council decision authorising the opening of negotiations with Turkey on an agreement on the extension of the scope of the bilateral preferential trade relationship and on the modernisation of the Customs Union, and to the Council Conclusions of 26 June 2018 to the effect that no further work towards the modernisation of the EU-Turkey Customs Union is foreseen,
 - having regard to the special report of the European Court of Auditors of 14 March 2018 entitled 'EU pre-accession assistance to Turkey: Only limited results so far',
 - having regard to the 2019 budget under which IPA II funds to Turkey will be cut by 146.7 million in view of the situation in Turkey as regards human rights, democracy and the rule of law,
 - having regard to the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights of March 2018 on the impact of the state of emergency on human rights in Turkey with particular reference to the south-east of the country,
 - having regard to the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement,
 - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A8-0091/2019),
- A. whereas the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) held its long-awaited 77th meeting in Brussels on 28 April 2018, after three years of standstill in interparliamentary relations;
- B. whereas according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Turkey hosts the largest refugee population in the world, with more than 3 million registered refugees from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan;
- C. whereas respect for the rule of law and fundamental rights, including the separation of powers, democracy, freedom of expression and the media, human rights, the rights of minorities and religious freedom, freedom of association and the right to peaceful protest, the fight against corruption and the fight against racism and discrimination against vulnerable groups are at the core of the negotiation process;
- D. whereas in November 2016 Parliament called on the Commission and the Member States to initiate a temporary freeze on the ongoing accession negotiations with Turkey and committed to reviewing its position once the disproportionate measures under the state of emergency in Turkey are lifted;
- E. whereas in July 2017 Parliament called on the Commission and the Member States, in accordance with the Negotiating Framework, to formally suspend the accession negotiations with Turkey without delay should the constitutional reform package be

implemented unchanged;

1. Notes that the state of emergency introduced after the 2016 coup attempt was extended 7 times; welcomes the decision of 19 July 2018 to lift the state of emergency; regrets, however, that the new legislation introduced in July 2018, in particularly Law No 7145, preserves many of the powers granted to the President and Executive under the state of emergency and basically enables it to continue, with all the limitations this entails on freedoms and basic human rights; stresses that this dampens any positive effects of its termination; notes that the prolonged state of emergency has led to an erosion of the rule of law and to the deterioration of human rights in Turkey, which may have long-lasting implications for the country's institutional and socio-economic fabric; is concerned that many of the procedures in force during the state of emergency are still being applied by police forces and local administrations; is equally concerned about the serious backsliding in the areas of freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, freedom of association and procedural and property rights;
2. Is deeply concerned that over 150 000 people were taken into custody in the post-coup crackdown and 78 000 have been arrested on the basis of terrorism charges, while more than 50 000 people remain in jail, in most cases without conclusive evidence; expresses concern at the excessively lengthy pre-trial detention and judicial proceedings, the fact that in several cases no indictment has been issued yet, and the harshness of detention conditions; also expresses concern at the widespread practice of cancelling the passports of the relatives of detainees and suspects, and stresses the need for due process and administrative redress where the cancellation is not soundly justified; is particularly concerned at the fact that such arrests seem also to target legitimate voices of dissent, including those of human rights defenders, journalists or members of the opposition; is very worried at the allegations of ill-treatment and torture of detainees, as reported by several human rights organisations and the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; is deeply concerned about reports indicating that long-term solitary confinement is being applied widely, turning into a second punishment for detainees; warns against the abuse of anti-terror measures to legitimise the repression of human rights; urges Turkey to observe the proportionality principle in its measures to fight terrorism, and to make its anti-terrorism legislation compliant with international human rights standards;
3. Regrets the actions undertaken by the Turkish government against Turkish citizens in third countries, including harassment and kidnappings and covert surveillance, as well as the practice of hotlines through which people are encouraged to report other citizens to the government; is deeply worried about the illegal abduction and extradition of 101 Turkish nationals which were conducted in 18 countries, as confirmed by the Turkish authorities' statement of 16 July 2018; urges EU Member States to process any extradition requests by Turkey in a transparent manner, while following judicial procedures fully in line with international human rights standards; reiterates that Interpol arrest warrants cannot be misused to target Turkish dissidents, human rights defenders, journalists and those critical of the government, such as former Sakharov Prize finalist Can Dündar;
4. Notes that since the introduction of the state of emergency more than 152 000 civil servants - including teachers, doctors, (peace) academics, lawyers, judges and prosecutors - have been dismissed; notes that 125 000 people applied to the Inquiry Commission on the State of Emergency Measures (CoSEM), which is tasked with

reviewing and deciding on, within two years, complaints about measures taken under the state of emergency and related decrees, and that 81 000 of these complaints are still awaiting a decision; notes the very low rate (7 %) of favourable outcomes leading to the reinstatement of the applicants in their positions; is concerned about the narrow scope of the mandate of this commission, its lack of independence and the fact that examinations are made on the sole basis of documents in the case-file, without participation of the person concerned; notes that these dismissals have had a very harsh impact on the individuals concerned and on their families, including in economic terms, and that they come with a lasting social and professional stigma; calls on the Turkish government to ensure that all individuals have the right to due process and to have their cases reviewed by an independent judicial court in accordance with international standards that can ensure compensation for the material and moral damage caused by their arbitrary dismissal; calls on Turkey to ensure the operational, structural and financial independence of the National Human Rights and Equality Institution and of the Ombudsman Institution in order to guarantee their capacity to provide genuine review and redress opportunities;

5. Is highly concerned at reports that the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet) is being exploited by the Turkish intelligence agency for purposes of pursuing opposition leaders from the Gülen movement or any other opponents, and urges the security institutions at EU and Member State level to investigate this serious violation of sovereignty and public order;
6. Condemns the increased executive surveillance and political pressure affecting the work of judges and prosecutors; stresses that a serious reform of the legislative and judicial branches of power is needed for Turkey in order to improve access to the justice system, increase its effectiveness and provide better protection for the right to trial within a reasonable time; stresses that these reforms are also needed if Turkey is to comply with its obligations under international human rights law; is worried that the dismissal of more than 4 000 judges and prosecutors is a threat to the independence and impartiality of the judiciary; also considers that the arrest of over 570 lawyers is an obstacle to the right of defence and amounts to a breach of the right to a fair trial; also condemns the detention and judicial harassment of human rights lawyers; calls on the Reform Action Group to review the judicial reform strategy and bring it into line with the required standards of the EU and of the Council of Europe; calls on Turkey to ensure throughout the reform process the participation of all relevant stakeholders and notably of civil society organisations; calls on the Commission to monitor the proper use of EU funding for the training of the judiciary and law enforcement officials, which should not be used to legitimise repressive behaviour;
7. Notes with concern that since the introduction of the state of emergency the number of asylum applications by Turkish citizens has risen dramatically, the result being that Turkey now occupies fifth place in terms of numbers of asylum applications submitted in EU Member States, according to the European Asylum Support Office; underlines that in September 2018 more than 16 000 applications were still waiting a first instance decision;
8. Reiterates the importance of media freedom and independence as one of the core values of the EU and a cornerstone of any democracy; expresses serious concern about the disproportionate and arbitrary measures curtailing freedom of expression, media freedom and access to information; condemns the closure of more than 160 media

outlets, the high number of arrests of journalists and media workers in the aftermath of the coup attempt, the unsubstantiated and disproportionate sentences handed down, and the blocking of more than 114 000 websites in Turkey until last year, including that of Wikipedia; draws attention to the restrictions put in place on the rights of journalists and human rights defenders working on the Kurdish issue; urges Turkey to guarantee media freedom as a matter of priority and to immediately release and acquit all unlawfully detained journalists; calls on the Turkish authorities to demonstrate zero tolerance towards all incidents of physical and verbal abuse or threats against journalists, and to allow media outlets which have been arbitrarily closed to reopen;

9. Expresses great concern at the shrinking space for civil society and the promotion of fundamental rights and freedoms; stresses that a large number of activists, including human rights defenders, were arrested and demonstrations were recurrently banned during the state of emergency; calls on Turkey to release all imprisoned human rights defenders, journalists and others who have been detained on unsubstantiated charges, and to drop those charges and enable them to carry out their work without threat or impediment in all circumstances; calls on Turkey to protect the fundamental rights of all citizens, including ethnic, religious and sexual minorities; recalls that legislation in Turkey on hate speech is not in line with ECtHR case-law; urges the Government and Parliament of Turkey to adopt a hate crimes law that can protect all members of minorities from physical and verbal attacks and fulfil the Copenhagen criteria for accession countries with regard to respect for and protection of minorities; calls on the Commission and the Member States to increase their protection of and support for human rights defenders at risk in Turkey, including through emergency grants;
10. Condemns the arbitrary detention of Osman Kavala, a prominent and respected leading civil society figure in Turkey, who has been detained for over a year and a half now; is appalled by the recent indictment against Osman Kavala and 15 others who are facing an aggravated life sentence for ‘attempting to overthrow the government’ for their alleged roles in the Gezi protests of 2013; calls for their immediate and unconditional release and requests the EU delegation in Turkey to follow their case very closely; in addition, calls for a delegation of the European Parliament to attend the proceedings of the trial; disapproves of the detention of 13 academics and activists on 16 November 2018, in connection with the case of Osman Kavala; notes that 12 of them were released after having given their depositions and that one is still detained; asks for the latter’s release pending proceedings and for the lifting of the travel ban imposed on the others;
11. Is seriously concerned about the lack of respect for freedom of religion, discrimination against religious minorities, including Christians and Alevis, and violence perpetrated on religious grounds; stresses that churches continue to face problems over the establishment or continuation of the use of premises as places of worship; calls on the Turkish authorities to promote positive and effective reforms in the area of freedom of thought, conscience and religion, by enabling religious communities to obtain legal personality, allowing charitable foundations to elect their governing bodies, eliminating all restrictions on the training, appointment and succession of the clergy, complying with the relevant judgements of the ECtHR and the recommendations of the Venice Commission, and eliminating all forms of discrimination or barriers based on religion; calls on Turkey to respect the distinct character and importance of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and to recognise its legal personality; reiterates the need to allow the reopening of the Halki Seminary and lift all obstacles to its proper functioning; calls for the electoral regulations for non-Muslim foundations to be published; welcomes the

Turkish government's return of 50 Aramean churches, monasteries and cemeteries in Mardin, and calls on the Turkish authorities also to return the respective land to its rightful owners; draws attention to the impact of the security measures on the population in Tur Abdin and calls on Turkey to ensure preservation of the inhabitants' access to education, economic activities and religious sites; urges Turkey to do its utmost to avoid the destruction of Aramean cultural heritage by the ongoing preparatory work on the Ilisiu dam project; calls on the Turkish authorities to take serious action to fight all manifestations of anti-Semitism in society;

12. Expresses its concern at the violations of the human rights of LGBTI people, in particular the repeated bans on Pride marches and LGBTI-related events across the country which are still being imposed, despite the lifting of the state of emergency, and calls for these discriminatory bans to be immediately lifted; calls on Turkey to take adequate measures to prevent and punish hate speech or crimes targeting disadvantaged groups such as Roma and Syrian refugees and asylum seekers, and calls for sustained efforts to improve their situation; calls on Turkey to fully implement the 2016-2021 Roma Integration Strategy Plan, paying particular attention to the fight against anti-Gypsyism, to guarantee access for Roma to affordable quality housing, to safeguard their access to education and take measures to prevent early school leaving, to fight against segregation, and to increase the employment rate among Roma; notes with concern the increase in so-called 'honour killings'; asks Turkey to harmonise its domestic legislation with the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women; calls on Turkey to ensure full equality for all citizens and to address the problems faced by members of minorities, in particular with regard to education and property rights; recalls the importance of the full implementation of the resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe relating to the islands of Imbros and Tenedos, and calls on Turkey to assist the repatriation of minority families who wish to return to those islands; welcomes the opening of a Greek-minority school on Imbros, which constitutes a positive step;
13. Is concerned about the prevalence and severity of violence against women in Turkish society, including honour killings, non-legal child marriages and sexual abuse, and about the Turkish authorities' reluctance to punish the perpetrators of gender-based violence; stresses that domestic violence led to the death of 440 women in 2018 – an increase on previous years – and that criminal proceedings are often lengthy and subject to delay; calls on the Turkish Government to adopt and implement a zero-tolerance policy on this matter;
14. Calls on the Turkish government to respect and fully implement the legal obligations which it has entered into concerning the protection of cultural heritage, and, in particular, to draw up in good faith an integrated inventory of Greek, Armenian, Assyrian and other cultural heritage that was destroyed or ruined in the course of the last century; opposes, in this context, any extreme view that promotes alterations to the physiognomy of the Hagia Sophia historical-religious monument and its conversion into a mosque; calls on Turkey to ratify the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions; calls on Turkey to cooperate with the relevant international organisations, especially the Council of Europe, in preventing and combating illicit trafficking in and the deliberate destruction of cultural heritage;
15. Is deeply concerned at the situation in the south-east of Turkey and the serious

allegations of human rights abuses, excessive use of force, torture, and the severe curtailment of the right to freedom of opinion and expression as well as political participation in the south-east, especially since the collapse of the Kurdish settlement process in 2015, as documented by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and human rights defenders in Turkey; reiterates its firm condemnation of the return to violence on the part of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has been on the EU list of terrorist organisations since 2002; stresses the urgency of resuming a credible political process leading to a peaceful settlement of the Kurdish issue; calls on Turkey to promptly investigate all serious allegations of human rights abuses and killings, and to allow international observers to carry out independent monitoring activities; is concerned at the destruction of historical heritage sites in the south-east, including that of the ancient Sur site in Diyarbakir, which was included on UNESCO's World Heritage List, an act which jeopardises the preservation of Kurdish identity and culture in Turkey;

16. Notes with concern that during the state of emergency a very large number of mayors and deputy mayors in the south-east were dismissed and/or arrested and that the Government appointed trustees to replace them; stresses that, as a result, a large part of Turkey's population has not been democratically represented at the local level; takes the view that the municipal elections to be held in March 2019 must be seen as providing an important opportunity for the full reinstatement of the principle of direct democratic mandate;
17. Notes with concern that the state of emergency and certain provisions under the constitutional reform package have further constrained the Grand National Assembly in its capacity to fulfil its fundamental role of ensuring democratic scrutiny and accountability; notes with great concern the arrest of two members of the Republican People's Party (CHP) and the way the People's Democratic Party (HDP) has been particularly marginalised, with many of its lawmakers being arrested on grounds of alleged support for terrorist activities; calls for the release of all members of the Grand National Assembly detained on account of speeches made and actions taken while carrying out their parliamentary work; underlines that the Grand National Assembly should be the central institution in Turkish democracy, and should represent all citizens on equal terms; regrets the high electoral threshold, which curbs true political representation and does not reflect Turkey's pluralistic society;
18. Condemns the continued arrest of Selahattin Demirtaş, opposition leader and presidential candidate; welcomes the ECtHR ruling on his case, which calls on the Turkish authorities to immediately release him; stresses that the ECtHR further ruled that the detention of Mr Demirtaş pursued the predominant ulterior purpose of stifling pluralism and limiting freedom of political debate; condemns the position of the Turkish authorities against this ruling; expects the Commission and the Member States to follow this case very closely, and calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Mr Demirtaş;
19. Stresses the importance of the fight against corruption, and draws attention to the findings of the 2018 Report on Turkey to the effect that corruption remains prevalent in many areas and continues to be a serious problem; is concerned that the track record of investigation, prosecution and conviction in corruption cases remains poor, particularly in high-level cases;

20. Recalls that the Venice Commission assessed the constitutional amendments related to the introduction of a presidential system as lacking sufficient checks and balances as well as endangering the separation of powers between executive and judiciary; recalls further that the European Parliament has called on the Government of Turkey to implement constitutional and judicial changes and reforms in cooperation with the Venice Commission, and last year also called for the formal suspension of the accession negotiations should the constitutional reform be implemented unchanged, since this would be incompatible with the Copenhagen criteria;
21. Taking all of the above into account, recommends that the Commission and the Council of the European Union, in accordance with the Negotiating Framework, formally suspend the accession negotiations with Turkey; remains, however, committed to democratic and political dialogue with Turkey; asks the Commission to use the funds currently allocated under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II and the future IPA III) to support, through a dedicated envelope directly managed by the EU, Turkey's civil society, human rights defenders and journalists and to increase opportunities for people-to-people contacts, academic dialogue, access for Turkish students to European universities, and media platforms for journalists with the objective of protecting and promoting democratic values and principles, human rights and the rule of law; without prejudice to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, expects the relationship between Turkey and the EU to be redefined in terms of an effective partnership; underlines that any political engagement between the EU and Turkey should be built on conditionality provisions concerning respect for democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights;
22. Notes that while the EU accession process was at its start a strong motivation for reforms in Turkey, there has been a stark regression in the areas of the rule of law and human rights during the last few years;
23. Stresses that the modernisation of the Customs Union would further strengthen the already strong ties between Turkey and the EU and would keep Turkey economically anchored to the EU; believes, therefore, that a door should be left open for the modernisation and upgrade of the 1995 Customs Union between the EU and Turkey, to include relevant areas such as agriculture, services and public procurement, which currently are not covered; recalls that Turkey is the EU's fifth largest trading partner, while the EU is Turkey's largest, that two thirds of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Turkey comes from EU Member States and that Turkey is an important growth market for the EU; believes that the upgrade would provide a valuable opportunity for democratic conditionality, positive leverage and the possibility of a roadmap where the upgrade of the Customs Union would go hand in hand with concrete improvements by Turkey on democratic reforms in the fields of democracy, human rights fundamental freedoms as well as the rule of law and towards a true, open space for civil society and pluralism; believes further that the upgrade of the Customs Union would provide an important opportunity for policy dialogue on socially and environmentally sustainable economic development and climate change, as well as on labour rights in Turkey; calls on the Commission to start preparatory work for the upgrade of the Customs Union as soon as the Turkish Government attests to its readiness for serious reforms; calls on the Commission to include a clause on human rights and fundamental freedoms in the upgraded Customs Union making human rights and fundamental freedoms a key conditionality; recalls that the current Customs Union does not achieve its full potential until Turkey fully implements the Additional Protocol towards all Member States;

24. Points out that trade union freedom and social dialogue are vital to the development of a pluralistic society; regrets the legislative shortcomings on labour and trade union rights, and stresses that the right to organise, the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike are fundamental rights of workers; deeply regrets that membership of a trade union has often been considered as criminal evidence in judicial cases; believes that such a stance could further endanger the status of trade unions in the country; is seriously concerned about the working conditions for workers in the construction of the new Istanbul airport, given that reportedly 38 workers have died in work-related accidents since the start of construction in May 2015 while 31 people, including a union leader, are currently in jail for protesting against poor working conditions and low and irregularly paid wages; calls on the Turkish authorities to consult closely with the relevant trade unions on the issue of the necessary safeguards for workers on-site, to carry out a thorough investigation into the deaths and injuries that have occurred, and to allow the unions full access to the workers concerned; expresses concern over the issue of child labour, especially in sectors such as agriculture and seasonal work; notes the efforts of the Turkish government with a view to granting refugees benefiting from temporary protection in Turkey the right to work, subject to an appropriate authorisation; notes that more than 20 000 work permits have been issued to Syrians and that they include certain conditions regarding minimum wage levels and social security; points out that despite these efforts, many Syrians continue to work without authorisation in numerous sectors and many of Turkey's provinces; stresses that language is still one of the most important barriers for Syrian workers;
25. Calls on the Turkish Government to halt its plans for the construction of the Akkuyu nuclear power plant; calls on Turkey to adhere to the Espoo Convention; asks the Turkish Government to involve, or at least consult, the governments of the neighbouring countries, such as Greece and Cyprus, in relation to any further developments in the Akkuyu venture;
26. Notes that visa liberalisation is of great importance for Turkish citizens, particularly for students, academics, business representatives and people with family ties in EU Member States; encourages the Turkish Government to fully comply with the 72 criteria identified in the visa liberalisation roadmap; stresses that the revision of Turkey's anti-terrorism legislation is a key condition for ensuring fundamental rights and freedoms; encourages Turkey to make the necessary efforts to fulfil the remaining benchmarks; stresses that visa liberalisation will be possible once all the criteria have been fully and effectively met in a non-discriminatory fashion;
27. Recalls the important role played by Turkey in responding to the migration crisis resulting from the war in Syria; takes the view that Turkey and its population have shown great hospitality by offering shelter to more than 3.5 million Syrian refugees; underlines that there are about one million Syrian children of school age in Turkey, of whom 60 % are registered in Turkish schools; takes note of the EU-Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016; urges Turkey to respect the non-refoulement principle; deplores the fact that under the 2011/2012 IPA programme, the EU financed the acquisition of Cobra II armoured surveillance vehicles, and calls on the Commission to closely monitor the use of equipment (co-)financed under EU programmes and the effective implementation of the non-refoulement principle, in particular on the Syrian border; calls on the EU and its Member States to keep their promises regarding large-scale resettlement, and to ensure adequate financial resources for the long-term support of Syrian refugees in Turkey; acknowledges the European Court of Auditors' 2018 Special Report, which calls for

increased efficiencies and more transparency in the allocation and distribution of funding; points to the increasing uncertainty for Syrian refugees over the prospects for their temporary protection in Turkey, and asks Turkey to consider strategies for increased social cohesion in areas with large Syrian refugee communities, as well as for longer-term socio-economic and cultural inclusion and adequate and effective access to education and job training; calls on the Commission to remain vigilant and to ensure that where EU funds are used the rights of refugees are properly upheld and that action is taken to prevent child labour, the sexual exploitation of children and other human rights abuses;

28. Notes the importance for both the EU and its Member States and Turkey of maintaining close dialogue and cooperation on foreign policy and security issues; encourages cooperation and further alignment on foreign policy, defence and security issues, including counter-terrorism cooperation; recalls that Turkey is also a longstanding member of the NATO alliance and sits at a key geostrategic location for maintaining regional and European security; notes that the EU and Turkey continue to cooperate on issues of (military) strategic importance within the NATO framework; calls, therefore, on Turkey to resume its cooperation with EU NATO members under NATO's rolling programme of cooperation with non-EU countries;
29. Commends Turkey for the negotiation of the memorandum on Idlib; regrets the fact that Turkey-backed armed groups in the 'Free Syrian Army' (FSA) have reportedly seized, looted, and destroyed property of Kurdish civilians in the Afrin district of northern Syria; insists that Turkey and the FSA groups in Afrin should compensate displaced residents whose property they have seized, destroyed, or looted, and should not permanently deprive residents of their property; is concerned at reports of a wide range of violations taking place in Afrin mostly at the hands of Syrian armed groups, equipped and armed by Turkey, and also by the Turkish armed forces, who have allegedly taken over a number of schools, disrupting children's education; is concerned that Turkey also seeks to change the demographic balance in the Afrin canton by resettling Syrian Arab Sunni refugees from Turkey to the Kurdish-populated region; asks the Turkish government to drop charges against all those citizens who have criticised Turkey's military actions in Syria and thus respect the right of free speech;
30. Reiterates the importance of good neighbourly relations; calls on Turkey, in this connection, to step up efforts to resolve outstanding bilateral issues, including unresolved legal obligations and unsettled disputes with its immediate neighbours over land and maritime borders and airspace, in accordance with the provisions of the UN Charter and with international law; reiterates its call on the Turkish Government to sign and ratify the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS); urges the Turkish Government to end the repeated violations of Greek airspace and territorial waters, and to respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all of its neighbours; expresses its regret that the *casus belli* threat issued by the Turkish Grand National Assembly against Greece has not yet been withdrawn;
31. Welcomes the efforts under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General to resume negotiations on the reunification of Cyprus; reiterates its support for a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement on the basis of a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with a single international legal personality, single sovereignty and single citizenship and with political equality between the two communities, as defined by the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, in accordance with international law and the EU acquis

and on the basis of respect for the principles on which the Union is founded; draws attention to the Framework put forward by the UN Secretary-General and his appeal for the resumption of negotiations, building on the agreements already reached in the 2017 Crans-Montana process; calls for the EU and its Member States to play a more active role in bringing negotiations to a successful conclusion; reiterates its call on all parties concerned, in particular Turkey, to commit and contribute to a comprehensive settlement; calls on Turkey to begin withdrawing its troops from Cyprus, to transfer the sealed-off area of Famagusta to the UN in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 550, and to refrain from actions altering the demographic balance on the island through a policy of illegal settlements; stresses the need for the implementation of the EU acquis on the whole island; acknowledges, in this regard, the continuation of the work of the bi-communal ad hoc committee on EU preparation; commits to stepping up its efforts to engage with the Turkish Cypriot community in its preparations to fully integrate into the EU following the solution of the Cyprus problem, and calls on the Commission to do the same; praises the important work of the bicommunal Committee on Missing Persons (CMP), which deals with both Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot missing persons, and commends the fact that improved access to relevant sites, including military areas, has been granted; calls on Turkey to assist the CMP by providing information from its military archives; recognises the right of the Republic of Cyprus to enter into bilateral agreements concerning its exclusive economic zone; reiterates its call on Turkey to fully respect the sovereign rights of all Member States, including those rights related to prospecting for and exploitation of natural resources, in accordance with the EU acquis and international law; urges Turkey to engage in the peaceful settlement of disputes, and to refrain from any threat or action which might have negative effects on good neighbourly relations;

32. Calls on Turkey and Armenia to pursue the normalisation of their relations; stresses that the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border could lead to improved relations, with particular reference to cross-border cooperation and economic integration;
33. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, the Member States, the Government of Turkey and the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, and asks for this report to be translated into Turkish.