



# IKVM MONTHLY

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## TURKEY-EU RELATIONS AFTER THE REFERENDUM

After the April 16 referendum, harsh comments in Turkey-EU relations and calls to end accession negotiations with Turkey left their place to a more reasonable approach following the Gymnich meeting.

Looking back, the referendum scheduled for April 16 will undoubtedly be considered an important milestone in Turkey's history. Approximately 50 million voters went to the polls and 51.41 percent of voters voted for the 18-item constitutional amendment package in the referendum. However, the small distinction between the 'yes' and 'no' votes, as well as the statement of the Supreme Election Board regarding the validation of unsealed votes on the referendum day, Turkey led to a dispute on coming days. Whereas with the result of the referendum Turkey decided to change its political system, it is clear that its long lasting ties with EU will also be affected by the change.

During the referendum campaign, there have been tensions with various EU countries, especially with the Netherlands, which was also prominent in Turkey-EU relations. It was expected that the results of the referendum will end this tension, however, immediately after the referendum, the statements by the Turkish side that the EU membership of the country could be subjected to a referendum showed that more time is needed to settle the waters. In fact, after the referendum, the decision of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the draft report for Turkey debated at the European Parliament and the informal meeting of EU foreign ministers' (Gymnich meeting) held on the last weekend of April were important developments that will shape Turkey-EU relations in the coming days.

The official announcement on behalf of the EU on the referendum in Turkey issued by President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini and Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations



Johannes Hahn stated that the reported results of the referendum in Turkey on the amendments to the Constitution, adopted by the Turkish Grand National Assembly on 21 January 2017 was noted. However, it was especially emphasised that the EU will wait for the assessment of OSCE/ODIHR International Observation Mission and also the constitutional amendments and their implementation will be evaluated in the light of the responsibilities of Turkey as a candidate country to the EU and as a member of the Council of Europe. Indeed, this approach of the EU was embraced by many western leaders.

For example, US President Donald Trump called and congratulated President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, but the official statement by the White House and the US State Department

was similar to the EU. Indeed, leaders of the EU's leading nations such as German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President François Hollande also called on the Turkish government to seek a respectful dialogue with all political and social groups, stating that the results of the referendum reveal the division in Turkey. This approach in the political arena was also reflecting the views of various think tanks in Brussels and experts working on Turkey.

The first official move came from PACE, which at its session on 25 April voted for re-opening of political monitoring procedure for Turkey. As it will be remembered, this process was relaxed in 2004 and it paved the way for Turkey to start accession negotiations with the EU. The decision was condemned in Turkey at the

highest level, in particular by the Prime Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and President's Spokesperson. However, this decision will take place in Turkey-EU relations for a long time as a formal note of Turkey's backsliding with respect to the Copenhagen political criteria. Just as the day the decision was taken, we remembered an article of deceased journalist Mehmet Ali Birand which published in 2003. In his article, Mr. Birand mentioned that he could not even believe in the favouring attitude of PACE, which he had watched for 22 years. On that day in Strasbourg, Mr. Birand, who felt a great joy for the positive developments in Turkey-EU relations, warned us that if we think that this is over, we will have trouble again after 10-15 years. Unfortunately, the point reached today is just justified his prediction.

### Gymnich Meeting Following the PACE Decision

Following the PACE decision, the EU discussed the future of its relations with Turkey at the informal meeting of the EU foreign ministers, briefly called Gymnich meeting held in Malta's capital city Valetta on 28-29 April. The invitation of Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu for the meeting was the first signal that a ground-breaking decision would not be taken, such as terminating the negotiations. Indeed, after the meeting, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini stated that the EU should provide clear signals that the doors are open to Turkey, but Ankara has to meet the criteria for human rights and the rule of law. **PAGE 2**



## TURKEY-EU RELATIONS AFTER THE REFERENDUM

### FROM THE FIRST PAGE

It seems that the role of the bad police was undertaken by Johannes Hahn, who stated that Turkey-EU relations should be carried out within the framework of economic relations, since overcoming of the stagnation in accession negotiations in short term appeared to be unrealistic. In fact, the message of Mr. Hahn to focus on the practical side of bilateral relations and the updating of the Customs Union in the upcoming period was a common talk of many experts following Turkey-EU relations. However, even in the process of focusing on practical side of relations such as refugee agreement, fighting terrorism, cooperation in the field of energy and upgrading the Customs Union, it is inevitable to face the political criteria. Today, increasing number of MEP in the European Parliament is saying that there have to be some political conditions for the launch of negotiations for upgrading the Customs Union. At this point, it should be re-called that the impact analysis carried out by the European Commission shows that the upgrade of the Customs Union, which is expected to start negotiations this year, will contribute 1.44 percent to Turkey's GDP and 0.01 percent to the EU. In short, the upgrade of the Customs Union is more important and meaningful for Turkey.

It is obvious that reforms are inevitable in order to obtain the maximum benefit for Turkey from the upgrading of the Customs Union, which has made a significant contribution to the transformation of Turkish industry from low-technology production to middle-technology production. Beyond all this, from the 2000s to the present, it is necessary to remember how Turkey can be a game changer when it moves with determination. In the upcoming period, President Erdogan is expected to meet with EU leaders at the NATO Summit to be held at the end of May and have bilateral meetings with EU leaders. Then, a Turkey-EU Summit will probably take place. Keeping mutual dialogue mechanisms open rather than criticising each other over media will undoubtedly have a more positive effect in easing the tension and improving the relations.

# IKV ORGANISED A MEETING HOSTED BY CHAMBER OF INDUSTRY IN ANKARA

IKV discussed Turkey-EU relations and the updating process of Customs Union in the context of "Tour d'Horizon in Turkey-EU Relations: New Dimensions, New Objectives" project.



In the context of the "Tour d'Horizon in Turkey-EU Relations: Dimensions, New Objectives" Project which IKV has been pursuing since 2015, IKV organised a meeting entitled "Turkey's EU Agenda: Effects Upon the Business World of a Modernised Customs Union" hosted by Ankara Chamber of Industry on 24 April.

In his speech, Ankara Chamber of Industry (ASO) Chairman Nurettin Özdebir indicated that the modernisation of the Customs Union agreement would create new opportunities and help Turkish industry in gaining a more competitive structure in the long term.

Furthermore, noting that the EU

market has the capacity to increase the productivity of companies in Turkey and enhancing economic productivity and efficiency in the long term, Özdebir also underscored that trade between Turkey and the EU not only grants financial gains to Turkish companies as well as competitive advantage. As such, Özdebir indicated the following: "Analyses in this area is showing that Turkish companies which have realised exports to the EU market are gaining total factor effectiveness by 7.4 percent in the first year, 8.1 percent in the second year and 9.7 percent in the third year respectively. From the perspective of average costs, it has been estimated that within the three years of exports

to the EU, the effect has increased by 1.3 percent, 3.5 percent and 3.8 percent respectively. Therefore, one can say that exporting towards the EU market is increasing company productivity within Turkey and is strengthening the productivity and efficiency of the Turkish economy in the long term".

In a panel moderated by IKV Secretary-General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas, ATAUM Director Sanem Baykal realised a presentation entitled "The Modernisation of the Customs Union and its Effects Upon Turkey-EU Relations"; TEPAV G20 Studies Centre Director Sait Akman assessed the latest developments in the modernisation

process of the Customs Union in a presentation entitled "Current Status and Expectations Regarding the Modernisation Process of the Customs Union"; IKV Strategy and Business Development Director Gökhan Kilit assessed the latest developments in the agricultural sector in a presentation entitled "The Modernisation of the Customs Union and its Effects Upon the Agricultural Sector" and IKV Research Director Çisem İleri revealed information on EU funds in a presentation entitled "How Can the Business World Benefit from EU Funds and Programmes?". Following the panel, IKV publications were distributed to the participants.

## STATEMENTS ON TERRORIST ATTACKS IN STOCKHOLM AND PARIS

The coordinated terrorist attacks around the world have been rising during the recent years. Some kinds of attacks are widely used and one of them is driving trucks into crowds. After outrageous killings in Nice and Berlin in the last year, the EU was shaken again by the same kind of an attack on 7 April in Stockholm, Sweden. A stolen beer delivery truck was deliberately driven into a department store on Drottninggatan which is one of the most crowded shopping streets in Stockholm. After the

attack that has caused 5 deaths and 15 injuries, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey made a statement to condemn this abominable attack in the strongest terms. As a country that has been a target of similar types of terrorist attacks for many times, Turkey expresses its willingness to share the grief of Sweden and the Swedish people. After emphasising the significance of global cooperation to counter terrorism, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey reiterates its determination to maintain solidarity with international community, allies and partners against all kinds of terrorism.

13 days later, another European capital, Paris, was the target of a heinous terrorist attack. On 20 April, a gunman with an assault rifle attacked parked police car and caused the death of 1 police officer and the injury of 2 police officers in the most famous avenue of the city, Les Champs-Élysées. Afterwards, a lot of countries, including Turkey, condemned the attack and conveyed their condolences to the families of the victims. As expressed in the statement of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, condolences to the French

people and French National Police with whom Turkey is in solidarity on this difficult day were presented. In addition to wishing endurance to those who lost their families, friends or relatives, Turkey wished quick recovery for the injured. Similar to Stockholm attack, grief of French people are stated to be understood and shared by Turkey that has been a target of similar types of terrorist attacks for many times. Turkey's willingness to provide all kinds of support to France to counter terrorism was also remarked.

# TURKEY-EU YOUTH FORUM WAS HELD IN ISTANBUL

Turkey-EU Youth Forum organised by IKV EU Information Centre and EU Delegation in Turkey on the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Erasmus+ Programme was held in Istanbul on 26-28 April with the participation of university students from all around Turkey.



The opening remarks of the forum were realised by Head of EU Delegation in Turkey Ambassador Christian Berger, Ministry for EU Affairs Acting Undersecretary Ambassador Selim Yenel and IKV Chairman Ayhan Zeytinoğlu.

In the forum, along with the success story which is represented by the Erasmus+ Programme, a variety of issues from education, teaching, the importance of volunteering in the context of a sustainable economy was discussed. As for the panels, it was the occasion to take into consideration the importance of the European Voluntary Service, young entrepreneurship, youth employment, future jobs and investment for youth.

In the panels where the moderation was ensured by Kaan Yakuphan, colourful participants such as futurist Ufuk Tarhan, one of the first Turkish participants to the

Erasmus programme Prof. Sermin Örnektekin, young entrepreneur and activist İrem Sefa Yayımalar, Director Yüksel Aksu and Dutch traveller and documentarist Wilco Van Herpen gave their own impression on Erasmus and the importance of such programmes in terms of bringing together young people from both the EU and Turkey.

Ambassador Yenel, who took office as the Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry for EU Affairs on 1 February 2017, underlined in his speech that the Programme is a branded initiative of the EU with the aim of improving tolerance and developing intercultural understanding between people.

On 3 April, Acting Undersecretary of Ministry of EU Affairs Ahmet Yücel and his delegation also attended the Erasmus+ Committee Meeting in Brussels. During the meeting, European Solidarity Corps, ErasmuPro

and the Work Programme for 2018 were discussed.

Apart from these, a consultation for Erasmus+ Mid-term Evaluation has launched by the Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC) in order to seek the views of the public on Erasmus+ as well as other programmes such as Lifelong Learning, Youth in Action, Erasmus Mundus and the like.

In general, the consultation aims to gather comments and views from various stakeholders and the general public on the Erasmus+ programme, its effectiveness and its added value regarding the opportunities as well as challenges of the programme. The consultation also covers of the Erasmus+ predecessor's programmes and other questions regarding a possible successor programme in 2020. Turkey participates educational and youth programme of the EU since 2004.

## IKV DISCUSSED THE CUSTOMS UNION AT BAHÇEŞEHİR UNIVERSITY

IKV Secretary-General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas attended a meeting entitled "The Modernisation Process of the Turkey-EU Customs Union" as a speaker on 6 April within the framework of the "Politics and Society" meeting series organised at Bahçeşehir University. Indicating the critical importance of the modernisation process of

the Customs Union in her presentation, IKV Secretary-General Nas shared figures with respect to impact analyses which have shown how the various sectors would be affected of the process.

Furthermore, she explained the historical background to the Customs Union, its evolution and how it has tremendously contributed to the development

of the Turkish economy in terms of investments and employment. The meeting was also an opportunity to assess the upcoming negotiations with respect to the modernisation of the Customs Union. As such, she indicated the possible opportunities and benefits for the Turkish economy once the negotiations would be successfully completed.

## TIMELINE APRIL 2017

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3	German Minister of State for Europe Michael Roth's visit to Turkey
4	
5	TOBB President Hisarcıkıoğlu hosted EUROCHAMBRES Meeting in Brussels
6	IKV discussed the modernisation process of the Customs Union at Bahçeşehir University
7	Terrorist attack in Stockholm
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10	TOBB President Hisarcıkıoğlu attended ICC Turkey National Committee Board of Directors
11	
12	A Consultation for Erasmus+ Mid-Term Evaluation was launched
13	
14	IKV published Turkish translation of Commission's White Paper on Future of Europe
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16	Constitutional Referendum in Turkey
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18	Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe Co-Rapporteur Ingebjorg Godskesen's visit to Turkey
19	IKV assessed Turkey-EU relations and Customs Union in Gaziantep
20	IKV Brief Note entitled "The Quota Issue of the Turkish Road Transport Sector in the EU" published
21	IKV assessed Turkey-EU relations and Customs Union in Eskişehir
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23	First round of the French Presidential Election
24	IKV organised a meeting on Customs Union in Ankara Chamber of Industry
25	IKV published a Turkish translation of Impact Analysis Prepared by European Commission on Modernisation of the Customs Union
26	Turkey-EU Youth Forum was held in Istanbul (26-28 April)
27	IKV discussed Turkey-EU relations and Customs Union in Samsun
28	IKV assessed Turkey-EU relations and Customs Union in Denizli
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# IKV DISCUSSED CUSTOMS UNION AND UPCOMING NEGOTIATIONS IN VARIOUS CITIES ACROSS TURKEY

IKV delegation toured Turkey and explained the latest developments in Turkey-EU Customs Union in the context of the "Tour d'Horizon in Turkey-EU Relations: Dimensions, New Objectives" and "The Effects of the Modernised Customs Union Upon the Business World" projects in April.

In the context of the "Tour d'Horizon in Turkey-EU Relations: Dimensions, New Objectives" Project which IKV has been pursuing since 2015, IKV organised a series of meetings in various cities across Turkey in order to further enlighten the audiences with respect to the current status of the Customs Union, the upcoming negotiations regarding its modernisation and how it may impact the various sectors of the Turkish economy. As such, it was an opportunity to explain the possible impacts of such negotiations for the economy as a whole, further investment and increase of employment.

#### Visit to Gaziantep and Eskişehir

The first visit of IKV delegation was in Gaziantep on 19 April.



The meeting hosted by Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce is entitled "The Effects of the Modernised Customs Union Upon the Business World". The delegation composed of IKV Secretary-General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas, IKV Strategy and Business Development Director M. Gökhan Kilit and IKV Research Director Çisel İleri gave several presentations with respect to the modernisation process of the Customs Union, the hypothetical effects of the modernisation of the Customs Union upon the agricultural sector as well as the various EU funds of which

the business world is entitled to benefit from. Following the visit to Gaziantep, IKV delegation realised a similar meeting in the western city of Eskişehir on 21 April hosted by Eskişehir Chamber of Commerce. The visit was an occasion for the local audience to know more about the way of how Customs Union works, the benefits for Turkish economy and business community, investment and employment opportunities. Furthermore, the delegation revealed details with respect to the upcoming negotiations on the modernisation process.

#### Visit to Denizli and Samsun

The third visit realised by IKV delegation was to the southern city of Denizli on 25 April hosted by Denizli Chamber of Commerce. In that context, the delegation explained the functioning of the Customs Union, its economic and social implications for Turkey and its economy and the many opportunities that may arise thanks to its upcoming modernisation. Finally, IKV delegation realised a trip to Samsun under the same project on 27 April which was hosted by Samsun Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The meeting was also an opportunity

for the local business community to know more about the intricacies of the architecture of the Customs Union, the benefits it has provided the Turkish business community since it was launched and the various possibilities and opportunities it may bring with respect to the upcoming negotiations regarding its modernisation. As such, IKV delegation gave extensive information with respect to latest developments in the modernisation process of the Customs Union and how it may affect the various sectors composing the Turkish economy.



## IKV'S NEW PUBLICATION: WHITE PAPER ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE



The White Paper on the Future of Europe, released by the European Commission on 1 March 2017, sets out five possible scenarios for the EU which will proceed on its way with 27 Member States after Britain's decision to leave the Union. In the White Paper, the impacts of the scenarios on the main policy areas of the EU are evaluated by their pros and cons. The publication is a Turkish translation of the White Paper prepared by IKV Junior Researcher Selvi Eren.

## IKV'S NEW PUBLICATION ON TURKEY-EU CUSTOMS UNION

IKV has published broad Turkish summary of the impact assessment on the modernisation of Turkey-EU Customs Union, released by the European Commission on 21 December 2016. After explaining problems of the current Customs Union, the impact assessment evaluates different policy options to modernise the Customs Union according to today's conditions and extending its scope by adding public procurement, services and deeper liberalisation in agriculture.

The impacts of each policy option on Turkey and the EU are also evaluated. We present to the attention of our readers broad Turkish summary of the impact assessment on the modernisation of Turkey-EU Customs Union, prepared by IKV Junior Researcher Merve Özcan, with the hope that it will enhance the awareness of the Customs Union's problems and their solutions that are of particular concern to both Turkish and European citizens.



## PACE DECIDED TO RE-OPEN THE POLITICAL MONITORING PROCEDURE FOR TURKEY

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) decided to re-open the monitoring procedure for Turkey on 25 April. The PACE decided to re-open the procedure in respect of Turkey until respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law are addressed in a satisfactory manner.

**A**t the meeting of PACE, the proposal for taking Turkey back into that process was adopted by 113 to 45. It is important to note that the members of the audit committee of PACE highlighted that such a decision was not aimed at punishment but rather solidarity.

By the majority of the votes at PACE, it was decided thus to re-open the political monitoring procedure for Turkey. It is important to note that Turkey had passed this procedure in 2004. The monitoring procedure is currently applied in the following countries which are also full members of the Council of Europe (CoE): Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia and Ukraine.

The political monitoring procedure was first launched following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, with the delinquency of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe in order to monitor closely the adoption as well as the application of CoE norms with respect to democracy, human rights and rule of law. The procedure generally applies to countries that have newly adhered to the CoE with the aim of

bringing together their standards with those of the CoE and thus adequately monitor and supervise their progress in that respect. The adherence and application of CoE norms is known to play an important role also in the possibility of opening EU membership talks, as seen by Central and Eastern European countries.

In a statement posted on social media, Presidential Spokesperson İbrahim Kalın condemned the PACE decision, stressing that it constitutes a "political operation by anti-Turkey circles". Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım also strongly condemned the PACE decision, describing it as both "unfair and "exceeding its authority". He also indicated that such a decision has been realised by parliamentarians from countries which have not shown stronger cooperation in the fight against all forms of terrorism and terrorist organisations.

In a press release, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also condemned the decision, deemed as "taken with political motives in contravention to the established procedures". The Ministry reiterated Turkey's fight against all brutal terrorist organisations with respect to CoE and EU standards.



Moreover, the Ministry urged CoE parliamentarians to act in common sense and to take the necessary steps by adopting a principled stance in order to fully fight against the common scourge posed by the threat of terrorism. It was also indicated that such a decision left no choice for Turkey but to reconsider its current relations with PACE. Despite such a decision, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs highlighted the fact that

Turkey will continue to work towards enhancing the rights and freedoms of all its citizens in adherence to democratic standards, human rights and its commitment to international obligations in that respect. As for Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Ömer Çelik, he described the decision as a "historical" mistake.

On the basis of a report published on 5 April by

Norwegian politician Ingebjørg Godskesen (European Conservatives Group) and Estonian politician Marianne Mikko (Socialist Group), it is mentioned in the report that "the authorities have been "ruling through decree laws" going far beyond what emergency situations require and overstepping the parliament's legislative competence, which the Assembly considers to be a serious democratic deficiency."

## TOBB HOSTED THE EUROCHAMBRES MEETING IN BRUSSELS

TOBB President M. Rifat Hisarcıklioğlu hosted the EUROCHAMBRES Presidential Council Meeting in Brussels on 6 April. Created in 1958, one year after the birth of the European Communities, EUROCHAMBRES is the Brussels-based Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

**E**UROCHAMBRES represents over 19 million member enterprises in Europe through 46 members (45 National Associations of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and 1 transnational Chamber Organisation) and a European network of 2.000 regional and local Chambers. TOBB is one of the founding members of EUROCHAMBRES and Hisarcıklioğlu acts as its Deputy President.

The meeting of EUROCHAMBRES Presidential Council, comprised of the Union of Chambers of Germany, Austria, France, Spain, Italy, Poland, Greece and Turkey,

was held at TOBB Brussels office. At the meeting, representatives of business communities discussed the future of Europe after Brexit. During the meeting, TOBB President Hisarcıklioğlu stressed the importance of close cooperation between Turkey and the EU. Prior to the Presidential Meeting, TOBB President M. Rifat Hisarcıklioğlu and TEPAV Director Prof. Güven Sak provided information regarding the Turkish economy and developments in Turkey at the luncheon hosted by TOBB.

Hisarcıklioğlu also visited Turkey's Permanent Representative to the EU Ambassador H.E. Faruk Kaymakçı and exchanged views



regarding Turkey's relations with the EU. Following the meeting, H.E. Kaymakçı stated that when looked

from an economic perspective Turkey is already in the EU. Lastly, Hisarcıklioğlu met with TOBB ETU

partner education student Merve Bobur in Brussels and learned about the training process.

## “ACCELERATING REFORMS TOWARDS MEETING OUR GOAL OF EU MEMBERSHIP IS CRITICAL”

As IKV, we believe that the importance of accelerating political and economic reforms towards meeting our goal of EU membership which has been pursued by consecutive governments for 58 years is critical in this period.

According to the results released regarding the referendum in April, constitutional amendments leading the way to a presidential system have been adopted with a 51.4 percent approval rate. As IKV, we wish these results to be beneficial for all our country and people.

With the results of this referendum, IKV Chairman Zeytinoğlu stated Turkey has decided to switch to a new political system and the executive competences will be concentrated in the office of the Presidency in this new system. He hopes that profound divisions and polarisation within people will be overcome within the framework of the aim of increasing the prosperity and development of our country and in an environment of pluralist democracy and rule of law.

At this particular juncture, it is of utmost importance for Turkey to strive to advance its growth and development without delay. In this new period, IKV Chairman underlined that the importance of accelerating political and economic reforms towards meeting our goal of EU membership is critical.

As a candidate country, one should recollect that Turkey has achieved important steps towards meeting that goal. The agreement regarding the refugee crisis which was reached last year with the EU and the reforms which have been realised towards meeting the goal of visa liberalisation for Turkish citizens are some examples of Turkey's efforts in this regard. In this point, IKV Chairman said as follows: “Along with the completion of the visa liberalisation process, we would like to



take this opportunity to highlight the importance of taking all the necessary steps regarding the modernisation of the Customs Union, recognising that the EU represents our biggest trade partner.”

The report published by the Monitoring Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) entitled “The functioning of democratic institutions in Turkey” and which

recommended placing Turkey under political monitoring was discussed at PACE General Assembly on 25 April. In that context, the draft resolution including the abovementioned recommendations was adopted by 113 to 45 votes. IKV Chairman Ayhan Zeytinoğlu also reacted to the decision of PACE in a written statement. Indicating that Turkey is a founding member of the Council

of Europe, IKV Chairman Zeytinoğlu added that Turkey played a critical role within the framework of an international order which was set up following the end of the Second World War and which was re-organised after the end of the Cold War. He pursued his words as follows:

“Our country is a founding member of the Council of Europe. As such, it is a party to the European Convention on Human Rights and all other Council of Europe regulations which are based on European values. It is very disappointing to see that Turkey has been placed under political monitoring once again after 13 years with the contention that it is not abiding by such values.”

Reminding that Turkey had been under political monitoring of the Council of Europe between 1996 and 2004, IKV Chairman Zeytinoğlu underscored that the reforms which were realised within the framework of the EU accession process contributed greatly to the ending of the political monitoring process for Turkey at that time. As such, IKV Chairman said that in the EU accession process, which began in 1999 and brought together the opening of accession negotiations in 2005, significant reforms were carried out in accordance with the Copenhagen criteria whilst these reforms not only allowed Turkey to be removed from the political monitoring mechanism of the Council of Europe, but also enabled it to become a rising country, which the international community has respected for its increasing stability and prosperity and which investors regarded as reliable. He said as follows: “Turkey's EU anchor

has always led to positive gains. Today, democracy, the rule of law and human rights need to be returned to the reform process.”

IKV Chairman Zeytinoğlu in his statement pointed out that Turkey is currently assessed within the context of the post-monitoring dialogue process and he further underlined the fact that it will be one of the members under the monitoring procedure together with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova and the Russian Federation.

Regarding the process following the political developments and the referendum in Turkey discussed in the European Parliament on 26 April and the Gymnich meeting of the foreign ministers on 28-29 April, he continued as follows:

“Throughout history we have seen that Turkey is an integral part of Europe. Today, this is still a very true affirmation. The fact that the EU has been blocking membership negotiations for political reasons has led to the lack of credibility of the membership perspective. It is of utmost importance for Europe and European organisations such as the Council of Europe and the EU to adopt a constructive, fair and unbiased approach towards Turkey rather than an exclusionary rhetoric, is not only important for Turkey, but it also holds critical importance for the security and welfare of Europe. The important role that Turkey played in the refugee crisis following the Syrian civil war is testimony to Turkey's critical place in the protection of European borders.”

## MINISTER FOR EU AFFAIRS ÖMER ÇELİK MET WITH GERMAN MINISTER MICHAEL ROTH

Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Ömer Çelik met with Minister of State for Europe at Minister of State for Europe of Germany Michael Roth on 3 April. During his visit to Ankara, Minister of State for Europe Roth also came together with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Ahmet Yıldız. Officials discussed bilateral relations and Turkey-EU relations. Minister of State for Europe Roth took office at the Federal Foreign Office in 2013 and became Commissioner for Franco-German

Cooperation in 2014.

H.E Roth is also member of the Deutsche Welle Broadcasting Board, member of the Board of Trustees of the Institute for European Politics and member of the board of the Franco-German Institute in Ludwigsburg, Chairman of the supervisory board of the Center for International Peace Operations, member of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation Flight, Expulsion, Reconciliation, member of the Foundation Council, German Foundation for Peace Research.



# REMARKS BY THE EU ON PROTECTING CHILDREN IN MIGRATION WITH THIRD COUNTRIES

On 12 April, European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos made a statement with respect to the priority actions for the protection of all children in migration for Member States and third countries such as Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon.



In his statement, he underlined the prevalence of children migration in current migration which is one third of asylum seekers in Europe today. According to him, the protection of migrant children starts before their arrival to the EU and migration has been included in all their dialogues with third countries at regional and global level over the past 2 years. He added that the investment in projects to protect children outside Europe will be continued for ensuring these migrant children's access to healthcare and education, and also children has to be protected from criminal activities or radicalisation. He also emphasised the need of acting collectively for implementing aforementioned actions. Thus, they urged Member States to support these actions to work together with them.

After giving the approximate number of registered eligible applicants that are ready to be relocated in Greece and Italy which is 14,000 and 3,500

respectively, he stated that relocation of all these applicants depends on increase in Member States' number of relocations. For this reason, the report that they present includes recommendations to Member States and they adopted 11<sup>th</sup> relocation and resettlement report. Avramopoulos continued to give more details about relocation by stating that till now 16,000 people are relocated and more than 2,400 of them are from the last reporting period. He showed their commitment to share responsibility with third countries such as Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon and emphasised to enhance their efforts to find an alternative to irregular migration. He concluded his statement by saying that 6<sup>th</sup> monthly report on the Security Union is also presented on that day and this report is focused on actions to combat organised crime which is an area that is often related to terrorism, drugs and firearms trafficking, migrant smuggling, cybercrime.

## COMMISSION PUBLISHED THE 2017 EU JUSTICE SCOREBOARD

The European Commission published its 2017 EU Justice Scoreboard on 10 April. The scoreboard's overarching aim is to assist the national authorities of the Member States with respect to their efforts in enhancing their judicial capabilities. As such, the scoreboard provides an array of comparative data which thus helps the readers in distinguishing the various differences and discrepancies between the Member States in that particular area. The Justice Scoreboard brings together a wide range of data from a variety of different sources thus helping to identify justice-related issues which deserve thorough and careful attention in order to strengthen an environment within the Member States which is friendly towards increased investments, the business community and ordinary citizens. Furthermore, the Scoreboard also contributes in enhancing the knowledge

of the various justice systems based on various indicators which are all recognised with the Member States. The Scoreboard focuses on three main aspects which are as follows: efficiency of justice systems, quality indicators, independence.

In contrast to last year's scoreboard, the 2017 edition looked into the first time at how easily consumers across the Member States may access judicial organs and which channels they can use in order to lodge complaints against some companies. The key findings of the 2017 edition notably include the following points:

- Shorter civil and commercial court proceedings since the first report give years ago including in a number of Member States whose justice systems are facing certain challenges;
- Mixed results regarding consumer protection enforcement, with the length of administrative proceedings and judicial review carrying by country;



- Varied lengths of cases against money laundering in different Member States;
- Continued limited access to justice faced by the poorer citizens especially in Central and

- European Member States;
- Limited use of ICT tools in some of the Member States;
- Improved perception of judicial independence within the general public and business;

- Continuation of absence of harmonisation in terms of quality standards in order to avoid lengthy proceedings which are absent in some Member States.

# MACRON VS LE PEN: HISTORICAL DUO AT THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE IN FRANCE

The first round of the French Presidency elections which is described as a "historic result" is sending far-right populist Le Pen and political novice Macron through to the second round.

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Voters in France went to the polls on Sunday, 23 April, in the first round of the presidential election. Emmanuel Macron topped first round with 24.01 percent of votes, slightly ahead of Marine Le Pen with 21.30 percent, according to final results from the interior ministry.

After UK's vote to "Brexit" and the US vote for the real estate billionaire Trump as president, the French Presidency election is a crucial stage in the struggle with right-wing populism and Euroscepticism. Kicking out the figures of the French political status quo, the 23 April election result marked the dissatisfaction of the voters with the ruling political class. The first round result mirrored others, such as the British vote for Brexit, US election and presidential elections in Austria, where voters have rejected traditional elites.



## The Political Novice and the Far-Right Populist

The favorite candidate of the 2017 French election, Emmanuel Macron, served under François Hollande as Minister of Economy, Industry and Digital Data between 2014 and 2016. But before that, he was a financial investment banker at Rothschild & Cie. Working in a bank after his studies at Institute of political science and administration at two of the most prestigious French schools, reveals his non-linear choice of career. When he launched his movement *En Marche!* on April 6 2016 he was unknown to most French people. It is sure that, starting a movement from scratch without any experience of how to campaign is an unconventional act in French politics.

On the other hand, Macron's rival Marine Le Pen, 48, took over her father's party (FN) in 2011 and has been making a conscious effort to police FN's image and to extend its electorate. Le Pen rejects "extreme right" label and prefers the term "patriotic". Even though FN was founded in 1972, was incapable of broadening his electoral base to win

the first place in elections because of its far right policies. In this sense Le Pen is not a "political novice" like Macron; but far-right populist politician has not any experience of ruling a country. At this point Macron and Le Pen has something in common despite their opposite politic views.

## Political Earthquake in the Presidential Elections

According to Geneva paper *Le Temps*, the result is a "profound change" for France after the neither of the two main parties, the Socialists and the Republicans, had a candidate in the final round of voting. "The rage towards traditional parties, disillusion with corrupt politicians and the desire to try something else were the motivations that led to the qualification of two personalities with very different visions", it wrote.

The first round of the election on Sunday was a closely fought contest, between four of the 11 candidates in the race. François Fillon, a former prime minister who ran for the Republican Party, came third on 20 percent. Despite a late surge, the Communist-backed Jean-Luc Mélenchon was narrowly held to fourth place, on 19.6

percent. And in addition Benoît Hamon, the Socialists' candidate was held fifth place, on 6 percent, which is a heavy defeat for center left.

The "political gambler" Macron whose *En Marche!* Movement has only existed for a year, defied all the rules. Macron is an economic liberal who believes in free markets and in benefits of globalisation. Le Pen, by contrast, is an anti-establishment and anti-EU nationalist who defends "economic patriotism" and "intelligent protectionism" as far-right politician defines her party's policy.

## Two Issues That Shape the French Elections

According to the latest polls right before the first round security issues and social issues including unemployment, which is cruising at an average 10 percent, remain primary concerns of French voters. Security issue stems from the context of the persistent terrorist attacks on the country which started in 2015. On this topic, security concerns are furthered by some of presidential candidates, especially by far-right populist and Eurosceptic Le Pen, who are fuelling fear to rally the electorate. For Le Pen's National Front (FN),

France must barricade itself from outsiders to guarantee both its security and unity. However, according to Le Pen withdrawing from the EU is the most effective way to regain the liberty and the dignity of France. "Europe is locking us up, Europe is forbidding us, and Europe is bullying us" declared Marine Le Pen during a television debate among the main candidates. In spite of Le Pen's extremism, polls and also first round result, ranked second with 21.30 percent, show that she is one of the most popular politicians in France.

On the other hand, Le Pen's main challenger the 39-year-old former Rothschild banker and economy minister Emmanuel Macron gives a strong defence of the EU values. "We need Europe, so we will remake it," Macron told the French voters. "I will be the president of the awakening of our European ambitions." The progressive, pro-business Macron campaigns on a pro-EU and a balancing outlook and aims to get votes from both right and left views.

## Which Future for France and the EU?

The first round results indicate a stunning victory for 39-year-old

Macron who has never before stood for elected office. Now, Macron carries a symbolic value well beyond his homeland for the presidential election on May 7<sup>th</sup>. If Macron defeats Le Pen, founding member of the EU will show the rest of the world that pro-European liberalism can still triumph over populism and Euroscepticism. According to some experts, the result of the first round elections means that the left-right divide is replaced by nationalist- globalist conflict.

After the second round, the legislative elections in June will be the next test for the triumphant of the presidency elections. Macron who is a new political face has a big chance to be the next president of France's Fifth Republic. Opinion polls taken since April 23, suggest that Macron will win at least 60 percent of the vote, but with a significant voter abstention. Nevertheless, despite Le Pen's possible defeat in France, the threat of populism and extremism still continues to exist. The hard part will begin for Macron and European leaders after elections because they need to prove that their political programs are efficacious in solving security and unemployment issues.