



Mr. Mustafa Çiftçi
Minister of the Interior of Türkiye
Devlet, T.C. İçişleri Bakanlığı,
06580 Çankaya/Ankara
Türkiye

Ref ► MMS 2026-318

Strasbourg, 27 April 2026

Subject: Situation of local democracy in Türkiye

Dear Minister,

We, the Rapporteurs on Türkiye of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, of the European Parliament and the President of the Working Group on Türkiye of the European Committee of the Regions follow closely the situation in Türkiye, one of the oldest members of the Council of Europe and a candidate country to the European Union.

Our cooperation with Türkiye has been based on our common values, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, which form the foundation of our continued engagement.

We are therefore jointly addressing you to express our shared concerns regarding recent developments affecting local democracy in your country, and how we can work together with you to overcome these.

In particular, we note that on 23 March of this year, the pre-trial detention of Ekrem İmamoğlu, Mayor of Istanbul and President of the Union of Turkish municipalities has entered its second year. Furthermore, many other local elected representatives affiliated with the opposition in Türkiye remain in prolonged pre-trial detention. As recently emphasized by the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) in its report of 24 October 2025 ([CDL-AD\(2025\)045-e](#)), if elected mayors' pretrial detention does not fulfil the conditions laid down in Article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights, this would negatively affect local democracy. The current situation is weakening democracy in general by undermining the rights of voters to freely choose their representatives. We have systematically raised our concerns regarding these issues through our political dialogue with the Turkish authorities.

Committed to strengthening local democracy in Türkiye, we reiterate our readiness to continue this dialogue, particularly with regard to adherence to fundamental principles of democracy, justice, human rights, and the issue of pre-trial detention of elected representatives. We stand ready to further support Türkiye in fulfilling its democratic commitments as a member of the Council of Europe and strategic partner of the European Union.

We trust that by jointly addressing these ongoing challenges, we can achieve tangible and sustainable progress in upholding democratic principles and values in Türkiye, to the benefit of its citizens and the wider European community.

We look forward to the continuation of our cooperation in a spirit of partnership and shared responsibility.

Yours sincerely,

 <p>Parliamentary Assembly Assemblée parlementaire</p>	 <p>THE CONGRESS COUNCIL OF EUROPE LE CONGRÈS CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE</p>	 <p>European Parliament</p>	 <p>European Committee of the Regions</p>
Lord David Blencathra	Bryony Rudkin	Nacho Sanchez Amor	Jelena Drenjanin
			
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Cc:

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