



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council N° 1191
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**EU Statement on Early Presidential and Parliamentary
Elections in Turkey and Restrictions in the Observation
Process**

Early presidential and parliamentary elections in Turkey on 24 June saw a very high voter turnout and a broad spectrum of candidates and parties competing in the elections. This reaffirmed the strong attachment of the Turkish people to democratic processes and the pursuit of their civil liberties as well as the rule of law and fundamental freedoms.

As the internationally recognized OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission (EOM) assesses, the voters had a genuine choice, but the conditions for campaigning were not equal. In addition, the restrictive legal framework and powers granted under the ongoing state of emergency restricted the freedoms of assembly and expression, including in the media. Despite the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and previous recommendations by ODIHR and Council of Europe, the 10 percent national electoral threshold, the highest among OSCE and Council of Europe states, continues to limit political pluralism.

The EU deplores the decision by Turkish authorities to deny two members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's election observation mission, German parliamentarian Andrej Hunko and Swedish parliamentarian Jabar Amin, entry into Turkey.

We would also like to express our deep concern that diplomatic staff and other individuals affiliated with Ankara-based Embassies of participating States were not permitted to act as Short Terms Observers. As Short Term Observers are not official representatives of their seconding states, we do not believe that their diplomatic status in Turkey or affiliation with Ankara-based Embassies in general are valid grounds for a conflict of interest, or that their participation would have compromised

the observation mission. According to standard OSCE election observation methodology, the country that has invited ODIHR and the OSCE PA to observe should not - directly or indirectly - influence the composition of the mission. We value dialogue in this Organisation and would like to hear the Turkish delegation's views on this.

The elections trigger the entry into force of the new presidential system which has far reaching implications for Turkish democracy - as raised by the Venice Commission - regarding checks and balances. In general, Turkey would benefit from urgently addressing key shortcomings regarding the rule of law and fundamental rights and following up on the OSCE/ODIHR EOM preliminary findings and on the final report when it is issued. We will work with the relevant Turkish authorities to address together the many common challenges ahead of us.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as ARMENIA align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.