



**JOINT DECLARATION BY THE
EU-TURKEY JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Izmir, 22 and 23 November 2021**

1. The EU-Turkey Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) brings together representatives of organised civil society from the EU and Turkey. It complements the other bodies set up within the framework of the Association Agreement between the EU and Turkey and enables civil society organisations from both sides to monitor the accession negotiations and initiate debates on issues of common interest. Its members come from various economic and social interest groups.
2. In the framework of its regular contacts, the JCC held in Izmir on 22 and 23 November 2021 a historic 40th meeting. General developments in EU-Turkey relations, the state of the economy in Turkey and EU-Turkey economic and trade relations, as well as social issues and employment and the consequences of the pandemic at large, were discussed in the opening session together with **Faruk Kaymakci**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Director for EU Affairs, **Nikolaus Meyer-Landrut**, Head of the EU Delegation to Turkey, **Dimitris Dimitriadis**, President of the EESC External Relations Section (REX), and **Maciej Popowski**, Acting Director General of the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR).
3. During the working sessions of the meeting, disaster management and the green economy were discussed on the basis of written reports prepared by both sides. **Christos Stylianides**, former European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, contributed to the discussions via a video message.
4. The modernisation of the EU-Turkey Customs Union was also on the agenda in order to obtain information on the expectations of the Turkish side. An in-depth discussion was not possible at this stage as the EU has not adopted a mandate to start negotiations for the upgrading of the Customs Union and this issue is therefore subject to additional guidance from the European Council.
5. Both the EU and Turkey must respect the obligations and work towards the objectives of bilateral agreements, including the EU-Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016, and honour the spirit and letter of international agreements, laws and conventions, such as the Paris Agreement.

Disaster management

Diana Indjova, EESC rapporteur, in cooperation with Panagiotis Gkofas, EESC rapporteur for the EU Civil Protection Mechanism

6. The [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#) (UCPM) provides a framework for cooperation and assistance in the event of major emergencies inside and outside the EU. The Mechanism aims to strengthen cooperation between the EU Member States and the six Participating States (including Turkey) and facilitates coordination in the field of civil protection to improve prevention, preparedness and response to disasters.
7. While the primary responsibility for preventing, preparing for and responding to natural and manmade disasters lies with the Member States, the Mechanism, and in particular rescEU, promotes solidarity between EU Member States in responding collectively to natural and manmade disasters through the establishment of a reserve of capacities that complement the existing capacities of all EU Member States and the six Participating States.
8. The coordinated sharing of information and human resources at disaster management events, provided by the Mechanism through the UCPM Knowledge Network and the Emergency Response Coordination Centre, will increase the effectiveness and capacity building of the EU-Turkey partnership.
9. The JCC draws particular attention to the following aspects:
 - establishing within the UCPM an independent and effective financial instrument to provide compensation for affected populations and property damage,
 - encouraging the transnational joint disaster management and first response teams with joint training, equipment standardisation,
 - developing best practices and sharing these examples with the member states of the Mechanism,
 - Developing standards for joint volunteering programmes,
 - in the event of emergencies, giving priority for immediate response under the Mechanism. (The European side of the JCC suggested adding "without requiring a prior request from the member state concerned", whereas the Turkish side had reservations.)

Asmin Kavas Bilgiç, TEPAV Project Manager, JCC-TR rapporteur

10. Cooperation between Turkey and EU in the area of the UCPM is developing with every passing day.
In this context, project announcements are followed and relevant ministries are encouraged to participate. Joint activities carried out to date include:
 - active participation in the CPM Training Program, which includes training in the field of disaster management,
 - Ankara and Istanbul AFAD Heavy Urban Search and Rescue Team, AKUT Medium Urban Search and Rescue Team and the Ministry of Health's Emergency Medical Team

2 (EMT2) are registered in the European Civil Protection Pool (ECP). In addition, a "water rescue and support team" consisting of 11 people, a "barrier team" consisting of 20 people and a "high-capacity pump team" formed within the scope of an IPA project were included in the pool,

- our experts can share their experiences or receive/provide on-site training within the scope of the UCPM Expert Exchange Programme,
- our country hosted the MODEX exercise held on 10-14 November 2021 for the first time. 378 people from 6 UCPM member countries (Italy, France, Spain, Austria, Greece and Bulgaria) participated with 60 vehicles. The exercise, which was carried out for an earthquake scenario, took place with a total of 1 715 participants, including the national teams,
- within the framework of free access to the mapping and imaging systems used by the EU, Copernicus was activated for the floods that took place in the Black Sea region in 2019 and the Elazig earthquake in 2020, enabling satellite imagery to be obtained.

11. Turkey will strengthen cooperation with the UCPM and facilitate coordination in the field of civil protection in order to improve the effectiveness of systems for preventing, preparing for and responding to natural and manmade disasters.
12. Fire services are one of the service areas that secure people's living spaces. The fire service in Turkey is one of the first services under the responsibility of the public within the municipal services. Since the field of duty of the fire brigade is very wide, there are many legal regulations regarding fire services in Turkey. Although the fire service in Turkey is organised as a local service, there are many institutions at central and local level within the Turkish administrative structure. Cooperation and coordination between the central and local governments in the fire services in Turkey should be strengthened.

Green economy

Michael McLoughlin, EESC rapporteur

13. The "Green Economy" concept has evolved significantly over recent years, as climate mitigation is increasingly being understood and approached as a critical risk management strategy for governments around the world, as they seek to implement the goals of the Paris Agreement.
14. The EU has committed to reaching net-zero emissions by 2050. This goal was translated into law through the EU Climate Law, the legislative instrument that covers nearly a whole continent under a legally binding carbon neutrality target.
15. Following COP 26 we are taking on a critical role in making progress on climate change and fully meeting the challenges of the Paris Agreement. Once more the pictures provided by research and data are stark. The ratification of the Paris Agreement by Turkey presents a major opportunity for cooperation between Turkey and the EU in advancing this major global issue together. Our JCC meeting urges both parties to examine all ways they can work together and provide assistance to each other and all those seeking to address climate change around the world.

16. The phasing-out of fossil fuels and the move to a green economy will be a major change in how we do business. Carbon budgeting and Emissions Trading Systems can help deliver this. However, the change will offer tremendous opportunities for growth and co-operation on this can provide a win-win solution for Turkey and the EU. We should now both be committed to the same targets. Both sides have something to bring to the table and can provide mutual learning.
17. There are clearly challenges and we must commit to the principle of a "Just Transition" to ensure that those least able to are not saddled with an impossible burden. Finance will continue to be a major area, but progress has been made and models exist and will be further developed. The European Green Deal has set a course that can work and act as a framework for others. We hope all those committed to tackling climate change and the clear and present threat it poses will join us in embracing such an approach.

Selin Özokcu, TEPAV Policy Analyst, "Just Transition" JCC-TR rapporteur

18. Whilst the EU committed to reaching the net-zero emissions target by 2050, cooperation between Turkey and the EU becomes more crucial to overcome this global challenge. As the climate change agenda becomes climate action, the decarbonisation of Turkey will be critical for the decarbonisation of the EU.
19. Turkey has now ratified the Paris Agreement in October 2021 and set 2053 as the net-zero carbon emissions year. As the Green Deal is a capital-intensive economic transformation process, fixed capital investments are of utmost importance to carry out the green and digital transformation process. Note that capital is a scarce commodity in countries like Turkey, and so it is the first area of cooperation between the EU and Turkey. The EU has to define a transition agenda for Turkey as it is doing for other candidate countries.
20. Turkey needs to define Emissions Trading Systems and the coal exit time to achieve the 2053 carbon net-zero target. At this point, the experience shared by the EU is invaluable in terms of a transition to a coal-free economy that protects social cohesion. Additionally, increasing education attainment is crucial to reach this target of decarbonisation. In addition, Turkey signed the COP26 Declaration on Accelerating the Transition to 100% Zero Emission Cars and Vans globally by 2040. Turkey has already started to manufacture an electric car with 100% IP rights and this car will be on the market by the beginning of 2023.
21. A just transition is about bouncing forward through the digital and green transformations. Once again, the EU's experience is required to facilitate a transparent public-private dialogue in Turkey to develop the country's capability and adaptability in bringing about a carbon-neutral economy. A just transition is not possible without discussion among key stakeholders to ensure that the principles of "no-one is left behind" and "business continuity" are implemented.
22. The JCC's 41st meeting will be held in Brussels.