



*European Economic and Social Committee*

**The EESC Workers' Group strongly support the civil society organisations in Turkey.**

The Workers' group has been actively engaged with Turkey in the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) since the very beginning (1995). The JCC was strongly supporting Turkish civil society organisations, to defend fundamental rights, trade unions and women rights particularly at risk. In the last months we are witnessing the serious deterioration of the freedom of expression and freedom of speech, which led to massive dismissals of public employees and other workers, in most cases without any bases of evidence or compliance with the rule of law. .

Looking at the situation in Turkey, the Workers group would like to reiterate the position already approved by the EESC many times. In order to ensure effective protection of human rights, all rule of law standards should be fully applied, and they should be covered by regular reporting. In particular, this concerns the power of courts to refer legislation and government measures to a higher court to check for breaches of fundamental and human rights.

Equally, citizens' rights should be guaranteed so that actions against violations of fundamental rights can be brought before the competent national and international courts and other competent bodies. We strongly believe that this condition should also apply in the negotiations on the Customs Union and the Refugees Joint Declaration, going on between EU and Turkey.

The Workers' group strongly supports the importance of maintaining a dialogue at all levels and will monitor and report back the situation with the Turkish civil society organisations, starting with our Turkish trade unions colleagues.

**DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS!**  
**DEFEND FREEDOM OF PRESS!**  
**DEFEND FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION!**