



## **EU-Turkey High Level Economic Dialogue Press Communiqué**

**April 26, 2016, Ankara**

Turkey - European Union (EU) Summit of 29 November 2015 marked a new beginning yielding concrete results such as re-energizing accession process which constitutes the backbone of Turkey-EU relations, acceleration of visa liberalization dialogue, burden sharing in migration management, updating Customs Union and high level dialogue in the areas of common interest such as economy, energy as well as international issues.

As an important part of this process the European Union and Turkey held the first High-Level Economic Dialogue (HLED) in Istanbul and Ankara on 25-26 April 2016, which was co-chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Şimşek and Vice President of the European Commission Jyrki Katainen. The EU delegation included Commissioners Pierre Moscovici (Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs), Johannes Hahn (Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations) and Karmenu Vella (Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries); the Turkish delegation included Ministers Volkan Bozkır (EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator), Mustafa Elitaş (Economy), Bülent Tüfenkci (Customs and Trade), Cevdet Yılmaz (Development and Binali Yıldırım (Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications).

The High-Level Economic Dialogue aims to further enhance the economic relations, which have been significantly improved as a result of the Customs Union between the EU and Turkey, through developing a mutual understanding of economic policies and structural reform agendas. The first day included an EU-Turkey Business Dialogue in Istanbul where officials from the Commission and Turkish Government, and representatives of major Turkish and European businesses came together and focused on how to create a better business environment and deepen bilateral trade and investment links. The second day of the HLED was held in Ankara where ministerial-level discussions were held about the outlook for the EU and Turkish economies and the need for an ambitious reform agenda.

Ministers and Commissioners noted that global economic growth is weak and the outlook is challenging with risks mainly on the downside. Volatility in financial markets, geopolitical tensions, terrorism and refugee crises continue to weigh on the economic prospects both globally and regionally. Against this backdrop, both parties exchanged their views on these challenges, and noted that all available policy levers should be employed to achieve strong growth, sustainable development and balanced economy.

Ministers and Commissioners underlined the importance of reforms to address structural deficiencies and support potential growth in both the EU and Turkey. In this regard, they had an exchange on the structural reform efforts of the EU and welcomed the progress achieved in major reform areas. Both parties also noted the structural reform agenda for Turkey and the implementation track record of the Program for 2016.

The discussions put special emphasis on investment, in particular the Investment Plan for Europe, the promotion of foreign direct investments in the EU and Turkey, and addressing obstacles to investment, including in the green and blue economies. There was a common understanding on the great potential between the EU and Turkey, and agreement to continue their dialogue to develop measures to further promote investments.

To meet the ambitions in the investment area, Ministers and Commissioners reiterated the crucial role of regional and multilateral investment and development banks, in particular the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Council of Europe Development Bank, and welcomed their operational, financial and capacity building contributions.

Ministers and Commissioners welcomed the strengthening of relations between the EU and Turkey as stated in the Turkey - EU Summit of 29 November 2015 and further recognized the merits of the High Level Economic Dialogue and agreed to meet next year in Brussels.