Role of women in Turkey in social, economic and political activities

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Emine BOZKURT (PES, NL) on the role of women in Turkey in social, economic and political activities. The report emphasised that respecting human rights, including women's rights, was a sine qua non for membership of the EU, and called on the Commission to make the issue of human rights, including women's rights, "central to the agenda for the negotiations with Turkey ". While commending Turkey 's recent legislative reforms, the committee expressed concern over the lack of progress on the implementation of legislation in the field of women's rights and underlined the need for "full and effective implementation of the new legislation".

The report emphasised the key role of civil society in pushing for the recent reforms. MEPs believed that the entire political class as well as grassroots organisations, religious communities and the media must be involved if democratic change was to be achieved.

The report also raised the issue of violence against women, and called on the Turkish Government to take action to protect women at risk, such as providing easily accessible healthcare and legal support and protection. Among other concerns were the involvement of Turkish women in politics, which remains weak, (only 4.4% of members of parliament are women and around 1% of representatives at local level), access to education, and the low number of women active on the labour market.

The committee urged Turkey to ratify Additional Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights which deals with preventing discrimination. Finally, MEPs said that they intended to monitor the situation of women in Turkey closely and report on it annually through the EP Women's Rights Committee, and they called on the Commission to do the same.