



**Meeting of the Bureau of  
PES Local | Socialist Local Representatives in Europe  
on 25<sup>th</sup> of April 2019 in Vienna**

**RESOLUTION**

**After local elections in Turkey the will of the electorate must be respected!**

The CHP and HDP parties, both associate member parties in the Party of European Socialists, scored considerable electoral successes in the local elections in Turkey on 31 March 2019. With 30.9% of votes, the CHP achieved the second best result nationwide. The HDP turned out again to be the strongest political force in local authorities in the mainly Kurdish populated regions of the country in Southeastern Turkey and obtained nationwide 4.2% of votes.

The CHP will in future appoint the mayor in the three largest cities in Turkey: Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. In Istanbul and Ankara, CHP candidates are taking over from AKP mayors in town halls. The HDP has again obtained a majority in the mayoral elections in the big city of Diyarbakir and in 64 other towns in Southeastern Turkey.

The Bureau of PES Local congratulates the CHP and the HDP for these electoral successes. They are all the more significant, as local elections in Turkey were held under unfair conditions. Despite considerable obstruction of the opposition by the government and the AKP, unfair and imbalanced media coverage and the use of state resources by the ruling party or its candidates, the CHP and the HDP were able to score major victories, in particular in the big cities.

We very much welcome the fact that the electoral commission eventually handed the new mayor of Istanbul, Ekrem Imamoglu, the certificate of appointment, even though the ruling party has questioned the election result. As local representatives, we observe with great concern and incomprehension the looming disregard for the will of the electorate and the consequent limitations on local democracy in Southeastern Turkey. Six elected mayors there were denied their election victory on the ground that, following the attempted coup in 2016, they had been dismissed from the civil service by governmental decree and are thus unable to take up any public office. The electoral commission has now announced that the elected mayors are to be replaced by the second-ranking candidates in the elections. However, why did the electoral commission allow the relevant HDP candidates to stand for elections, if they may not hold any public office? This way of proceeding is utterly unacceptable to democrats and a gross violation of the election results.

The arrest of numerous mayors and local representatives and the use of state administrators in recent years in predominantly Kurdish populated Southeastern Turkey, violates the principles of local self-government and local democracy. Therefore, PES Local appeals to the Turkish government to restore the principles of democracy and the rule of law and to guarantee local self-government. We urge the European Union and the Council of Europe and their member states to call insistently on the Turkish government to do so.

PES Local reaffirms the desire to have good partnership relations between the EU and Turkey, in particular between citizens. A democratic order based on the rule of law is an indispensable prerequisite to joining the EU. We will continue to monitor closely developments in Turkey and we stand alongside the democrats.