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**Türkiye's Green Agenda and Progress in Sustainability:  
An Analysis Based on the European Union's Türkiye 2024 Report**

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**Türkiye's Green Agenda and Progress in Sustainability:  
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## **Introduction**

In today's world, where the concept of sustainability intersects with global progress along a shared trajectory, the Republic of Türkiye finds itself at a crossroads filled with opportunities and challenges. Since 1998, the European Union has been publishing regular reports to evaluate the progress and development of Türkiye in its bid for full membership. Starting in 2021, these reports began to include a separate section on Türkiye's progress in sustainability and the green agenda. This section evaluates all steps taken under "transport policy," "energy," "Trans-European networks," and "environment and climate change."

This study aims to shed light on Türkiye's progress in these areas, taking into account the European Union's increasing sensitivity to green agendas and sustainability. A brief evaluation is conducted based on the most up-to-date data available from the European Union's Türkiye 2024 Report.

## **1. Türkiye's Transport Policy**

The Republic of Türkiye, as part of its candidacy for the European Union and its other international binding commitments, has adhered to its 2030 and 2053 goals and shaped its transport policy accordingly. The 2024 Report highlights moderate progress in decarbonizing Türkiye's transport sector by 2053, which aligns with these efforts. These efforts are also consistent with the broader goal of the European Union to achieve a carbon-neutral economy. Türkiye underscores the importance of innovation in reducing emissions, initiating feasibility studies for green technologies based on alternative fuels.

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Sustainable urban mobility planning is also among Türkiye's priorities in transport policy. Türkiye has begun developing Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans to increase resilience against disasters. However, effective implementation requires strengthened coordination between local and central authorities. The European Union's report also recommends increased investment in green technologies and setting interim targets for decarbonizing aviation and maritime transport (2024 EU Report, Chapter 14).

## **2. Türkiye's Energy Policy**

The Republic of Türkiye has shown progress at a level defined as limited by the European Union in its policies and actions related to the energy sector and has demonstrated efforts to align its energy policies with the European Union's energy standards (2024 EU Report, Chapter 15). The adoption of the National Energy Efficiency Strategy and Roadmap can be defined as a step that reflects this determination. In Türkiye, the scope of renewable energy projects, particularly in solar and wind energy, continues to expand. This expansion can be considered an indicator of Türkiye's commitment to increasing energy diversity within the country.

The European Union has identified Türkiye's dependence on Russia in the energy sector as a critical source of concern. The report publicly states that legislative changes made in the natural gas market to reduce this dependency and align with the European Union's third energy package requirements have been inadequate. The European Union also shared with the Republic of Türkiye its recommendations to establish a legally binding timeline for the unbundling of activities in the natural gas sector and to put an end to protective practices in renewable energy resources (2024 EU Report, Chapter 15).

## **3. Trans-European Networks**

Türkiye's integration with the Trans-European networks is linked to its compliance with the European Union's infrastructure standards. However, the relevant report emphasizes that Türkiye's progress in this regard has not yet fully aligned with the European Union's *acquis* (2024 EU Report, Chapter 21). The report states that establishing or revising these networks to comply with EU standards would facilitate

Türkiye's integration into European transport and energy corridors. This integration is also highlighted as being of vital importance for the development of regional cooperation and economic relations.

#### **4. Environment and Climate Change**

The report states that Türkiye has demonstrated its determination to address global climate issues by adopting updated "Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies" covering the years 2024–2030 (2024 EU Report, Chapter 27). However, the results in the chapter on environment and climate change can be described as quite mixed. This is because the Türkiye 2024 Report reveals that significant deficiencies persist in aligning with existing European Union directives on industrial pollution, water and waste management, biodiversity, and air quality.

In the face of these deficiencies, the European Union recommends in the report that Türkiye focus on ensuring compliance with the emission trading requirements under the Paris Agreement and enhancing protections for biodiversity and natural resources (2024 EU Report, Chapter 27).

#### **5. Challenges, Opportunities, and Policy Recommendations**

It is evident that Türkiye faces challenges encompassing policy, infrastructure, and governance in aligning with the European Union's Green Agenda. Delays in legal reforms and structural inadequacies undermine progress, hinder compliance with international standards and trade agreements, and simultaneously cause Türkiye to miss out on numerous economic opportunities. Moreover, reliance on conventional energy sources and the inadequacy of renewable technologies further exacerbates these issues. However, Türkiye's progress in renewable energy projects and the development of cross-border transport networks demonstrates significant potential.

Strengthening policy frameworks, promoting regional cooperation, and investing in green technologies will create a favourable environment for Türkiye to position itself as a key player in sustainable development within the region.

The recommendations in the European Union's Türkiye 2024 Report for the areas covered in this study generally emphasize the need for holistic and strategic reforms.

The adoption of green technologies in transportation and the integration of disaster resilience into urban planning are critically important (2024 EU Report, Chapter 14). In the energy sector, increasing legislative alignment and diversifying energy sources are required to reduce dependency on imports (2024 EU Report, Chapter 15). Accelerating alignment with EU acquis in Trans-European networks is noted as enhancing Türkiye's role in regional connectivity (2024 EU Report, Chapter 21). Environmental reforms, particularly in emission trading and biodiversity conservation, are deemed essential for achieving long-term sustainability goals (2024 EU Report, Chapter 27).

## **Conclusion**

The European Union's Türkiye 2024 Report sheds a critical yet constructive light on the country's efforts to align with the European Union's Green Agenda and sustainability goals. The report reveals not only Türkiye's meticulous efforts across four different themes but also the dynamic interplay of progress and stagnation. Although Türkiye has taken significant steps to address deficiencies in its European Union candidacy process, existing systemic issues require continuous effort and international cooperation. Compliance with European Union standards is not only a prerequisite for accession but also an opportunity to enhance Türkiye's economic and environmental resilience.

The challenges and risks Türkiye faces in bridging policy gaps and achieving its accession goals are not only political but also environmental and economic. Through strategic reforms and targeted investments, Türkiye has the potential to emerge not only as a candidate country but also as a regional leader in sustainable development. By addressing structural inefficiencies and investing in sustainable technologies, Türkiye can build a more inclusive and sustainable future.

The European Union's recommendations provide a roadmap for achieving these goals, emphasizing the importance of transparency, alignment, and innovation in ensuring progress.

**References**

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