

As a Member of the European Parliament, I served on the EU–Türkiye Joint Parliamentary Committee, during which time Asli Altan was my Turkish language instructor. She is an inspiring and dynamic teacher; under her guidance, my Turkish language skills developed rapidly, and I gained the confidence to communicate effectively in both political and everyday contexts.

Over two consecutive summers, she organized intensive language programs in Çeşme (İzmir), where we had four hours of instruction each morning, followed by cultural activities in the afternoons. This immersive structure provided an exceptional opportunity to learn the language in context. She consistently created opportunities for us to engage with local communities (through daily interactions such as shopping, shared meals, and workshops) thereby reinforcing practical language use.

Moreover, Asli Hanim instilled in me an enduring appreciation for the Turkish language and culture, one that has remained with me long after my departure from political life.

Arlene McCarthy OBE