Visa Lib Scorecard

Turkey's progress on the visa liberalisation roadmap

On 20 October 2014, the European Commission published its first report assessing whether Turkey complies with the benchmarks that its visa liberalisation roadmap sets out. Once it does, Turkey will qualify for visa-free travel with the Schengen countries. The Commission assessment came 10 months after the EU-Turkey visa liberalisation process was launched on 16 December 2013.

In the report, the Commission looked at all the individual benchmarks and used five distinct formulations to describe progress. We have "translated" them into five grades (from 1 for "benchmark fulfilled" to 5 for "benchmark not fulfilled") and use three colours to visualise progress: green, yellow and red.

This is the roadmap legend in detail (the sentences in quotation marks are direct quotes from the Commission report):

- *"Requirement fulfilled"*: **grade 1 and green**

- *"Almost fulfilled* (i.e. only some limited work still needs to be done to entirely fulfil the requirement)"*: **grade 2 and green**

- *"Fulfilled partially, but with good prospects for further progress* (i.e. much work still needs to be done, but the results achieved and the work done by the Turkish authorities are substantial, and developments so far are encouraging):"* **grade 3 and yellow**

- *"Only partially fulfilled* (i.e. much work still needs to be done to fulfil the requirements of the benchmark, no particular positive developments to address them were observed):"* **grade 4 and red**

- *"Requirement not fulfilled* (i.e. Turkey is far from meeting this benchmark)"*: **grade 5 and red**

RED ALERT - PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

I. Requirements related to the readmission of illegal migrants	Grade
Implement readmission obligations existing with Member States	5
Implement the EU-Turkey readmission agreement in all its provisions (solid track record)	5
Strengthen the capacity of the competent authority to process readmission applications	5
Process readmission requests in line with domestic and EU data protection requirements	5
Compile and share with MS and the European Commission statistics on readmission	5
Establish & implement internal procedures to identify and return Turkish citizens, third-country nationals and stateless persons illegally residing in EU MS, facilitate the transit of persons being returned elsewhere	4
Block 1: Document security	
Exchange passport specimens, visa forms and information on false documents, cooperate on document security with the EU	4
Block 2: Migration management	
Adopt & implement legislation on the movement of persons at the external borders and the organisation of the border authorities in line with Turkey's 2006 IBM strategy and principles of the Schengen Border Code and Schengen Catalogue	5
Allow visa-free access to Turkish territory for the citizens of all EU MS	5
Enhance cooperation and information exchange between the staff and bodies in charge of border management, the custom service and other law enforcement agencies	4
Ensure cooperation with neighbouring EU MS, in particular on border management	4
Pursue the alignment of Turkish visa policy towards the EU *acquis* vis-à-vis the main countries representing important sources of illegal migration for the EU	4
Set up & apply a mechanism to monitor migration flows (regular and illegal), develop situational picture on illegal migration flows and the different countries of origin	4
Seek to conclude and implement readmission agreements with countries that represent sources of important illegal migration directed towards Turkey or EU MS	4
Block 3: Public order and security	
Conclude and implement an Operational Cooperation Agreement with EUROPOL	5
Sign, ratify and implement relevant international data protection conventions	5
Adopt and implement legislation on the protection of personal data in line with the EU standards	5
Continue & complete the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan for the fight against organised crime, ensuring adequate human and financial resources	4
Sign & ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Human Trafficking, adopt and implement legislation in line with it and with the relevant EU *acquis* on prevention of THB, the prosecution of traffickers and protection and assistance to their victims	4
Provide adequate infrastructure and resources ensuring decent reception and protection of victims of trafficking and supporting their social and professional reintegration	4
Continue implementing the National Strategy and the Action Plan on the Fight against Corruption and the recommendations of GRECO (I., II. and III. Evaluation Rounds)	4
Develop working relations with EUROJUST	4
Continue implementing the 1980 Hague Convention on civil aspects of international child abduction, accede to the 1996 and the 2007 Hague Conventions related to parental responsibility and the protection of children, and international recovery of child support	4
Provide effective judicial cooperation in criminal matters, incl. in extradition matters, to all EU MS	4
Block 4: External Relations and Fundamental Rights	
Develop and implement policies addressing Roma social exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination in access to education, health services, ID cards, housing, employment and participation in public life	4
Ratify additional Protocols n. 4 and 7 of the European Convention on Human Rights	4
Revise - in line with the ECHR and with the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) case law, the EU acquis and EU Member States practices - the legal framework as regards organised crime and terrorism, as well as its interpretation by the courts and by the security forces and the law enforcement agencies, so as to ensure the right to liberty and security, the right to a fair trial and freedom of expression, of assembly and association in practice	4

THE SCORECARD IN FULL

I. Requirements related to the readmission of illegal migrants	Grade
Implement readmission obligations existing with Member States	5
Implement the EU-Turkey readmission agreement in all its provisions (solid track record)	5
Strengthen the capacity of the competent authority to process readmission applications	5
Process readmission requests in line with domestic and EU data protection requirements	5
Compile and share with MS and the European Commission statistics on readmission	5
Establish & implement internal procedures to identify and return Turkish citizens, third-country nationals and stateless persons illegally residing in EU MS, facilitate the transit of persons being returned elsewhere	4
Ratify the EU-Turkey readmission agreement initialled on 21 June 2012	1
II. Requirements related to Document Security; Migration Management; Public Order and Security; Fundamental Rights	
Block 1: Document security	
Exchange passport specimens, visa forms and information on false documents, cooperate on document security with the EU	4
Continue issuing machine-readable biometric travel documents in compliance with ICAO and EU standards, introduce passports with biometric data in line with EU standards	3
Ensure the integrity and security of the personalisation, distribution and validation process for passports and breeder documents	2
Ensure a high level of security of breeder documents and ID cards, define strict procedures for application and issuance	2
Establish anti-corruption training programmes & ethical codes for officials dealing with visas, breeder documents and passports	1
Report to Interpol/LASP data base on lost and stolen passports	1
Adopt and implement measures ensuring the integrity and security of the civil status and civil registration process	1
Block 2: Migration management	
Adopt & implement legislation on the movement of persons at the external borders and the organisation of the border authorities in line with Turkey's 2006 IBM strategy and principles of the Schengen Border Code and Schengen Catalogue	5
Allow visa-free access to Turkish territory for the citizens of all EU MS	5
Enhance cooperation and information exchange between the staff and bodies in charge of border management, the custom service and other law enforcement agencies	4
Ensure cooperation with neighbouring EU MS, in particular on border management	4
Pursue the alignment of Turkish visa policy towards the EU *acquis* vis-à-vis the main countries representing important sources of illegal migration for the EU	4
Set up & apply a mechanism to monitor migration flows (regular and illegal), develop situational picture on illegal migration flows and the different countries of origin	4
Seek to conclude and implement readmission agreements with countries that represent sources of important illegal migration directed towards Turkey or EU MS	4
Carry out border checks and border surveillance along all the borders of the country, particularly those with EU MS, reducing the number of illegal border crossings	3
Take the necessary budgetary and other measures to ensure the deployment of sufficient numbers of well-trained border guards as well as infrastructure, equipment & IT technology at BCPs and along all the borders, particularly those with EU MS	3
Establish anti-corruption training programmes and ethical codes for border guards, customs and other officials involved in border management	3
Enhance training on document security for Turkey's consular and border staff, develop and use the Turkish Visa Information System	3
Abolish issuance of visas at the borders as an ordinary procedure for citizens of countries representing a high migratory and security risk to the EU	3
Use the new Turkish visa stickers with higher security features, stop using stamp visas	3

Make access to Turkey more difficult for citizens of countries representing important sources of illegal migration for the EU	3
Adopt & implement legislation on carriers' responsibility defining sanctions	3
Adopt & implement legislation in line with the EU acquis and the 1951 Refugee Convention and its Protocol without a geographical limitation, to ensure respect for non-refoulement, the ECHR and the possibility to claim asylum and obtain protection, allow UNHCR to fulfil its mandate on Turkish territory unrestricted	3
Establish a specialised body for refugee status determination, offer the possibility of legal remedy before a court, ensure protection and assistance for asylum seekers and refugees	3
Provide adequate infrastructure and sufficient resources ensuring decent reception and protection of asylum seekers and refugees	3
Persons granted refugee status should be given the possibility to self-sustain, access public services, enjoy social rights and integrate in Turkey	3
Adopt and implement legislation in line with EU and Council of Europe standards on migration management including rules on entry, stay and exit of foreigners and the reception, return and rights of illegally entering/residing foreigners	3
Address the pull factors facilitating illegal migration into Turkey, take measures improving the capacity to investigate cases of organised or facilitated illegal migration	3
Allow expelled third-country nationals to return voluntarily	3
Provide adequate infrastructure (incl. detention centres) and strengthen responsible bodies to ensure the expulsion of illegally entering/residing third-country nationals, while offering legal aid, assistance & decent and fair detention conditions and removal procedures	3
Introduce airport transit visas	2
Ensure sufficient resources for migration management, incl. training programmes	2
Ensure effective expulsion of illegally residing third-country nationals	2
Implement the Memorandum of Understanding signed with FRONTEX	1
Ensure that border management is carried out in line with international refugee law	1
Block 3: Public order and security	
Conclude and implement an Operational Cooperation Agreement with EUROPOL	5
Sign, ratify and implement relevant international data protection conventions	5
Adopt and implement legislation on the protection of personal data in line with the EU standards	5
Continue & complete the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan for the fight against organised crime, ensuring adequate human and financial resources	4
Sign & ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Human Trafficking, adopt and implement legislation in line with it and with the relevant EU *acquis* on prevention of THB, the prosecution of traffickers and protection and assistance to their victims	4
Provide adequate infrastructure and resources ensuring decent reception and protection of victims of trafficking and supporting their social and professional reintegration	4
Continue implementing the National Strategy and the Action Plan on the Fight against Corruption and the recommendations of GRECO (I., II. and III. Evaluation Rounds)	4
Develop working relations with EUROJUST	4
Continue implementing the 1980 Hague Convention on civil aspects of international child abduction, accede to the 1996 and the 2007 Hague Conventions related to parental responsibility and the protection of children, and international recovery of child support	4
Provide effective judicial cooperation in criminal matters, incl. in extradition matters, to all EU MS	4
Ratify the CoE Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism, transpose it into national law, enact legislation implementing the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force	3
Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime, adopt legislation enacting it	3
Continue implementing the National Strategy and the Action Plans against Drugs and Drug Addiction; cooperate with the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA);	3
Implement & comply with international conventions concerning judicial cooperation in criminal matters	3

Take measures aimed at improving the efficiency of judicial co-operation in criminal matters, of judges and prosecutors with EU MS and countries in the region	3
Strengthen the capacities of the Turkish Financial Crimes Investigation Board (MASAK) and develop its cooperation with Financial Intelligence Units within EU MS	3
Ensure law enforcement co-operation among the relevant national agencies - especially border guards, police, customs officers - as well as with judicial authorities	2
Reinforce regional law enforcement services co-operation, implement bilateral and multilateral operational cooperation agreements, share information with EU MS authorities	2
Continue implementing the Strategic Agreement with EUROPOL	2
Improve the operational and special investigative capacity of law enforcement services to tackle more efficiently serious and cross-border crime incl. ID and travel document fraud	1
Cooperate with OLAF and EUROPOL in protecting the Euro against counterfeiting	1
Block 4: External Relations and Fundamental Rights	
Develop and implement policies addressing Roma social exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination in access to education, health services, ID cards, housing, employment and participation in public life	4
Ratify additional Protocols n. 4 and 7 of the European Convention on Human Rights	4
Revise - in line with the ECHR and with the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) case law, the EU acquis and EU Member States practices - the legal framework as regards organised crime and terrorism, as well as its interpretation by the courts and by the security forces and the law enforcement agencies, so as to ensure the right to liberty and security, the right to a fair trial and freedom of expression, of assembly and association in practice	4
Ensure access to identity documents for refugees & stateless persons residing in Turkey	2
Ensure that freedom of movement of citizens of Turkey is not subject to unjustified or discriminatory restrictions, carry out full investigations when needed	1
Provide information about the conditions and circumstances for the acquisition of Turkish citizenship	1
Provide information about the conditions for changing personal data	1
Ensure access to travel and identity documents for all citizens	1
Provide information on registration requirements to foreigners wishing to reside in Turkey, ensure equal and transparent implementation of the respective legislation	1