

November 2015

Outlook for the 29 November 2015 meeting of the Heads of State or Government of the EU with Turkey

Heads of State or Government from the EU and the Republic of Turkey¹ will meet on 29 November 2015 in Brussels to further strengthen EU-Turkey relations while discussing the management of the ongoing migration crisis. The meeting is expected to result in a number of political and financial commitments, including the finalisation of the [Joint Action Plan on support of refugees and migration management](#), the acceleration of the [visa liberalisation process with Turkey](#) and the opening of more negotiation chapters in the accession process.

Background

Since the emergence of the recent migration crisis in Europe, [consecutive European Council meetings](#) on migration have stressed the need for greater cooperation with third countries to manage the crisis, including deeper cooperation with Turkey. Reinforcing dialogue with Turkey at all levels, in order to reduce and manage migratory flows was an [outcome of the Extraordinary European Council of 23 September 2015](#); whilst stepping up cooperation with Turkey on the migration crisis was on the agenda of European Council meetings in [October](#) and [November](#) 2015. At [their informal 12 November 2015 meeting on migration in Valletta](#) EU Leaders decided to organise a special summit between the EU and Turkey, addressing migration, before the end of the year. European Council President Donald Tusk's [invitation letter](#) for the meeting, now scheduled for 29 November, specifies that its aim is the adoption of the joint EU-Turkey Action Plan, a draft of which was already endorsed by the 15 October 2015 European Council.

Expected outcomes

One of the main EU actions under the joint action plan - proposed by the European Commission - will be the establishment of a [Turkey Refugee Grant Facility](#). This instrument will mobilise funds to help Turkey receive and host refugees. It is expected that a total of three billion euro will be allocated over the next two years, and that it will be funded by both the EU budget and the Member States². The meeting is likely to [reiterate](#) the call to accelerate [the visa liberalisation process with Turkey](#).

European Council President Donald Tusk stressed that 'the meeting will mark an important step in developing [EU-Turkey] relations and contribute to managing the migration crisis'. It is expected that the EU-Turkey summit will also re-energize the enlargement process and lead to the opening of further chapters in the [negotiation process for Turkish EU Membership](#).

¹ The official invitation was addressed to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, but may be replaced by the Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu.

² Discussions on the exact division of contributions between the EU budget and individual Member States are ongoing.

Views and opinions

[MEPs expressed concerns](#) relating to Turkey's respect for human rights and with regard to the proposal to classify Turkey as a safe country.

Relations between Turkey and Russia

The shooting down of a Russian bomber jet allegedly violating Turkish airspace on 23 November 2015 may undoubtedly be discussed at the meeting. The incident has already led French President François Hollande to abandon his plans to include Russia in an international coalition against Islamic State. The European Parliament also addressed Turkish-Russian relations in the context of the plenary discussion on the [outcome of the Valletta Summit of 11/12 November 2015 and of the G20 summit of 15/16 November 2015](#).

To contact the European Council Oversight Unit, please e-mail: EPRS-EuropeanCouncilOversight@ep.europa.eu

Manuscript completed on 26 November 2015. Brussels © European Union, 2015.

The opinions expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the author(s) and do not represent an official position of the European Parliament. Reproduction and translation of this document for non-commercial purposes are authorized, provided the source is acknowledged and the publisher is given prior notice and sent a copy.

www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank (Internet) – www.eptthinktank.eu (blog) – www.eprs.sso.ep.parl.union.eu (Intranet)