



Press Release

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EU Auditors examine aid to Turkey

The European Court of Auditors is to audit EU financial support for Turkey. Turkey is the single largest beneficiary of the EU Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), with more than 40 % of all IPA allocations. According to the European Commission, during the 2007-2013 period, Turkey was allocated €4.79 billion, of which €4.58 billion was committed and €3.49 billion paid out. For the 2014-2020 period, a further €4.45 billion has been allocated, of which €186 million paid out (situation as of May 2017).

The aim of the IPA is to support the accession process and the underlying reforms in Turkey. However, there is currently little progress in Turkey's accession negotiations, and reforms have been backsliding in recent years.

"Turkey is the EU's largest beneficiary of external aid and a strategic partner in the key policy areas of foreign affairs, defence, migration, the fight against terrorism and trade. But up to now we have never audited the effectiveness of the EU Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance to Turkey," said **Mr Hans Gustaf Wessberg, the Member of the European Court of Auditors responsible for the audit.**

The ongoing audit is assessing whether EU pre-accession assistance to Turkey has been well-managed and effective. It focuses on three priority sectors: rule of law and fundamental rights; democracy and governance; and education, employment and social policies.

An audit visit to Turkey took place in March 2017, and the results of the audit are expected by the first half of 2018.

Notes to Editors

Turkey has been linked to the EU by an Association Agreement since 1964 and a customs union since 1995. The European Council granted Turkey the status of candidate country in December 1999, accession negotiations were opened in October 2005, and the Council adopted the Accession Partnership with the Republic of Turkey in 2008, the execution of which has been partly supported by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance.

Since 2006, 16 out of the 35 chapters in the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey have been opened. On 13 December 2016, the Council stated that, under the currently prevailing circumstances, no new chapters are being considered for opening.

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