

# **Massive Backsliding': Turkey Bid to Join EU Bloc Doomed Says New Evaluation**

The European Commission in Brussels will soon give some pointedly negative updates to Turkey's progress in joining the European Union in its country report.

In a draft version of the upcoming report, the EU Commission noted that "Turkey has made big steps away from the EU" and that there is a "serious relapse in the areas of justice, public administration reform, fundamental rights and freedom of expression." The Commission also predicted additional relapses "in an increasing number of other areas," according to Politico.

The draft report also urges Turkey to "end the state of emergency without any delay," referring to "disproportionate measures" used by its president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and his administration, including layoffs and arrests following a July 15, 2016, coup attempt.

Erdogan quickly issued a state of emergency following the poorly planned and ineptly executed military coup. Since the attempt, some 150,000 people have been placed in custody and at least 110,000 civil servants have been fired. In addition, at least 150 journalists, as well as many authors and rights activists, have been detained.

"There is massive backsliding away from the European Union," one EU official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Reuters.

In addition, the report adds that "above all, Turkey needs to reverse the current negative trend in the rule of law and fundamental rights" and "the weakening of an effective separation of powers in the political system should be addressed."

The report did commend Turkey's economy, however, and its "outstanding performance" in hosting an estimated 4 million Syrian refugees.

The final version of the official report is to be released Tuesday.

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