

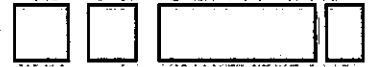


Turkey News Update



Robert Wexler

Thu 3/1/2018 1:59 PM



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Sent Items

I thought you might be interested in the latest developments regarding the Republic of Turkey.

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Turkey's Economy is on the Rise

- 2017 had increased foreign investors regarding mergers, take overs, and joint ventures, with the volume of disclosed mergers and acquisitions jumping from 61% year-on-year, to reach an expected \$10 billion. This increasing foreign interest shows that Turkey's economy is on the rise.
- World Bank projects Turkey's economic growth at 6.7% for 2017.
- Unemployment in Turkey fell to 10.3% in October 2017, which is down 1.5% from October 2016, and the number of women in the workplace rose 1.1% from the previous year. The drop in unemployment was largely due to the employment mobilization program.
- 32.4 million tourists visited Turkey in 2017, a 27.8% year-on-year visitor increase, which brought in \$26.3 billion in tourism revenue, a 19% year-on-year revenue increase, with 77.4% of the revenue from foreign visitors.
- Turkey has been the world's top flour producer for the last 5 years, with exports reaching 3.6 million tons, worth \$1.1 billion, exporting to 160 countries in the last decade.

- Turkey's industrial production is up 7% in November 2017, compared to November 2016.
- 2017 brought in Turkey's second highest export volume in its history with \$157.1 billion.
- 2017 also saw an increase in the number of passengers in its airports by 11% compared to the previous year, serving more than 193 million people.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/2018/01/05/more-foreign-companies-seek-mergers-joint-ventures-in-turkey>

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<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/world-bank-projects-near-seven-percent-economic-growth-in-turkey-125494>

Turkey Works to Restore Churches, Synagogues, and Religious Artifacts

- The seven-year, \$4 million renovation of the Bulgarian Orthodox St Stephen's Church in Istanbul, which is also known as the Iron Church, is finally complete. This show of cooperation and good faith between Bulgaria and Turkey has restored one of the world's oldest prefabricated cast iron churches.
- Turkey's President Erdogan stated, "Istanbul has shown once again to the entire world that it is a city where different religions and cultures peacefully co-exist". He continued by pointing out that it is the state's responsibility to safeguard the freedom of worship for all people regardless of faith or ethnic origin.
- The Directorate-General of Foundations, a government run authority, has recently restored 14 places of worship, including: the Great Synagogue, the Aya Nikola Church, Armenian Protestant Church, the Fevkani Church, the Aya Yorgi Church, and the Syrian Catholic Church.
- Experts at Turkey's Culture Ministry lab are restoring 452 pieces of historical Byzantine church icons, dating back to the 17th century.

<http://www.digitaljournal.com/news/world/turkey-reopens-iconic-iron-church-after-revamp/article/511508>

<http://aa.com.tr/en/culture-and-art/turkey-restores-historic-bulgarian-church-in-istanbul/1024440>

<https://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/2018/01/02/decade-of-restoration-for-churches-synagogues-in-turkey>

<https://www.yenisafak.com/en/life/turkey-restoring-452-historic-byzantine-church-icons-2972031>

The EU & Turkey Work to Mend Ties

- Bulgarian PM Borisov recently visited Turkey, where he stated that he will exert more effort to help normalize relations between Turkey and the EU, and that during Bulgaria's EU term presidency he will push to gain momentum for Turkey's cooperation with the EU.
- Bulgarian FM Zaharivea stated, "We believe Turkey is an important partner of Europe on many issues like refugees, terrorism, the economy, and energy. We should try to improve the relationship with them without hiding the problems."
- Ankara is hoping to build bridges with the EU, and Bulgaria, which currently holds the EU presidency, is keen to work with Turkey on migration, counterterrorism, and energy issues.
- German Chancellor Merkel welcomes EU-Turkey meeting to continue the dialogue between the two countries, stating that the EU needs "orderly relations" with Turkey.
- Finnish Parliament's Second Deputy Speaker Satonen said that the EU and Turkey need each other and that it is important the two find a solution to move forward.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-01/07/c_136878347.htm

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2018/01/11/eu-presidency-calls-for-better-relations-with-turkey.html>

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2018/01/20/germanys-chancellor-supports-dialogue-between-eu-turkey.html>

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<http://www.euronews.com/2018/01/25/turkey-eu-look-to-mend-fences>

Erdogan Gains Momentum in the 2019 Election

- Turkey's nationalist opposition stated that they will support President Erdogan in the 2019 election, showing continued right-wing support.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/turkey-nationalist-opposition-back-recep-tayyip-erdogan-presidential-election/4198720.html>

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-01/13/c_136893391.htm

Turkey's Humanitarian Efforts Keep on Giving

- Turkey has the largest refugee population in the world, hosting 4.3 million refugees.
- The Turkish Red Crescent and Turkey's Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) have established a new camp in Idlib that can house 3,000 refugees, in addition to the temporary refugee centers in Idlib, one of which feeds 3,500 families per month.
- The Turkish Red Crescent is now feeding 70,000 refugees in two regions of Idlib, and is providing clothing to 15,000 of them.
- Although Turkey's border with Syria has been shut down for two years, Turkey has created a safe-haven between Idlib and Hatay, where 700,000 Syrians live in 400 camps that are run by and supplied by the Turkish Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH).

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-hosts-largest-refugee-population-in-world-125979>

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1222656/middle-east>

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-01/18/c_136903372.htm

Turkey Expands its Energy Market

- Turkey currently ranks fourth in the world for the largest installed geothermal power capacity, with a capacity of 1,100 MW.
- The Turkish government plans to invest \$11 billion in energy efficiency measures to decrease primary energy consumption by 14% by 2023. In addition, it is looking to develop renewable sources of energy like wind, solar, hydro, and geothermal energy by developing 30% of its total installed capacity by 2023.
- The EBRD is financing large-scale stand-alone projects, as well as, mid-sized and small-scale renewable projects in Turkey, to the amount of 1.8€ billion to date, which has reached over 1,000 companies and 1,500 households.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/energy/2018/01/11/turkey-ranks-fourth-in-global-geothermal-power>

<http://www.ebrd.com/news/2018/ebrd-welcomes-turkeys-national-energy-efficiency-action-plan.html>

<https://www.dailysabah.com/energy/2018/01/13/ebrd-welcomes-turkeys-national-energy-efficiency-plan-says-ready-to-provide-support>

Turkey Normalizes Relations with European Countries

- Croatia's President Grabar-Kitarovic stated, "Our bilateral relationship is very good. We do not have any open issues... we have always very much appreciated the support of Turkey to Croatia during the most difficult times."
- She continued, "Turkey was Croatia's friend when friends were very few. We believe that it is in EU's vital interest to keep Turkey on the EU track. We immensely appreciate what Turkey has been doing in caring for Syrian and other refugees."
- Turkey's President Erdogan stated that Turkey and Croatia spoke about how they can fight terrorism and how they can strengthen bilateral cooperation in trade, culture, politics, the economy, and in regional and international matters.
- Azerbaijan supports Turkey in matters relating to regional issues, and the two hope to increase their trade volume.
- France's first lady Brigitte Macron met with Turkey's first lady Emine Erdogan, where they discussed education, and the refugee crisis. Brigitte Macron praised Emine Erdogan for her humanitarian work, and Emine Erdogan invited Brigitte Macron to Turkey for a visit.
- During President Erdogan's visit to France, he and French President Macron addressed bilateral and regional issues,

the fight against terrorism, and their need to increase the bilateral trade volume to €20 billion.

- President Erdogan and President Macron also discussed, the joint Eurosam consortium between Turkey, Italy, and France that will develop air and missile defense systems to reduce Turkey's security vulnerabilities.
- German and Turkish senior officials met for a two-day high-level meeting in Berlin to discuss security and counter-terrorism issues. The German and Turkish Foreign Ministers agreed to pull out all the stops to improve ties between the two countries, push their disagreements aside, and find common ground, especially on areas that serve as a win-win for both countries, like the Customs Union.
- Turkish FM Cavusoglu asks for a fresh start with Germany, holding out hope for closer economic cooperation, especially in transportation and energy.
- German travelers are flocking to Turkey this summer, with an increase of travel by 70%.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/germany-hints-warming-relations-turkey-180117164059026.html>

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<https://www.tecb.gov.tr/en/news/542/88990/our-target-is-20-billion-in-turkey-france-trade-volume.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/reuters/article-5239081/Turkey-awards-missile-study-Franco-Italian-group-Turkish-firms.html>

<http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/article/525584/World/Mena/Germany-Turkey-pledge-to-thaw-ties>

<https://www.trtworld.com/europe/turkey-s-cavusoglu-seeks-fresh-start-with-germany-13927>

<http://aa.com.tr/en/europe/turkey-croatia-agree-to-strengthen-cooperation/1026586#>

The UK & Turkey Increase Cooperation as Strategic Partners

- British Trade Minister Liam Fox calls Turkey a longtime friend and one of the most important strategic partners of the UK. Further, he said that Brexit is a new beginning for a very positive period for their relations, and that the UK hopes to increase cooperation with the business world in Turkey.
- Dr. Fox traveled to Turkey in January to build on the strong foundations between the UK and Turkey. With the total trade in goods and services accounting for £14.5 billion in 2016, and with the UK being Turkey's second largest export market, the two look forward to building increased cooperation.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/economy/2018/01/13/uk-wants-to-maintain-strong-ties-with-turkey-while-leaving-eu-trade-minister-says>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/international-trade-secretary-travels-to-turkey-to-promote-trade-ties>

EBRD Continues to Support Turkey

- EBRD President Chakrabarti visited Turkey to mark the establishment of the EBRD-Turkey Donor Fund.
- In Turkey, the EBRD focuses on investments in sustainable energy, improving infrastructure, increasing the competitiveness of the private sector, deepening local capital and local currency markets, while promoting greater job opportunities for women, youth, and workers in rural areas.
- The EBRD invested €1.6 billion into 51 projects in Turkey in 2017, with 50 of the projects supporting private companies. Amazingly, most of the investment went to supporting renewable energy projects, while the remaining funds were invested into the expansion of the metro in Istanbul, the Women in Business Program, and Turkish lira-denominated cooperate bonds to deepen capital markets.
- Turkey's Treasury and the EBRD have established a cooperation fund account worth €25 million, which will allow them to diversify their development aid policies, boost economic growth, and improve people's lives.

<http://www.ebrd.com/news/2018/ebrd-president-to-visit-turkey.html>

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/ebrd-turkish-treasury-establish-cooperation-fund-as-turkey-becomes-banks-benefactor-126016>

<http://www.ebrd.com/news/2018/ebrd-invests-in-a-record-51-projects-in-turkey-in-2017.html>

The US & Turkey Continue Talks About Afrin

- Turkey and the US are working to de-escalate the rising tension of the US's backing of the YPG in Syria and the impending Turkish attack against the YPG in Syria.

- US National Security Advisor McMaster stated, "We may have a difference in opinion on some issues, but we are allied countries."
- A Pentagon spokesperson stated, "We are not in crisis. Turkey is an ally, and we are going to work with them." "They have legitimate security concerns, so we're going to continue to engage with them. It's very important for all parties to remember that the common threat is ISIS and we need all parties to focus on that mission."
- Defense Secretary Mattis said that Turkey warned the US before launching airstrikes in Syria against the US-backed Kurdish militia and insisted that the two were working it out and moving forward. He defended Turkey, saying that they are a trusted NATO ally with legitimate security concerns, and that Turkey's advances in Syria had not harmed US troops, as they are not stationed in that part of Syria.
- Secretary of State Tillerson said that the US recognizes Turkey's legitimate concerns for its security, and its right to defend itself from terrorist elements, but he calls for restraint from both sides.
- A Pentagon spokesperson stated "One action does not typically result in chaos or a breakdown. We have regular communication with our ally Turkey. We talk about these things. That is part of being allies. Allies do not always see eye to eye, but they are willing to work together."

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-us-agree-to-work-to-de-escalate-bilateral-tension-over-syria-126388>

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/pentagon-split-with-turkey-over-kurds-is-a-distraction-not-a-crisis/article/2647159>

<http://thehill.com/policy/international/370011-mattis-turkey-advised-us-ahead-of-airstrikes-in-syria>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42782017>

<http://www.fox16.com/news/mattis-says-turkey-gave-us-notice-about-airstrikes-in-syria/931753262>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-5295203/Turkey-gave-US-heads-Syria-operation-Mattis.html>

<http://aa.com.tr/en/americas/pentagon-turkey-s-aftrin-operation-will-not-affect-ties/1036192#>

NATO Weighs in on Turkey's Advances in Syria

- NATO Deputy Secretary-General Rose Gottemoeller recently visited Turkey, where she stated, "All NATO allies have been wrestling with terrorism threats in recent years, but Turkey has had the most intense number of attacks on Turkish soil... they have legitimate security concerns". She continued, "I want you to know that NATO stands in solidarity with Turkey in the fight against terrorism".
- She then pointed out that there is a strong desire for Washington and Ankara to work together on the matter, and that the two are staying in close contact and are working together to try and find a solution.
- NATO Secretary-General Stoltenberg stated, "Turkey suffered most from terrorist attacks over many years. And Turkey, as all countries, has the right to self-defense."

<http://www.dw.com/en/nato-us-and-turkey-aiming-to-prevent-direct-clashes-in-aftrin/a-42324482>

<https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1424345/nato-deputy-stresses-alliances-dedication-to-turkey/>

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<https://www.yenisafak.com/en/world/nato-chief-says-turkey-has-right-to-self-defense-3033304>

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/nato-chief-says-turkey-has-right-to-self-defense-amid-aftrin-operation-126326>

Turkey Expands Bi-lateral Relations with African Countries

- Turkey and Somalia sign a trade deal and an economic partnership pact to expand their trade volume to \$200 million.
- Turkey is working to restore Sudan's Suakin Island's historic past, which will help increase tourism.
- Turkey pledges to provide Zambia with technical support to help with disaster management, as Zambia grapples with an influx of refugees.
- Turkey's new approach in Africa is to develop joint projects to construct schools and health care facilities. President Erdogan has visited 25 African countries in recent years and is looking to boost trade ties and form joint business councils.
- In January President Erdogan signed 33 agreements with Chad, Tunisia, and Sudan to improve bi-lateral relations and boost trade.

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<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/2018/01/10/turkey-wants-to-rejuvenate-sudans-suakin-island>

All the best,

The Honorable Robert Wexler