

# Romania will veto the EU-Canada trade deal

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Apr 14, 2016 (updated: Apr 14, 2016)

**EXCLUSIVE / Romania will not ratify the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between the EU and Canada which was concluded in 2014, as an angry reaction to the refusal by Ottawa to lift the visa requirement of its nationals, but also for the lack of EU solidarity for solving the issue.**

The Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has published a position regarding Canada maintaining the visa requirement for Romanian citizens, expressing disappointment that Ottawa had not delivered on its promise to solve the issue, contained in the Statement of the 2014 EU-Canada summit.

Canada has a visa-free regime with all EU countries except Romania and Bulgaria.

“In this situation the Romanian authorities will reassess, at EU level, the approach to the relationship between the EU and Canada so as to secure the goal of having obligatory visas for Romanian citizens eliminated”, the [Position](#) of the Romanian foreign ministry reads.

Asked to explain this text, a Romanian high official who asked not to be named said that Romania would “veto” the CETA ratification.

Normally the ratification of CETA should conclude by the end of 2016 or 2017. Romania however will not ratify the agreement, EurActiv was told.

## **Commission blamed**

The official also expressed anger at the way the European Commission had handled the issue.

On 12 April, the College of Commissioners met exceptionally on a Tuesday, not on a Wednesday. This is because 12 April was the deadline for the Commission to propose how EU countries should “react in common”, as [an EU regulation](#) requires, in cases where foreign countries “subjects [EU] citizens to differing treatment”.

Based on an in-house made assessment, the Commissioners decided that the consequences of the EU imposing visas to Canada and the USA would be so dire, that the EU legislation requiring reciprocity was impossible to be applied.

“According to the assessment, it is highly unlikely that member states would be able to process the increased number of visa applications in accordance with the Visa Code within 90 days following the entry into force of such visa requirement decision and moreover such visa requirement could result in a decrease in the number of travellers from Canada and the US,” [the Commission stated](#).

“The Commission therefore recommends to the Council and the Parliament not to apply the EU legislation,” the Romanian official said, adding that this amounted to “treachery”.

EurActiv contacted the Bulgarian authorities for their position on the issue. It appears that Sofia has not yet decided what position to take.

### **More work to do**

There is still more work to be done before the visa dispute between Canada and the European Union can be resolved, Canada’s Immigration Minister John McCallum was quoted as saying by the Toronto Sun.

“We have not offered full visa lift but we have offered something called Canada plus, which is easier access for regular travellers,” McCallum said.

The minister also said he’s not concerned how the dispute might affect CETA, adding that it was a separate issue.

According to the Canadian press, the authorities in Ottawa have been aware that the unsolved visa issue may inspire unspecified member states to block the ratification of CETA.