

# Canada-EU visa spat an irritant as trade deal nears ratification: Freeland

Trade minister says Canadian, European, Bulgarian and Romanian officials are working to resolve the visa impasse

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OTTAWA – International Trade Minister Chrystia Freeland says the ongoing visa dispute between Canada and the European Union is an irritant in an otherwise strong relationship.

Freeland is speaking from Germany, where she was in talks aimed at pushing the mammoth Canada-EU free trade deal towards final ratification later this year.

Canada's continued imposition of a visa for travellers from Romania and Bulgaria is hanging over the deal, as the European Commission took steps this week towards a possible retaliatory visa on Canadians travelling to Europe.

Earlier this week, the EU's ambassador to Canada said if the visa issue isn't resolved, there's no guarantee the trade deal will receive smooth passage through the European Parliament later this year.

Freeland says Canadian, European, Bulgarian and Romanian officials are working to resolve the impasse.

Freeland is touring European countries to push the trade agreement, but she won't say if Romania and Bulgaria are on her itinerary.