

IETF Venue Assessment Report: Istanbul, Turkiye

This is a recommendation made by the IETF Executive Director with respect to the appropriateness of Istanbul, Turkiye as a viable location for an IETF meeting, based on the assessment made by the IETF Secretariat of mandatory and important criteria taken from the requirements documented in RFC 8718¹.





Recommendation

This is a **preliminary recommendation** made on 22 May 2023 prior to community feedback.

Based on the assessment below of the conditions for hosting an IETF meeting in Istanbul, Turkiye the **preliminary recommendation** is that Istanbul Turkiye is **not suitable** as a potential location for an IETF meeting.

Classification system

This assessment uses the following classification system for each criterion:

Assessment	Indicator	Methodology
Met		Each test is applied on a <u>country</u> , <u>city</u> or <u>venue</u> basis. For some, local level exceptions may be considered. Some tests use an external source with no IETF LLC judgement. Others require the IETF LLC to assess multiple sources and make a judgement, as does community feedback. A venue must meet all mandatory criteria to be approved.
Uncertain but possible		
Not met		
Unable to assess / not assessed		

¹ <https://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc8718>

Assessment of individual criteria

CRITERION: City includes one or more venues able to accommodate an IETF meeting (*mandatory*²).

#	Test	Assessment	Indicator
1.1	<u>Venue</u> : Possible venues evaluated for size and general location acceptable to hold an IETF meeting	Sufficient choice from: Hilton Istanbul Bosphorous, Hilton Istanbul Bomonti, and Conrad Istanbul Bosphorous so this is met .	

CRITERION: The level of Internet freedom is acceptable (*mandatory*).

#	Test	Assessment	Indicator
2.1	<u>Country</u> : VPNs can be freely used <i>Region/City exceptions may override</i>	While VPNs are not illegal, in practice almost all of them are unable to operate and so this is assessed as not met . https://www.comparitech.com/vpn/where-are-vpns-legal-banned/	

CRITERION: An overwhelming majority of participants who wish to do so can attend (*important*³).

#	Test	Assessment	Indicator
3.1	<u>Country</u> : Visa requirements are such that 80% of IETF attendees will be able to obtain a visa without excessive effort or cost	This is met as 80% of attendees, by country, can enter Turkiye without a visa or through a standard application process at reasonable cost. https://www.mfa.gov.tr/visa-information-for-foreigners.en.mfa	

² Corresponds to RFC 8718, section 3.1 Mandatory Criteria

³ Corresponds to RFC 8718, section 3.2.1 important Criteria

CRITERION: Travel risks associated with holding an IETF meeting are acceptable (*important*).

#	Test	Assessment	Indicator
4.1	<p><u>Country:</u> US State Dept travel advisory⁴ is at level 1 (<i>Exercise Normal Precautions</i>) or level 2 (<i>Exercise Increased Caution</i>) and not at level 3 (<i>Reconsider Travel</i>) or level 4 (<i>Do Not Travel</i>)</p> <p><i>Region/City exceptions may override</i></p>	<p>US State Dept travel advisory is at level 2 as of 4, which is met.</p> <p>https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Turkey.html</p>	

CRITERION: Health risks associated with holding an IETF meeting are acceptable (*important*).

#	Test	Assessment	Indicator
5.1	<p><u>Country:</u> No local disease outbreak or epidemic or regular vaccination requirements^{5 6} for serious diseases other than those we expect all attendees to be vaccinated against (<i>Currently: Chickenpox, Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Measles, Mumps, Pertussis, Polio, Rabies, Rubella, Tetanus and Typhoid</i>)</p> <p><i>Region/City exceptions may override</i></p>	<p>This is met as there are no local disease outbreaks or epidemics (other than COVID19). Standard vaccination requirements.</p> <p>https://www.who.int/emergencies/disease-outbreak-news</p>	

⁴ <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html>

⁵ <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/vaccination-requirements-and-recommendations-for-international-travelers-and-malaria-situation-per-country-2020-edition>

⁶ <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>

5.2	<p><u>City</u>: Air Quality Index⁷ in March, July or November is below 50 (<i>Good</i>), or below 100 (<i>Moderate</i>) or below 150 (<i>Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups</i>) for at least 16 days of the month for 2017-2022.</p>	<p>The data is incomplete but appears to show that March AQI (PM2.5) is acceptable and therefore this criterion is met.</p> <p>https://aqicn.org/city/turkey/marmara/istanbul/aksaray/</p>	
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CRITERION: Human rights risks associated with holding an IETF meeting are acceptable (*important*).

#	Test	Assessment	Indicator
6.1	<p><u>Country</u>: Women Peace and Security Index⁸ score from the Georgetown Institute of Women, Peace and Security is above 0.7⁹</p> <p><i>Region/City exceptions may override</i></p>	<p>The WPS Index score of 0.693 is below the required threshold and this criterion is not met. Istanbul may be sufficiently different from the rest of the country for this to change but there is insufficient data to make that assessment.</p>	
6.2	<p><u>Country</u>: Safe for LGBT people, researched on an individual basis using multiple sources including Global LGBT Acceptance Index¹⁰, Asher and Lyric Fergusson LGBTQ+ Danger Index¹¹ and others found at the time of assessment.</p> <p><i>Region/City exceptions may override</i></p>	<p>Level of LGBT acceptance and safety is met as Turkiye scores a positive though low score on the LGBTQ+ Danger Index and rates 85/174 on the Global Acceptance Index.</p>	

⁷ <https://aqicn.org/map/world/>

⁸ <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/the-index/>

⁹ This test previously required a country to be in the top two quintiles but the general scores have all lifted and so this has switched to an indicative measure.

¹⁰ <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/projects/gai/>

¹¹ <https://www.asherfergusson.com/lgbtq-travel-safety/>

6.3	<p><u>Country</u>: No significant discrimination or persecution of religious freedoms, researched on an individual basis using multiple sources including World Bank¹², Religious Freedom Report¹³ and others found at the time of assessment.</p> <p><i>Region/City exceptions may override</i></p>	<p>The World Bank scores the level of religious freedom quite low at .33 and this is supported by multiple independent reports. The situation in Istanbul may be substantively different from the rest of the country as that is where the majority of non-muslims live, but without good data on that we assess this as not met.</p> <p>https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/441219-TU%CC%88RKIYE-2022-INTERNATIONAL-RELIGIOUS-FREEDOM-REPORT.pdf https://acninternational.org/religiousfreedomreport/reports/tr/</p>	
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Additional sources including community feedback

- Community feedback will be incorporated into the next revision of this report.

Summary

One of the mandatory criteria is met but one, Internet freedom is not met. Of the important criteria, five are met and two not met. Those not met are both human rights related and could possibly be adjusted if the community feedback is that Istanbul specifically, is substantially better on these issues.

Date of assessment and recommendation: 22 May 2023

¹² https://govdata360.worldbank.org/indicators/hd6a18526?indicator=41930&viz=line_chart&years=2010,2020

¹³ <https://religious-freedom-report.org/#map>