



Hosted by MEPs Michaela Šojdrová, Sandra Kalniete and Jaromír Štětina

Visa Liberalisation for Ukraine - Is the EU Ready To Support It?

1 December 2015 (16.15-18.15)

European Parliament, Room: JAN 6Q1

Registration is open until 24 November 12h00 CET

Ukraine has never been so close to the abolition of the visa regime with the EU as it is now, but this process can still be delayed or even disrupted due to migration risks arising from the annexation of Crimea and armed conflict in the East of Ukraine. Some data signals an increase in the number of asylum seekers from Ukraine, which may be used as a pretext to defer the decision on Ukraine. The experts will offer their alternative assessment on the state of implementation of Visa Liberalization Action Plan and present the Migration Security Map containing sectorial counterarguments to the widely spread myths of a massive exodus of Ukrainians to the EU.

Opening remarks: **Michaela Šojdrová**, MEP (EPP), **Sandra Kalniete**, MEP (EPP Vice-Chair), **Jaromír Štětina**, MEP (EPP), **Iryna Sushko**, Executive Director, Europe without Barriers, **Natalia Yerashevich**, Director, Secretariat of the EaP CSF, **Dmytro Shulga**, the European Programme Director, International Renaissance Foundation (IRF)

Discussion Panel:

Security and Migration Challenges Influencing the Visa-Free Prospect of Ukraine and the EU MS Willingness to Support Visa Free Regime Introduction

Panellists:

- **Iryna Sushko**, Executive director, Civic Organization Europe without Barriers, Kyiv, Ukraine
- **Piotr Kazmierkiewicz**, Expert, Migration and Eastern Policy Programme, Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw, Poland
- **Aleksandra Eriksson**, Swedish journalist member of the Östgruppen, the Swedish Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights, Visa Free Europe Coalition member, Stockholm, Sweden
- **Lana Zerkal**, Deputy Minister, MFA, Ukraine or **Roman Andarak**, Head of Unit "Justice, Liberty and Security, Humanitarian and Cross-border Cooperation", MFA of Ukraine
- **Anitta Hipper**, DG Home, European Commission (TBC)

Moderator: **Dmytro Shulga**, European Programme Director, International Renaissance Foundation (IRF), Kyiv, Ukraine

Discussants:

- **Joanna Fomina**, Researcher and policy analyst, Polish Academy of Science, Warsaw, Poland
 - **Alexandra Stiglmyer**, Senior Analyst, European Stability Initiative, Brussels, Belgium
 - **Maryana Kuzio**, Policy analyst on visa liberalization, Europe without Barriers, Kyiv, Ukraine
 - **Iryna Savchenko**, Migration analyst, Europe without Barriers, Kyiv, Ukraine
 - **Kateryna Kulchytska**, Migration expert and policy analyst, Europe without Barriers, Ukraine
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Main issues to be discussed:

- Security and migration challenges, which might have an influence on the decision of the EU Member States to abolish visa regime for the citizens of Ukraine
- Most common cautions and perceptions about the risks and disadvantages of the visa abolition, spread among target groups in the EU Member States
- Influence of the conflict in the Eastern Ukraine on the visa liberalisation process
- Political willingness of the EU Member States to grant the visa-free regime
- Arguments in favour or against the introduction of the visa-free regime