

Visa-Liberalisation Bosnia and Albania

Commission needs to act promptly to ensure EU credibility in the Balkans

Following today's presentation of the evaluation reports on the visa-roadmap for Bosnia Herzegovina and Albania by the European Commission to the Council working group for the Western Balkans as well as in the Committee for Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, **Franziska Brantner** and **Ulrike Lunacek**, Greens/EFA spokeswomen for foreign affairs declared:

"The evaluation reports written by experts on the implementation of the visa-road-map are crystal clear: Bosnia and Albania are model students and have already made more progress regarding the implementation of the four prerequisite criteria necessary for visa liberalisation than Serbia and Montenegro had a year ago.[1] We call upon the Commission to bring forward without delay legislative proposals for visa-liberalisation for both countries. In November 2009 Council and the European Parliament called for an urgent response to this issue. If the EU wants to remain a credible actor in the Balkans, the Commission must bring forward proposals as soon as possible.

The Commission should also prepare a roadmap for visa-liberalisation for Kosovo. Kosovo's development is being hindered by a lack of freedom of movement. Furthermore, the government in Pristina should finally - supported by the Commission - start with the full implementation of the prerequisite criteria for visa liberalisation."

Dutch Green MEP **Judith Sargentini** said:

"It's time for the European Union to take responsibility towards Bosnia-Herzegovina and Albania. The Commission is willing to do so as their evaluation is showing a very positive development. The Commission has just promised in the LIBE committee that the proposal for visa liberalisation will be presented before the summer. The European Council should act according to the positive report on these countries and take steps to liberalize the visa. "

"Although few minor issues are still open, there is no reason to slow down the process. They are easy to overcome by the time the final decision will be made by the European Council. It is of most importance the Bosniaks will have the same access to the EU as the Serbs have now."

Note for editors:

[1][1]The Evaluations-Report on Bosnia:

<http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/White%20List%20Project%20Paper%20-%20Bosnia%20assessment%2019%20April%202010.pdf>

On Albania:

<http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/White%20List%20Project%20Paper%20-%20Albania%20assessment%2019%20April%202010.pdf>

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Responsible MEPs



Ulrike Lunacek

EP Vice-President, Member



Judith Sargentini

Member

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