



RESOLUTION of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Towards a visa free Europe – making the dream real!

The visa liberalisation process has become one of the most powerful tools of European Union (EU) policy in steering fundamental reforms in the Eastern Partnership countries in areas such as human rights, freedom, security and justice.

The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP-CSF) welcomes EU policy of providing Visa Liberalisation Action Plans (VLAPs) to all EaP countries as soon as the Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements (VFRAs) are in place. We also welcome the efforts undertaken by the governments, parliaments and the civil society organizations in meeting VLAP benchmarks.

Taking into consideration the achievements of the Republic of Moldova in meeting these benchmarks, we call on the EU to grant visa free travel to citizens of Moldova as soon as possible. Guided by the results of the independent monitoring on the implementation of VLAP benchmarks, we consider that Moldova has largely met the relevant EU criteria and thus we call on the European Commission to recommend visa liberalization with Moldova to the European Council by the Vilnius EaP summit at the latest and we call on the Moldovan government to continue with the permanent implementation and finalisation of the reforms.

We believe that issuing a recommendation for visa-free movement between EU and Moldova marks an appropriate example and good practice for the rest of EaP countries. It shows that strengthening democracy, human rights, international cooperation in the areas of justice and security, and overall fulfilment of all benchmarks, will be finalised by visa liberalisation.

We consider that Ukraine and Georgia, which are already implementing the VLAP, should put more effort in overcoming legislative deadlocks in order to pass to the implementation of the second phase and we encourage the governments of these countries, the EU and the civil society to contribute to the achievement of these goals.

We appeal to the European and Armenian Parliaments to bring forward the ratification of the readmission and visa facilitation agreements. From the beginning of this year Armenia abolished Schengen visas for EU citizens. Therefore we believe that Armenian citizens should enjoy facilitations in visa movement to EU countries.

At the same time, we call on the EU to ensure that the visa liberalisation option remains fully open for all the Eastern Partnership countries on the basis of clear conditionality and transparent benchmark assessment.

We also call on EU member states to immediately introduce fee waivers for visas in all partner countries.

As civil society we reiterate our commitment to continue the monitoring of the reforms related to the visa liberalisation process in all the EaP countries through the Visa Free Europe Civic Coalition and others and to put every effort into achieving free movement of our peoples as soon as possible.