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## VISA-FREE ENTRY EU AND UKRAINE: THE MONITORING OF PROBLEMS

*The article deals with the problems associated with the implementation of the EU Action Plan on visa liberalization with Ukraine. The strengthening of Ukraine's position in the dialogue with the EU on the issues of National Action Plan implementation is being approved.*

**Keywords:** *European integration, the EU, Ukraine, liberalization, visa entry, the National Action Plan.*

The urgency of the topic. At the present stage the realization of multilateral foreign policy of the country is the basic, central course of Ukraine towards the integration in political, economic, cultural and rededucational space. At the same time it should be mentioned the objective and subjective factors, which restrain the processes of European integration. One of these factors is the not regulated processes of simplified border crossing between EU and Ukraine by citizens of both countries. Namely, the process of liberalization of visa entry is the basic issue at the present stage bilateral relations. All this is the evidence of the urgency of the problem. The presentation of the main material. The basic constituent of foreign policy of Ukraine is the strategy of European integration. Therefore the acquirement of full-fledged membership in EU is preferable, as for the domestic development and for the foreign relations and was vested in the Law of Ukraine "On the basis (principles) of domestic and foreign policy" in 2010.

In the context of preparation for EU membership Ukraine's priorities is creating conditions for providing free border crossing of goods, services, assets and labor force and freedom for border crossing by citizens of Ukraine and EU Member States, thanks to gradual introduction visa-free travel entry. The solving of these problems has become necessary after the introduction of Schengen zone between Ukraine and neighboring countries of the EU.

Officially the visa-free dialogue between Ukraine and EU began on the 9-th of September 2008. On October 30,2008 in Brussels was the first meeting within the visa-free dialogue between Ukraine- EU where the following key results were

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achieved: visa-free dialogue of Ukraine and EU is carried out by four main directions: safety of documents, the introduction biometric data; the fight with the illegal migration, readmission; public order and security; foreign (external) relations.

According the mentioned directions 4 common working groups were created, which coordinated the corresponding recommendations on the basis of comparative analysis of legislation of Ukraine with the norms and standards of EU, worked out the methodology of determination the conditions of the visa-free entry. The first stage of visa-free entry dialogue was held in December 2008- May 2009. The second meeting on the level of senior officials from Ukraine and EU on these issues was held on May 18, 2009, where the results of visa-free dialogue were summed up, which was reflected in the first report of senior officials. Mentioned report was introduced to the European committee at the meeting of Ukraine- EU Troika on the level of Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs on of June 3, 2009 in Luxembourg.

On May 19, 2010 in Brussels regular meeting of the Senior officials was held, the results of which was the agreement to start the work towards the visa-free entry between Ukraine and EU. On June 9, 2010 the recommendations of Senior officials were approved according to the transition to the full-scale operational stage visa-free dialogue on the basis of Action Plan concerning liberalization visa-free entry for the short trips of Ukrainian citizens to the EU. On 2010 European Committee extend (circulate) among the EU Member States for consideration and approval of the draft Action Plan concerning the liberalization visa entry with Ukraine. On October 25 the political decision adopted concerning the visa-free dialogue with Ukraine it will be continued on the basis of Action Plan regarding liberalization visa entry for the short trips of Ukrainian citizens to the countries of European Union, that was approved on November 22, 2010 in Brussels.

During 2010-2011 Ukraine achieved progress in accomplishment technical criteria, that comes from the Action Plan on liberalization visa entry. Within the implementation of Action Plan at the first stage national programs of reforms in the sphere of safety of documents, migration, protection public order, and external relations are carried out. The success in the sphere of structured visa dialogue between Ukraine and EU is a

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significant step in the process of integration of the country into the European Community. In the connection of this constructive step is the decision of EU does not determine establishment visa-free entry between Ukraine and European Union as a long-term matter. The further progress in visa dialogue with the EU should depend exclusively from the speed of realization technical aims by Ukraine, which were expected by the Plan.

At the second stage the basic aim is the financing and creating the infrastructure for functioning visa-free entry on the borders with the European Union, in particular, the introduction of biometric documents, trial practice of integrative system of border management, including the connection and interaction among law enforcing, border, customs and other agencies, that control the process of the movement of people across the border.

Concerning the terms of realization of the Action Plan as to visa entry the President of Ukraine Victor Yanukovich pointed out, that transition of Ukraine to the visa-free entry with the EU countries depends from the fulfillment of each stage of agreements, determined by the Road map.

Analyzing the condition (state) of the Ukraine's completion of the Action Plan on visa liberalization, positive changes, which happened in the process of realization of complex measures, should be mentioned namely:

- achieved simplifying visa procedure concerning execution of Schengen visa (multiple, free visa) for the determined categories of citizens throughout the country;
- introduced the local frontier movement for the inhabitants of frontier territories of Ukraine with Hungary, Slovakia and Poland and started the work on its introduction with Romania. - started a new stage of visa relations with EU, namely: from the simplification of the procedure of execution visas to the gradual liberalization of the visa entry (cancellation of the visa meetings for all the categories of citizens of Ukraine);
- started structured visa dialogue with EU (formulating measures and recommendations, the accomplishment of which will allow the introduction of visa-free entry);
- realized the first steps in the realization of Communicative European Committee "Eastern Partnership", in particular, started the work on the project "Roadmap", which

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will contain preconditions and technical criteria, the accomplishment of which will allow to cancel visas and to improve the relations between Ukraine and the EU states. In Ukraine within the implementation of the EU Action Plan on visa liberalization the National program of reforms is realized in this sphere, that are generalized in National plan concerning the liberalization visa entry for Ukraine.

In order to coordinate and to amplify the control of accomplishment of the statements (principles) of the named document, the Coordinating Center was created by the decision of The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine № 77 on the 7-th of February 2011. The basis of the created structure and central executive departments set the task to fulfill the complex of measures and aims, in particular:

First- in May-June to develop and accept all necessary regulatory and legal framework.

Second- to accelerate the introduction of an effective mechanism for the management of migration, according to the EU standards. In the first place it is necessary to create an effective State Migration Service and to create national database to control migration flows.

Third- to set up the protection system of personal data according to the requirements of European Union.

Fourth- to create an effective system of integrated borders management.

Fifth- by the end of the year to create biometric identification system of Ukrainian citizens and to start the edition of corresponding travel documents with electronic data biometric medium. Practical actions of Ukraine in realization agreements, achieved during the 14-th summit "EU- Ukraine", find the positive assessment by European Union.

Analyzing the state of Ukrainian implementation of National Plan it should be mentioned, that an effective work in this direction is being realized, in particular:

- The work for protection of implementation of "Integrated concept borders management" is activated;

- The drafts of "Migration Policy Concept" and regulatory and legal acts, necessary for the realization of the Law of Ukraine "On border control" are worked out;

- Successfully realizing the State Target program of the arrangement and reconstruction of the border until 2015;

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- The work of the Law of Ukraine "On border control" has been optimized.

- Significant measures concerning integration of foreign migrants and reintegration of Ukrainian migrants on 2011-2015 are implemented and the automatic information system "Refugees" is introduced.

- The work for providing citizens of Ukraine with biometric travelling passports abroad from 2011 has started. The fact that in 2011 Ukrainians issued one million Schengen visas that is significantly more than in the previous years is of considerable importance.

A significant step in the realizing the Action Plan on liberalization of visa entry was the Agreement of EU and Ukraine. The signed Agreement has the annex (supplement) to the previous agreement, which extend the list of persons, who can be eligible for receiving visas to the EU states by the simplified procedure. In addition, the document regulates the term of the visas: instead of "till 5 years" and "till 1 year" such terms as "5 years" and "1 year". It will allow avoiding the misunderstanding of statements by the consuls of EU

Member States. Along with the positive improvements in the realization of the Action Plan on visa liberalization the leaders of Social Initiative "Europe without barriers" Iryna and Olexander Sushko made a conclusion, that Ukraine's progress towards visa-free entry with EU is irregular and disproportional.

The author believes, that the results of public monitoring of the problems implementation of the Action plan by Ukraine on visa liberalization, which is prepared by the leaders of Social Initiative "Europe without barriers"- is worth attention of all, who are interested in the problem of visa entry.

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