Ukraine meets criteria for visa liberalization – European Commission progress report

18 December 2015 — European Commission Press Release

The Commission adopted the sixth and last progress report on the implementation by Ukraine of its Visa Liberalisation Action Plan (VLAP).
Following the positive assessment of the progress report and taking into account the overall EU-Ukraine relations, the Commission will present in early 2016 a legislative proposal to the Council and the European Parliament to lift visa requirements for Ukrainian citizens holding a biometric passport.
The visa-free travel will apply to all EU Member States, except for Ireland and UK, as well as the four Schengen associated countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland). The exemption from visa requirement concerns only short-stays, up to 90 days in any 180-day period for business, touristic or family purposes.

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EU backs visa-free access for Ukraine, Georgia

18 December 2015 — The Wall Street Journal

The European Union's executive backed Ukraine and Georgia's bid for visa-free access to the bloc on 18 December, opening the way to more than 40 million people to potentially travel visa-free to the bloc.
The European Commission said both countries had carried out the reforms they promised to enact to win Brussels' backing and they planned to make the formal legal recommendation in early 2016.
At a news conference, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said he pushed EU leaders to make "rapid decisions" on the visa-free requests. In the past, he has expressed confidence that the bloc's 28 governments will approve Brussels' decision, but with the EU facing its biggest migration crisis in decades, some diplomats have warned there could be a protracted debate among capitals next year.

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Implementation of EU visa free deal for Ukraine by mid-2016

19 December 2015 — Ukraine Today TV

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin said he expects the European Union to provide a visa-free regime to Ukraine by July 2016.
"I very much hope that a visa-free regime will be available for Ukrainians in five to seven months maximum," Klimkin said.

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Some Crimea and Donbas residents may obtain biometric passports for visa-free travel to EU – President Poroshenko

21 December 2015 — Interfax

Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko said that some residents of Crimea and the area of Donbas which is not controlled by Ukraine's government may obtain biometric passports for visa-free travel to the European Union.
Overall, in the words of Poroshenko, all Ukrainian residents living on the temporary occupied territories will be entitled to biometric passports and the right to visa-free travel to the EU as soon as Ukraine's sovereignty over these territories is restored.

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Denmark, Iceland simplify visa regime for Ukrainians – Klimkin

2 December 2015 — Ukrinform

Starting from 1 January 2016, Denmark and Iceland will simplify procedures for issuing Schengen visas for Ukrainians. Foreign Minister of Ukraine Pavlo Klimkin posted this information on Twitter.
"The talks were held: Denmark and Iceland simplify procedures for issuing Schengen visas. You now have another reason to go there," he wrote.

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Canada introduces 10-year multivisas for Ukrainians, – Ambassador

2 December 2015 — UNIAN

Canada is introducing 10-year multivisas for Ukrainians, said Canadian Ambassador to Ukraine Roman Vashchuk. He explained that if a passport of a Ukrainian citizen is valid for 10 years, the person can get a visa for this term. "If the passport is valid for five years, you can get a 5-year-long visa", the Ambassador said.

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Over 1,000 Ukrainians get additional protection in Belarus

3 December 2015 – Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum

Over 1,100 Ukrainians have received additional protection in Belarus, head of the Department of Citizenship and Migration at the Interior Ministry of Belarus Alexei Begun told media, BelTA informs.
"In 2014 due to the military conflict in Ukraine, we faced a massive inflow of Ukrainians, especially from its south-eastern regions. The competent bodies of Belarus received applications for the refugee status and additional protection. As for today we have considered more than 1,300 applications of the kind," Mr. Begun added.

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Ethnic Turks repatriated from eastern Ukraine

26 December 2015 – Euronews

Uprooted once again, hundreds of ethnic Turks living in eastern Ukraine are being repatriated by the Turkish government. Originally from Georgia, deported to Central Asia by Stalin, many of these Meskhetian Turks had settled in Ukraine decades ago. On 25 December, about 300 of them were flown to Turkey on military planes. Most lived in Sloviansk.
The Ukrainian conflict has killed more than 9,000 people in the past 21 months. Ankara said in April it would bring ethnic Turks to safety. The first families arrived in eastern Turkey's Erzincan province on 25 December. Some 2,000 ethnic Turks are due to be repatriated in the coming weeks. The government has promised to provide them housing and help them find jobs.

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