

DRAFT CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

**Does it Really Matter? Visa Facilitation in the Western Balkans:
Monitoring of the new Agreements**

International Conference

10 December 2008

Venue: Crown Plaza Brussels Europa Hotel

Address: 107 rue de la Loi

Brussels, Belgium

08:30 – 09:00 **Registration**

09:00 – 09:30 **Keynote address: Jonathan Faull**, Director-General of the
European Commission, Responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security (TBC)

Discussion Q&A

09:30 – 10:45 **Panel 1: Presentations of the findings of the hotline and
survey reports on visa facilitation in Western Balkans**

Issues for debate: What are the convergences in the survey and hotline results in the five countries? Have the visa facilitation agreements done their homework – triggered people to people contacts among citizens of the EU and Western Balkans? What are the main findings of the analysis of surveys accomplished with visa applicants? Do both reports draw the same conclusions? Have the advantages come through: multiple entry visas, easier access to the special categories of population, lower issuing costs, etc? Are the visa facilitation agreements worth amending? What mechanism could be put in place to evaluate and control the implementation of the agreements?

Chair: **Amra Seleskovic**, Director, Vesta Association, Bosnia -
Herzegovina

Panel: **Leszek Chajewski**, PhD, Poland
Kenan Hadzimusic, Project Manager, European Citizen
Action Service, Brussels - Hotline Report
Ditmir Bushati, Executive Director, European Movement
Albania, Albania

Discussion Q&A

10:45 – 11:00 Coffee Break

11:00 – 12:30 Panel 2: From visa facilitation to visa liberalization

Issues for debate: What are the next steps for advocating visa liberalization? Could a common visa code between member states constitute a good tool to insure more uniform visa implementation? What are the convergences with other studies accomplished in Eastern Europe? What is the role of the National governments in Western Balkans in the visa liberalization process? Is the decision to liberalize the visa system with Western Balkans intrinsically of a political nature?

Chair: **Daliborka Uljarevic**, Executive Director, Centre for Civic Education, Montenegro (TBC)

Panel: **Jelko Kacin**, Member of the European Parliament, Slovenia (TBC)

H.E. Edmund Dukwitz, German Ambassador to the EU, Brussels (TBC)

Alexandra Stiglmyer, Senior Analyst, European Stability Initiative, Brussels

Tanja Hafner Ademi, Coordinator, Balkan Civil Society Development Network, Macedonia

Discussion, Q & A

Concluding Remarks

12:30 – 13:15 Lunch Break

END OF THE CONFERENCE