



## **International Institute ESI: Albanians will have visa-free travel in July 2010**

Gazeta Albania  
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The European Stability Initiative, based in Brussels, has published a report about the progress achieved by Albanian authorities regarding the fulfilment of the criteria on visa liberalization. In this report, it is mentioned that Albania has made significant progress regarding the visa liberalization process and that Albanian citizens would probably travel without visas starting from July 2010.

“During the summer, Albania was taking things a bit slower due to the elections in June 2009. However, the government produced an action plan on 29 July 2009, with ambitious but still realistic deadlines to meet the remaining roadmap conditions, and on 16 September the new government pledged to achieve “free movement of Albanians in the Schengen area within the first year of the government mandate”. This soon translated into concentrated activities in Albania to achieve the remaining benchmarks. In October/November, ESI and its partner organization, the European Movement in Albania, analyzed the Albanian government’s regularly

updated readiness reports of 30 September, 23 October and 2 November.

“Like in Bosnia’s case, we came to the conclusion that Albania had achieved significant progress, bringing it to approximately the same level of implementation that Serbia and Montenegro had achieved in May 2009.” Fortunately, this has been recognized by the European Parliament, EU member states, and the European Commission. The Commission plans to send EU national expert missions to Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina in December 2009 to assess progress under block 1, and the remaining assessment missions in early 2010. Provided that Albania and Bosnia will have met all benchmarks by then, their citizens might be able to benefit from visa-free travel from July 2010 onward – it is mentioned in the report of European Stability Initiative.

*Translation of the article: “Instituti ndërkombëtar “ESI”: Shqiptarët lëvizin pa viza në korrik të vitit 2010”*