

Statement by Vilson Mirdita

"As the Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of the Republic of Kosovo in Germany, I am in daily contact with Kosovars living in Germany and those who want to reach Germany for various reasons. Having to apply and wait for a travel visa is an enormous burden to these people's lives.

In a lot of cases Kosovars get rejected a visa by the respective authorities and are subsequently banned from visiting their relatives, they lose their university placement, or miss out on a great job opportunity. And now, when all their neighbors benefit from visa free travel, it will be even harder for those who want to travel from Kosovo to be faced with visa rejections.

I personally share the happiness of our neighbors, who achieved visa liberalization after they complied with the EU criteria. Being in close contact with the Kosovo Ministry of Interior, I am aware that Kosovo authorities are working very hard to include Kosovo into the White Schengen List. I am confident that with serious guiding and assistance from the EU we can achieve visa liberalization for Kosovo as well.

However, for that to happen, we need a clear and an open offer by the EU, with a clear set of criteria which Kosovo needs to meet. Coming from a science background, I am aware of the importance of recipes, which serve as a guide when addressing any issue. I am kindly hereby asking the EU to issue the 'visa free' recipe for Kosovo, and in turn to monitor closely the fulfilling of conditions for visa liberalization.

The process has to start, now! On the contrary, I am afraid that Kosovo may fall behind the rest of the region, and that consequently people might feel compelled to fall back on clandestine solutions to travel to the EU."

Dr. Vilson Mirdita, Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of Republic of Kosovo