

The aim of the dialogue is to examine all the relevant conditions for visa-free travel to the EU for Georgian citizens. In doing so, the EU is living up to its commitment to closer cooperation and increased mobility in a secure environment with its Eastern neighbours, including Georgia, as asserted in the Warsaw Declaration of the Eastern Partnership summit in September 2011. Following her meeting with Mr. Grigol Vashadze, Georgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cecilia Malmström, EU commissioner for Home Affairs, said: "Today we demonstrate once more our longstanding commitment to strengthen the ties between our countries and people. The start of this visa liberalisation dialogue indeed marks an important political milestone in the EU-Georgian relations. It recognises the efforts made by Georgia in the different areas relevant for a future visa-free travel to the EU and constitutes a further incentive for Georgia to pursue those reforms".

All EU citizens are already exempt from visa requirements when entering Georgia. The visa liberalisation dialogue which is starting today will allow the EU and the Georgian authorities to examine all the technical preconditions for the establishment of a visa-free regime for Georgian citizens. The visa liberalisation dialogue addresses areas directly related to document security, border management, migration, mobility and asylum, as well as other issues such as the fight against corruption and organised crime, protection of human rights, minorities, and anti-discrimination, which are highly relevant to ensure that mobility takes place in a secure and well-managed environment.

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