



European Asylum Support Office

European Asylum Support Office

Newsletter - July-August 2014

EDITORIAL

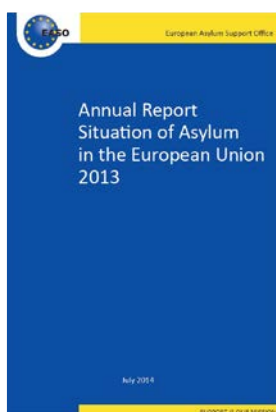
Welcome to the July-August edition of EASO's Newsletter. This month, EASO published its reference document, the Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU (you will find interesting highlights on page 2). In July, EASO held a number of activities, such as the Country of Origin Information (COI) Portal training in Greece and the practical workshop on Ukraine (p9).

Our latest asylum trends can be found on page 4. These figures show a monthly record of applications for international protection from persons claiming to be Syrians in June, which is 27% more than the previous highest number. Additionally, applications from Ukrainians went up by 25% compared to May.

Enjoy the reading and on behalf of EASO, I wish you a nice summer. We will be back with the Newsletter in September.

Jean-Pierre Schembri
EASO Spokesperson
Newsletter editor

EASO publishes Annual Report



On 7 July, EASO published the Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the European Union 2013. The report was launched during an event organised by EASO in Brussels. Presentations on the key findings of the report and a panel discussion were followed by a presentation on EASO's Early warning and Preparedness System

(EPS). The European Commission also gave a presentation on the mechanism for early warning, preparedness and crisis management provided in Article 33 of the Dublin III Regulation.

Read more on page 2.

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EASO participates in the informal JHA Council



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On 8 and 9 July, the Executive Director of EASO presented EASO's Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU during the informal meeting of the Justice and Home Affairs Council, held in Milan.

Read more on page 3.

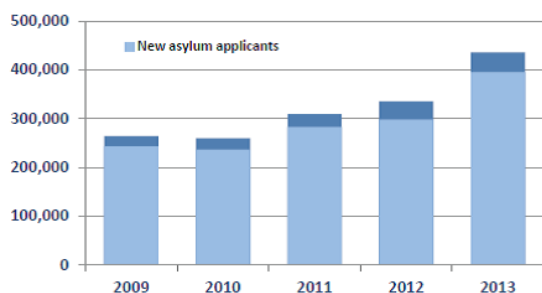
SUPPORT IS OUR MISSION

Continued from the previous page.

The aim of the Annual Report is to provide a comprehensive overview of the situation of asylum in the EU, by examining requests for international protection to the EU, analysing application and decision data, and focusing on some of the most important countries of origin of applicants for international protection. The report highlights the current trends of asylum flows in the EU. These comprise flows from Syria, the Russian Federation and also the Western Balkans countries.

The report points out that in 2013, 435,760 persons applied for international protection in the European Union - the highest number of applications for international protection since the beginning of EU data collection in 2008 – and represented an increase of 30% compared to 2012. The highest numbers of asylum applicants were recorded for citizens of Syria, the Russian Federation and the Western Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia), while the main receiving Member States were Germany, France, Sweden, United Kingdom and Italy.

Asylum applicants in the EU28 at their highest point since the beginning of EU-level collection



This graph reveals that since 2009, 2013 has so far been the year with the highest levels of people seeking asylum in the EU

The overall recognition rate at first instance at EU28 level (including humanitarian protection) stood at 34.4%, with refugee status being granted to 49,710 persons, subsidiary protection to 45,535 persons and humanitarian protection to 17,665 persons. The highest recognition rates were noted for Syrians, Eritreans and stateless persons. At the end of 2013, more than 352 000 persons were awaiting a decision on their asylum application in the EU28; the volume of pending applications therefore increased by 33% compared to the previous year.

With a 109% increase in the number of applications for international protection, Syria became the main country of origin of asylum seekers in the EU28 in 2013. The increase was widespread and the volume of Syrian applicants increased in nearly

all Member States in 2013. In the same year, the Western Balkan countries continued to represent a very significant workload for the asylum systems of the EU28. The number of Western Balkan applicants registered in the EU28 increased by 36% from 2012 to 2013, and when considered together represented (with 72,840 total asylum applicants) 17% of the EU total (more than for Syria) in 2013.

The report also highlights major developments with regard to EU and national policies, legislative changes and jurisprudence. In particular, 2013 saw the adoption of the asylum acquis package in June including the revised Reception Conditions Directive, revised Asylum Procedures Directive, revised Dublin Regulation, and the revised Eurodac Regulation, completing the review process (as the revised Qualification Directive was adopted in 2011).

The EASO Annual Report serves as a useful tool for national and EU policy-makers helping to identify areas where improvement is most needed (and thus where EASO and other key stakeholders should focus their future efforts), in line with its declared purpose of improving the quality, consistency and effectiveness of the CEAS.

Latest trends

In the first 5 months of 2014, there was a 19% rise in the number of applications for asylum in the EU compared to the same period last year. This follows the 30% increase seen in numbers of asylum applications in 2013 compared to 2012.

In 2014, new trends seem to be emerging, compared to 2013. The numbers of Syrian asylum seekers continue to rise; Syrians have increased in absolute and relative terms compared to 2013 and are in the top 3 countries of origin of 16 Member States. There has been a substantial increase in the numbers of Eritreans in recent months – arriving in Italy and applying in a number of northern countries, most notably Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. On the other hand, applications from citizens of the Russian Federation have declined significantly since 2013.

Since March 2014, there has also been a significant rise in the numbers of Ukrainian citizens applying for asylum in the EU+ (EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland). In the last 20 years the average number of applications was of roughly 100 applicants per month. From March to May, over 2,000 applications were made. The new applications are in large part (over 95%) from first time applicants (i.e. persons who have never applied before in the EU) and are widely distributed throughout Europe.

The Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU is available on: easo.europa.eu/asylum-documentation/easo-publication-and-documentation

The press conference addressed by EASO's Executive Director and Commissioner Malmström on the Annual Report is available on: easo.europa.eu/news-events/easo-in-the-press/videozone

European Parliament elects Juncker as Commission President

On 15 July, the European Parliament elected Jean-Claude Juncker as the new President of the European Commission. The European Peoples Party's candidate was elected with 422 votes in favour out of 729. This took place after his proposed candidature by the European Council at the end of June.



Jean-Claude Juncker © European Union 2014 - source:EP

The new Commission's President issued his political guidelines for the next European Commission, entitled 'My Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change'. Chapter 8, 'Towards a New Policy on Migration', outlines the following priorities of the Commission on asylum and migration:

'The recent terrible events in the Mediterranean have shown us that Europe needs to manage migration better, in all aspects. This is first of all a humanitarian imperative. I am convinced that we must work closely together in a spirit of solidarity to ensure that situations such as the one in Lampedusa never arise again. On the basis of our shared values, we need to protect those in need through a strong common asylum policy. The newly agreed common asylum system has to be fully implemented, and divergences in national implementation removed. I also intend to explore the possibility of using the European Asylum Support Office to assist third countries and Member States authorities in dealing with refugees and asylum requests in emergency situations, where appropriate on the ground in a third country that is particularly concerned.'

I want to promote a new European policy on legal migration. Such a policy could help us to address shortages of specific skills and attract talent to better cope with the demographic challenges of the European Union. I want Europe to become at least as attractive as the favourite migration destinations such as Australia, Canada and the USA. As a first step, I intend to review the "Blue Card" legislation and its unsatisfactory state of implementation.

I also believe that we need to deal more robustly with irregular migration, notably through better

cooperation with third countries, including on readmission. I will entrust a Commissioner with special responsibility for Migration to work on this together with all Member States and with the third countries most concerned.

Last but not least, we need to secure Europe's borders. Our common asylum and migration policies will only work if we can prevent an uncontrolled influx of illegal migrants. We therefore need to step up the operational capacities of the European border agency FRONTEX. A budget of just EUR 90 million a year certainly does not equal the task of protecting Europe's common borders. We need to pool more resources amongst Member States to reinforce the work of FRONTEX and put European Border Guard Teams into action for quick deployment in FRONTEX joint operations and rapid border interventions. This is the joint responsibility of all EU Member States, North and South, which needs to be taken up in a spirit of solidarity.

We also need to apply and vigorously enforce our new common European rules to penalise human traffickers. Criminals who exploit the pain and needs of people in distress or suffering from persecution need to know: Europe is on guard and will bring them to justice at every turn.'

The political guidelines for the new European Commission are available on: ec.europa.eu/about/juncker-commission/docs/pg_en.pdf.

Continued from the front page: EASO participates in the informal JHA Council

The JHA Ministers of the 28 EU countries, Commissioner Cecilia Malmström, the Executive Secretary General of EEAS, the Executive Directors and Directors of Cepol, EASO, eu-LISA, Europol, FRA and Frontex, the Director General of the International Organisation for Migration and the Director of the Bureau for Europe of UNHCR exchanged views on certain aspects of the new strategic guidelines in the area of Home Affairs which were adopted by the European Council on 26 and 27 June 2014. The participants specifically addressed selected topics such as immigration and the Mediterranean, migration for growth, the coordination of the internal and external dimension of JHA policies and the Internal Security Strategy. Additionally, the implementation of the actions foreseen in the Task Force Mediterranean was discussed, as well as the enhancement of actions in cooperation with key third countries and the further development of the Regional Protection Programmes and resettlement. Views on the reinforcement of legal ways to access Europe were shared, and the participants acknowledged the importance of strengthening the fight against trafficking, smuggling and organised crime. Finally, the Council called for reinforced border surveillance and assistance and solidarity with Member States dealing with high migration pressures.

Latest asylum trends and main countries of origin

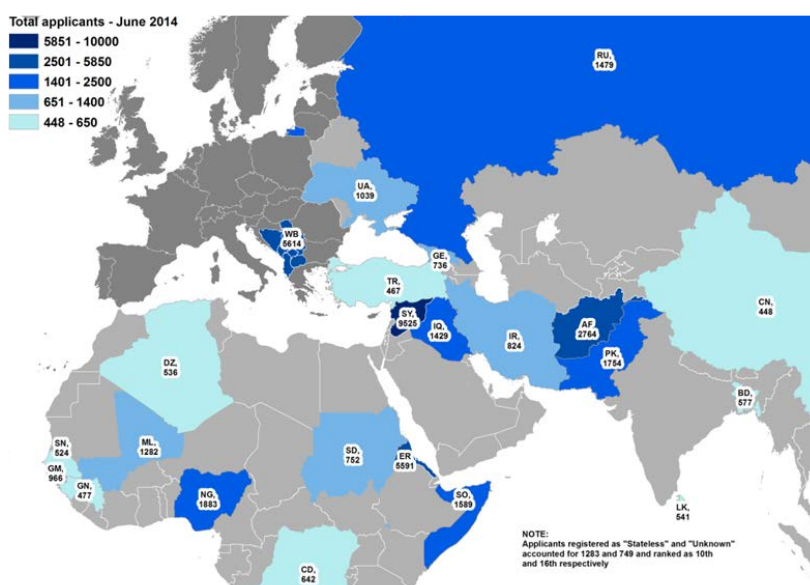
1. Number of applicants¹ for international protection in EU+ countries²

Monthly trend of asylum applicants, 2012 - June 2014



Following the seasonal trend in June 2014, EU+ countries recorded 49,512 asylum applicants. This level is almost on a par with the highest monthly peak registered since the beginning of Eurostat data collection in 2008 (50,135 applicants in October 2013). First time applicants also went up compared to the previous months reaching 44,095 claims lodged during the month under review.

In June 2014, the largest numbers of applicants were reported by Germany, Sweden, Italy and France, which altogether accounted for 65% of the monthly total.



2. Top 25 countries of origin in EU+ countries in June 2014

In June, Syrians, nationals from all six Western Balkan (WB) states³ and Eritreans continued to be the largest groups of asylum applicants in the EU+ countries. Compared to the previous month, when the number of Eritreans exceeded the one of WB nationals, in June, once again, WB nationals were recorded as the second largest group of applicants.

3. Latest country of origin trends

Syria

- In June, EU+ countries recorded the highest monthly total of Syrian nationals who lodged an application for international protection, 27% higher than the total registered in May 2014. The flow continued to be widely spread across 20 EU+ countries reporting Syrians in their top 3 nationalities recorded in June.

Eritrea

- After the sharp increase recorded in May, Eritrean applications went down by 2% in June compared to the previous month. The highest decrease compared to May was reported by the Netherlands, while Sweden and Switzerland recorded an increased influx of Eritreans.

Ukraine

- Applications from Ukrainians went up by 25% in June compared to May; whereas initially a large proportion of Ukrainian applications in EU+ countries were thought to be “*sur place*” (Ukrainians already present on the territory of the EU+ countries seeking protection against forced return), an EASO Practical Cooperation workshop in July 2014 concluded that the majority of applicants consist of new arrivals.

¹ No data available from January to May 2014 for Austria, no data for June 2014 for Spain.

² EU28 plus Norway and Switzerland.

³ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2), Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (1) (This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244/99 and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Kosovo declaration of independence).

Additional data and reports

Quarterly reports are available here: easo.europa.eu/asylum-trends-analysis/quarterly-report

Other EASO documentation is available here: easo.europa.eu/asylum-documentation/easo-publication-and-documentation

EASO Training Curriculum

Overview of EASO training activities

In the first half of the year numerous training activities were organised by EASO.

Eight train-the-trainer sessions took place within the EASO premises in Malta and two train-the-trainer sessions were held within the regional training session in Warsaw. In total 60 trainers were trained in the EASO train-the-trainer sessions and 770 individuals were trained in EASO modules in 51 national training sessions.

In the meantime, EASO continued working on updating the EASO Training modules as well as on the development of the new modules on *Gender*, *Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation* and *Reception* module. EASO also published its *Training Brochure* and developed Handbooks on *Inclusion* and the *Common European Asylum System (CEAS)* module. We would like to express our thanks and appreciation to all the experts that supported EASO training activities and thus helped us to make the first training semester a successful one.

For the second semester, EASO has recently sent Member States requests for the deployment of trainers and content experts for training activities between September and December 2014. EASO appreciates the very good response received from Member States so far.

The second training semester will start with the train-the-trainer sessions on the newly developed Module for *Managers* and updated module on *Dublin III Regulation*. The online part of these trainings will start on 8 September, while the face-to-face session will be held in Malta from 7 to 10 October. Additionally the training session on *Inclusion* and the training session on the *CEAS* will take place within the regional training in Vienna. The online part of the regional training sessions will start on 1 September and the face-to-face session will be held from 29 September to 2 October 2014 in Vienna. You can register for all the training sessions at training@easo.europa.eu. The registration deadline is 22 August for the regular training session and 28 August for the regional training session.

Dublin III Regulation module

In July EASO finalised the update of the EASO Training module on the *Dublin Regulation*. The aim of the update was to implement the recast of the Dublin Regulation into the existing module.

The Dublin III Regulation entered into force in July 2013 and is applicable to applications for international protection lodged as of 1 January 2014.

The aim of the Dublin III Regulation was to increase the system's efficiency and ensure higher standards of protection for asylum seekers falling under the Dublin procedure. The Dublin III Regulation includes among others, higher procedural safeguards; such as the right to a Dublin interview and free legal assistance, and representation in case of an appeal or review.

The Dublin III Regulation limits the detention for a period up to three months, provides extra guarantees to unaccompanied minors and puts forward a new clause that does not allow transferring a person to another Member State under the Dublin principle, if there is a risk that the person will be subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment. The Dublin III Regulation also introduces the mechanism for early warning, preparedness and crisis management.

By the end of this newly updated module, trainees will acquire not only the skills and knowledge, but will also learn about the specific aspects of this Regulation which are required for the application of the Dublin III Regulation in a framework that respects other international human rights instruments.

The pilot session of this module is scheduled for autumn this year. The online session will start on 8 September, with the expected duration of 20-30 hours. The face-to-face sessions will be held in Malta from 7 to 10 October. The deadline for registration is 22 August and you can register through your NCPs by e-mailing us on training@easo.europa.eu.

More information on EASO's training is available on easo.europa.eu/about-us/tasks-of-easo/training-quality

EASO activities on Unaccompanied Children

Save the date: Age Assessment & Dublin Regulation with a focus on Family Tracing and “Best Interest” considerations

EASO will organise two expert meetings in the beginning of September. Both meetings will take place at EASO’s premises. The purpose of these meetings is to facilitate the exchange of information, expertise and good practices by taking a practical approach and promoting the concept of joint cooperation. As such they are open to Member State representatives as well as other relevant experts identified by EASO for their skills and expertise in the field of minors. These meetings are aimed at officers responsible for the thematic areas under discussion and/or developing policy on children.

The aim of the meeting on “Age Assessment” is to undertake a first evaluation of the Age Assessment EASO publication, to share experiences

and intentions by those Member States that are currently reviewing their Age Assessment policies and to discuss emerging case law on the topic.

The aim of the meeting on the Dublin Regulation, which will focus on Family Tracing and “Best Interest” considerations, is to continue with the discussions which were started last year at EASO, giving specific consideration to the practicalities of family tracing within the framework of the Dublin Regulation, taking into account experiences of Member States since the new Regulation came into force. Also to reflect on wider best interest considerations as mandated within the Dublin Regulation.

For further information please contact vulnerablegroups@easo.europa.eu.

Expert Meeting	Dates	Deadline for Registration
Age Assessment	1-2 (morning) September 2014	20 August 2014
Dublin Regulation with a focus on Family Tracing and ‘Best Interest’ Considerations	2 (afternoon)-3 September 2014	20 August 2014

Update on EASO’s development of a common platform for sharing information and expertise on children

Since commencing its work on children in 2011, EASO has developed and facilitated good cooperation between Member State administrations and actors within civil society. Instances of collaboration resulting from thematic meetings include:

- Reference group of Member States and members of civil society for the age assessment publication;
- Wider civil society sharing expertise in thematic meetings;
- EASO and Commission collaboration on common Dublin leaflet for unaccompanied children and adults;
- EASO joining UNICEF advisory board for the development of child- specific notices on Country of Origin Information (COI).

The subject of a platform and network was discussed as part of the EASO Annual Conference in December 2013 and during the expert meeting on Family Tracing and Children, which took place 6 and 7 March 2014. During the meetings representatives from both Member States’ administrations and civil society expressed a wish to continue and further develop collaboration where possible; with the concrete outcome being the decision to create a platform and forum to facilitate the exchange and sharing of information, including instances of good practice.

Feedback from participants to the meeting indicated that they would like to use the network for the following:

- a) central contact point for members,

- b) distribute relevant EASO communications and information between national administrations and other relevant stakeholders,
- c) identification of relevant experts who could be invited by EASO to participate in its activities (meetings, development of tools),
- d) exchange of expertise and knowledge (including provision of information/developments at national level),
- e) contribute to the planning and evaluation of EASO activities.

Via the platform members of the network shall be able to access the following:

- EASO tools and resources;
- Relevant materials from previous meetings (agendas, presentations, background documents, minutes, questionnaires etc);
- Details of planned and upcoming meetings;
- Contact details of meeting participants and/or network members.

Membership of the network is currently open to all Member State administrations, and those expert organisations who have participated in and contributed to EASO’s activities on children. Entry to the platform will be password restricted to the verified members of the network. We are currently in the final stages of completing the pilot of the platform, before granting access to users, with the intention that the platform and network start to be accessible this summer.

For further information please contact vulnerablegroups@easo.europa.eu.

EASO participates in German Parliament's hearing



© Bundestag

On 2 July the Deutscher Bundestag (German Parliament) organised a hearing on the European Union's asylum policy. EASO's Executive Director participated in the hearing in which he pointed out that there has been a steady rise in the number of applications for international protection. He also acknowledged the progress that was achieved towards reaching a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and that the "primary objective" of the CEAS is to have similar situations resulting in similar outcomes via a similar treatment.

The event can be seen via the following link: [youtube.com/watch?v=RQ646bGujg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQ646bGujg).

Upcoming event: EASO to present annual reports at the European Parliament

In September, EASO's Executive Director will be giving a presentation on EASO's Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU 2013 as well as on the 2013 Annual Activity Report in the European Parliament's new LIBE Committee, whose



EASO info day in Ireland (©IE)

members were appointed after the European elections at the end of May. On 7 July, the LIBE Committee elected its new chair, British MEP Claude Moraes (Socialists & Democrats).

Also in September, EASO will hold its info day in the European Parliament. The objective of the info day was to reach out to EASO's stakeholders, especially asylum officials. The initiative aimed to inform our stakeholders of EASO's work, products and services and how to make best use of them.

The presentation will be broadcasted live and made available via the following link: www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en.

Upcoming event: EASO's 15th Management Board meeting

On 15 September, EASO will hold its 15th Management Board meeting. The Management Board, EASO's governing body, is made up of representatives of EU Member States, the Commission and UNHCR. Representatives of Associated Countries are invited to attend as observers.

Interim assessment on the implementation of the EASO Operating Plan for Greece

EASO published on 29 July an interim assessment on the implementation of the EASO Operating Plan for Greece. This interim assessment report looks into the state of implementation of the EASO support measures (contained in the EASO Operating Plan for Greece), compares the current situation with the situation in March 2011, identifies the changes made till end of May 2014 and also highlights where further efforts are needed.

Following a request made by the Greek Government, in February 2011, EASO agreed to support Greece with its establishment of the new Asylum Service, First Reception Service, Appeal Authority, and reception in general and reduction of the backlog by deploying experts from the different EU member states via the so-called Asylum Support Teams. The first phase of EASO's support to Greece ended in March 2013. Following a second request made by the Greek Government early 2013 for further support, EASO will continue to support Greece until December 2014. In this second phase EASO supports Greece via the deployment of Asylum Support Teams, which provide training on nationality establishment (in close cooperation with Frontex) and provide support on EU funding, support on the collection and analysis of statistical data and support in the field of Country of Origin Information. Depending on the request by the Greek government, EASO can rearrange or step up its operations.

This interim assessment report shows that with the support of EASO and other stakeholders involved, Greece has taken concrete steps towards establishing a modern asylum and reception system for offering protection to those in need. Whilst Greece has set up an asylum procedure at first and second instance, capacity building and consolidation should continue, in particular in the field of reception and clearing of the backlog of asylum cases, with a view to ensure the sustainability of the new procedures and further improve the standards in accordance with EU and Greece's legal obligations. Further implementation of a data quality management will enhance the assessment of Greek asylum data collection and analysis, within the Common European Asylum System.

The report is available via the following link: easo.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/Interim-assessment-on-the-implementation-of-the-EASO-Operating-Plan-for-Greece.pdf.

EASO implements the first activity in Cyprus

EASO and Cyprus signed, on 5 June 2014, a Special Support Plan, which provides for EASO support to Cyprus until 1 July 2015. From 8 to 11 July 2014, EASO started the implementation of the first measure of the Special Support Plan for Cyprus, aiming at the provision of support in the field of reception and open accommodation.

Three experts with long term experience in the development and management of reception systems and facilities were selected to participate in this measure.



EASO Expert Team together with the Cypriot colleagues

The experts conducted a needs assessment on the operation and management of the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers in Kofinou. The Reception Centre is in the process of being refurbished and will expand its capacity by August 2014, from 70 to a total of 400 persons.

Based on the needs assessment, the experts provided advice, which included suggestions on the structure, operation and management of the expanded Reception Centre.

EASO organises a study visit of the Greek Appeals Authority to Denmark and Sweden

Twelve expert-rapporteurs from the Appeals Authority of the Greek Ministry of Public Order and Citizen Protection participated in a study visit to asylum and appeals institutions in Denmark and Sweden.

EASO organised this intensive two-day visit in close cooperation with the Greek delegation and the Swedish and Danish migration and asylum authorities. This study visit was conducted in the framework of the EASO-Greece Operating Plan Phase II.



The Greek delegates during their study visit in Denmark

During the study visit to Denmark and Sweden, the Greek experts attended presentations and held dialogues with the Danish Immigration Service, the Refugee Appeals Board, the Swedish Migration Board and the Migration Court. The Greek participants gained knowledge on the functioning of these systems.

Of particular value was the guidance provided by experienced Danish and Swedish experts working on similar tasks in the area of asylum appeals at the second instance. The study visit led to active discussions and exchange of ideas on ensuring the efficiency and quality of the asylum appeals system. Through this visit, the Greek delegation was able to identify good practices and procedural options to inspire and guide their work in Greece.

EASO Practical Cooperation Workshop on Ukraine

On 2 July 2014, EASO organised a Practical Cooperation Workshop on Ukraine, hosted by the Polish Office for Foreigners in Warsaw. A total of 29 participants attended the workshop, representing 14 Member States, the Commission, UNHCR, Frontex and EASO. An expert from the Centre for Eastern Studies was also present. The workshop was organised within a short timeframe following discussions during the EASO Management Board on 26 May on Ukraine, and statistical indications that the number of Ukrainian applicants, albeit still low compared to other caseloads, is rapidly increasing in a number of EU+ countries (EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland).

The workshop provided participants with an update on the current situation in different regions of Ukraine and on possible protection considerations as a result of this situation; to analyse and discuss data and profiles of Ukrainian applicants; to compare and discuss case processing and decision practices in different EU+ countries; and to inform each other of national contingency plans and measures to raise preparedness in case of a larger influx of Ukrainian applicants. So far the numbers of Ukrainian applicants are still very low compared to other countries of origin. Of all countries bordering Ukraine, only Poland had already witnessed a significant rise in the number of applicants. Some other countries at the Eastern border, who are not yet confronted with an influx, have contingency plans in place and are monitoring the situation closely.

Despite the low numbers, various profiles of Ukrainian asylum applicants can be identified. Whereas initially it seemed a significant number of “*sur place*” applications were made by Ukrainians already residing in EU+ countries, the majority of applications now appear to represent new arrivals. Recurrent profiles include Maidan demonstrators from Western Ukraine, inhabitants from Eastern Ukraine (Donetsk, Luhansk) fleeing the general violence, journalists and human rights activists who are specifically targeted by the insurgents, and a small number of Crimean Tatars.

Due to the constantly changing situation, especially in Eastern Ukraine, many EU+ countries have temporarily halted decisions on Ukrainian applications for international protection. Several EU+ countries have high numbers of Ukrainians residing on their territory, which may constitute a pull factor in case of a drastic deterioration of the Ukrainian conflict. Until now, however, Ukrainians leaving their country mainly use other (legal) migration channels than asylum.

That said, it seems that the Ukrainian authorities

may find it difficult to effectively cope with a continuously rising number of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Since June, numbers have been drastically increasing, and if the conflict continues into autumn and winter, most temporary shelters currently being used will become inadequate. Those IDPs without family networks in other parts of Ukraine, or IDPs whose resources are exhausted, may start seeking international protection in an EU country as the situation becomes protracted.

At this stage, there is a need to monitor data and keep a close look at the situation of IDPs (where information is available, as the situation is changing continuously) and the human rights situation in Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk regions (where almost no information is readily available).

EASO organises COI Portal training in Greece

Following a first successful regional training on the Common Country of Origin Information (COI) Portal for Portugal and Spain (organised in Lisbon in April 2014), EASO organised two training sessions in Athens. Intended for Greek and Cypriot users (National Common Portal Administrators/NCPAs, COI Specialists and case workers), the two sessions were hosted in the premises of the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government, in Athens, from 30 June to 2 July.

Besides providing users of the COI Portal with hands-on training of the COI Portal’s main features, the sessions aimed at reinforcing the NCPAs’ capacity to train their internal users. Participants



welcomed this on-site training focused on countries of origin for which participants had indicated to have specific needs (namely Afghanistan, Algeria, Egypt, Eritrea, Georgia, Guinea, Nigeria, Pakistan, Syria, Iran and Iraq). On 1 July, the two EASO trainers met with the COI unit of the Greek Central Asylum Service to exchange views on the first training session and on the use of the COI Portal in relation to national COI needs.

It should be noted that Greece has the highest number of registered COI Portal users. Furthermore, the Greek COI unit has been actively using the COI Portal to provide its national COI products. These products are then retrievable since the COI Portal also supports search in non-Latin alphabets. Moreover, as any registered EU+ users, Greek COI Portal users can benefit from a variety of COI available in different languages such as English, French and German.

EASO Vacancies

EASO has recently published the following vacancies:

Open Calls		
Reference Number	Title	Closing Date
EASO/2014/CA/009	Data Collection and Processing Officer	19 August 2014

For more information please visit our website on easo.europa.eu/working-for-easo

Your opinion is important to us! Visit the EASO consultation calendar, to keep updated on when EASO will open consultation procedures:
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