

Min-II, EASO deployed expert from Germany, shares his experience of working in EASO



Min-II is a German national who has been deployed in Greece and recently in Malta in order to support EASO operations.

The last day of his deployment in Malta operations, EASO contacted him for a short interview.

What was your exact role within EASO operations? What were your main tasks?

My experience with EASO started in 2017, where I was first deployed in Greece as part of the EASO Greece Operations. I had the opportunity to be deployed three times in the Greek islands and provide my support. Starting in February 2020, I was also deployed in Malta, supporting the EASO Malta Operations. My role as a deployed expert in both locations was to conduct interviews and write evaluations for asylum applications.

What was your motivation to work/be deployed with EASO?

My eagerness to assist with EASO operations on the ground started few years ago when I was working as a caseworker in Germany. I very much wanted to assist different EU Member States under particular pressure and especially Greece, which was dealing with a particularly difficult situation. I wanted to contribute with my knowledge, time and language skills. I knew it would be a unique experience for me, both personally and professionally, as I would meet colleagues from other countries, and I would learn a lot through them. For the same reason, when EASO became operational in Malta, I expressed my interest to join the team in order to provide support with the interviews and evaluations of asylum applications.

How did you get into working with refugees & asylum?

When the so-called migration crisis began in Greece in 2015, I was working in the field of academia in Germany. The images of asylum seekers were everywhere, and everybody was talking about the migration crisis. It had a profound impact on me, and that was the moment I decided to offer my support and become a caseworker.

What did you find most challenging while working for EASO operations?

The most challenging conditions I experienced were during my deployment in Chios, in Greece. I was witness to various unpleasant conditions. It was an understandably tense environment, with a lot of stress. Often, I had to deal with the frustration of some applicants and manage difficult situations. In Malta, I experienced challenges as well; however not to the same extent as the ones in Greece, as it is a very different environment.

Was there any moment when you wanted to give up your deployment?

No, never. In difficult moments I had co-workers who I could trust and talk to. In these situations, you build a temporary social network and you have people you can rely on. In the end, we all face the same challenges and problems in the field, so we can understand and support each other.

What did you miss the most during your deployment?

During my deployment, I naturally missed my family and friends, but personally I could deal with that. When my deployment was over and I was back in Germany, I actually found that I missed being part of the EASO operations. I was feeling that my experience was not enough, and that I wanted to contribute more. This is why I ended up being deployed several times.

What do you bring back home from the mission?

I bring the differences from the two countries I was deployed. Malta operations are much more manageable than the operations in Greece as they receive a lower number of asylum applications. I have directly seen that EASO's operations have contributed to improving the asylum processes in both countries and lay the foundations of improved systems, and I am happy that I contributed to this.

Would you recommend a mission with EASO to others?

Absolutely. It is a very beneficial experience. You explore something outside of your regular work and you see how the EU system works. It is an opportunity to explore different ways of working of other EU Member States. This experience helped me professionally, but mainly personally.

EASO would like to thank Min-II for his commitment and wish him the best of luck for his future endeavours.