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Press Release: EASO signs new Operating Plan with Greece

Continued support for Greece: EASO signs 2018 Operating Plan

The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and the Government of Greece have signed a new Operating Plan outlining the technical and operational support measures that the Agency will carry out in the country in 2018.

The 2018 Operating Plan was signed by the Minister of Migration Policy of Greece, Ioannis Mouzalas, and by the Executive Director of EASO, José Carreira. The agreement builds on EASO's existing operational support to Greece and aims to sustain the Agency's support for the country's response to the extraordinary pressure on its asylum and reception systems while implementing the EU Asylum Acquis.

Commenting on the new agreement, Mr. Carreira stated: "Greece's response to the unprecedented pressures faced by its asylum and reception systems over the past years has been commendable. Since 2011, EASO has been increasing its operational support to the Greek authorities so as to assist in relieving such pressures. Today's agreement updates this support and tailors it to the current needs of our Greek partners, therefore ensuring that the value of EASO's assistance is maximised."

The 2018 Operating Plan sets out 10 measures, divided into three priority areas:

- Support to the Asylum Procedure;
- Support to Reception; and
- Capacity building in implementation of Common European Asylum System (CEAS)

The measures cover a broad range of activities which EASO will implement throughout the year. These include supporting the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement by improving the efficiency of the asylum process, support for Dublin processing, supporting capacity-building through training and workshops, and strengthening the capacity of the Reception and Identification Service to, among others, identify, assess and refer vulnerable applicants.

EASO's presence in Greece has increased significantly over the past year, with over 300 staff currently deployed in the country. EASO and Greece are currently in the process of negotiating a Hosting Arrangement which will establish the legal modalities through which the Agency's presence in the country will be formalised, following the completion of a similar arrangement with Italy.

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Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office on the following email address: press@easo.europa.eu

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