EASO
Single Programming Document

Multiannual Programming 2019-2021

Work Programme 2019

Revision 2

July 2019

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Notes on the SPD 2019-2021

The initial version of the Single Programming Document (SPD) 2019-2021 of the European Asylum Support Office was adopted in February 2018. That version of the SPD 2019-2021 was drafted on the basis of the proposed new founding Regulation establishing the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA). As noted by the European Council in June 2018, much progress has been achieved on the reform of the Common European Asylum System and several files are close to finalisation. However, a consensus needs to be found on the Dublin Regulation and further examination is also required on the Asylum Procedures proposal. In light of this, it was likely that the EUAA would not be taking effect on 1 January 2019. Revision 1 of the SPD 2019-2021 was therefore initiated to be again based on the current EASO Regulation, and was endorsed by the EASO Management Board in November 2018.

Revision 2 of the SPD 2019-2021 primarily incorporates re-adjusted budget provisions (following the mid-year budget review outcome) along with specified HR allocation, and details aspects of operational support to be provided to Malta.

Human and financial resource estimates for 2019 and 2020 are aligned with the Legislative Financial Statement annexed to the Commission proposal for a Regulation on the EUAA. Resources for 2021 are the Agency's estimates, pending agreement of the Multiannual Financial Framework post-2020.

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

1 Foreword

2019 is expected to be a year of transformation for the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and EASO in general. At the moment, negotiations on the reform of the legislative package constituting the CEAS have not yet been concluded. The reform of the CEAS includes also a new mandate for EASO, which aims at increasing the competences, responsibilities, and resources of the agency and converting it into the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA). Furthermore, in September 2018, the Commission proposed a number of targeted amendments to the EUAA proposal that will boost the agency's operational role further in managing efficient and resilient asylum procedures to the fullest extent possible.

Over the past years, the agency has considerably strengthened its operational role, in particular through its support activities provided in the hotspots in Italy and Greece. Moreover, the agency intensified its training activities, production of guidance and tools, professional development of members of courts and tribunals, COI, and statistical and analytical reports thereby bolstering its role as a centre of expertise on asylum. However, the agency has experienced serious governance and management-related difficulties in 2017 and 2018, which led to the resignation of the former executive Director and my appointment as interim Executive Director. Notwithstanding these difficulties, the activities of the agency were not affected and staff have demonstrated great resilience. Conversely, recruitment slowed down considerably during the first half of 2018, which impacted the number of establishment positions that the agency could fill by the end of the year. In line with a rigorous recruitment plan established in June 2018, the agency expected to recover the situation and reach the total number of positions foreseen in the establishment plan by end 2019.

This work programme was initially drafted on the assumption that EASO would become EUAA during 2019. This was based on the fact that inter-institutional negotiations on the CEAS package at the end of 2017, appeared to show that the EUAA Regulation would be adopted in mid-2018. Yet, during the course of 2018, it became apparent that due to slow progress on negotiations on the other instruments of the CEAS and as several Member States and the Parliament were of the view that the CEAS legislative package must be adopted together in view of the direct and indirect links between the different legislative proposals, the adoption was delayed further until there is an agreement on all legislative proposals. Therefore adoption and entry into force of the EUAA Regulation in early 2019 was not possible. The document is therefore exclusively based on the EASO mandate. Preparatory activities in view of the operationalisation of EUAA are included in this plan so as to ensure that once the new mandate is adopted and enters into force, the agency can immediately start delivering on its new tasks.

I trust that 2019 will yet be another year of growth for the agency making it a reliable support partner to the EU and its Member States in the implementation of a fair and efficient CEAS.

Jamil Addou
Executive Director a.i.[1]

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[1] On 16 June 2019, Nina Gregori took up duty as EASO Executive Director.

2 List of acronyms

AD	Administrator
AEAJ	Association of European Administrative Judges
ARP	Asylum Reserve Pool
AST	Assistant
CA	Contract agent
CEAS	Common European Asylum System
CEPOL	European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training
COI	Country of Origin Information
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
EEAS	European External Action Service
EMN	European Migration Network
EPRA	European Platform of Reception Agencies
EPS	Early warning and Preparedness System
EU	European Union
EU+	EU Member States and Associate Countries
eu-LISA	European Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
Eurojust	The European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit
Europol	European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
Frontex/EBCG	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
FTE	Full-time equivalent
GDISC	General Directors' Immigration Service Conference
IARLJ	International Association of Refugee Law Judges
IDS	Information Documentation System
IGC	Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs
KCMD	Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography
LAL	List of Available Languages
LMS	e-Learning management system
MedCOI	Medical Country of Origin Information
MFF	Multiannual Financial Framework
NCP	National Contact Point
RDPP	Regional Development and Protection Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WB	Western Balkans

3   Mission Statement

3.1. Mission of the European Asylum Support Office

As a centre of expertise, the European Asylum Support Office's (EASO) mission is to contribute to the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) by enhancing practical cooperation, stimulating information exchange, ensuring convergence in the assessment of protection needs in the Member States, monitoring the implementation of the CEAS and providing operational and technical assistance to Member States subject to pressure on their asylum and reception systems.

3.2. EASO's principles

In fulfilling its mission, EASO observes the following principles:

- Enhancing practical cooperation and information exchange among Member States in the field of asylum;

- Providing timely and up-to-date data, analysis and assessments on asylum-related matters;

- Stimulating quality and efficiency of the asylum procedures, reception conditions of Member States and the assessment of protection needs across the Union through promotion of EU law and development of operational standards;

- Ensuring greater convergence in the assessment of protection needs across the Union;

- Monitoring the implementation of the CEAS and compliance by Member States with operational standards, guidelines and best practices;

- Providing comprehensive and timely operational and technical support to Member States on asylum and reception;

- Acting as an independent and impartial centre of expertise;

- Providing operational and technical assistance to support Member States in taking up their responsibilities in the field of asylum and in showing solidarity with Member States whose asylum systems are under pressure;

- Providing support to third countries' asylum and reception systems, as well as support related to resettlement, in close cooperation with the relevant EU institutions and international organisations;

- Ensuring the protection and promotion of fundamental rights and principles, as enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, in the implementation of asylum-related activities[2];

- Providing evidence-based input to EU policymakers on asylum;

- Cooperating with EU institutions, EU agencies and bodies, international organisations and civil society.

3.3. EASO's founding act

Regulation (EU) No 439/2010[3] established EASO on 19 May 2010. Article 1 of the Regulation stipulates:

"*A European Asylum Support Office (the Support Office) is hereby established in order to help to improve the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (the CEAS), to strengthen*

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[2] All actions under the Work Programme shall respect, and be implemented in line with the rights and principles enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, in particular Article 1 (human dignity), Article 8 (protection of personal data), Article 18 (right to asylum), Article 19 (protection in the event of removal, expulsion or extradition), Article 21 (non-discrimination) and Article 24 (rights of the child).

[3] Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 establishing a European Asylum Support Office, OJ L 132, 29.5.2010, p. 11.

practical cooperation among Member States on asylum and to provide and/or coordinate the provision of operational support to Member States subject to particular pressure on their asylum and reception systems".

According to the Regulation, the duties of EASO are to support practical cooperation on asylum, including identification and exchange of best practices, information on countries of origin, supporting relocation, training, and the external dimension of CEAS; to support Member States subject to particular pressure, including through gathering and analysing information and implementing support actions; and to contribute to the implementation of CEAS through gathering and exchanging information and drafting reports and technical documents.

EASO's internal governance comprises a Management Board and an Executive Director. The Management Board is the governing and planning body of EASO, which aims to ensure that the Agency performs effectively its duties. The Executive Director is independent in the performance of his tasks and is the legal representative of EASO. The Executive Director is responsible, inter alia, for the administrative management of EASO and for the implementation of the Annual Work Programme and the decisions of the Management Board.

The Executive Director is supported by Heads of Department, Heads of Unit, Heads of Sector and Liaison Officers. EASO's organisation chart is included as annex to this document. On 4 May 2016 the Commission presented a proposal to transform EASO into a fully flegged EU Agency for Asylum with increased competences. A provisional political agreement between the Presidency of the Council of the EU and the European Parliament was taken note of by COREPER in December 2017. In September 2018, the European Commission proposed further targeted amendments. Negotiations have not yet been finalised.

SECTION II. GENERAL CONTEXT

Migratory flows have significantly reduced since 2015 and the number of deaths at sea has decreased, nevertheless, migration continues to be a key policy priority in the European Union (EU). Efforts made by the EU and its Member States (MS) to manage migration have yielded positive results. The European Agenda on Migration[4], adopted on 13 May 2015, which gives strategic direction in the field of migration and the establishment of the hotspots, the implementation of the Council Decisions on Relocation, the EU–Turkey Statement, the Partnership Framework and the joint actions on the Central Mediterranean route have all played a significant role in the reduction of the number of irregular arrivals and in migration management.

The Common European Asylum System (CEAS) sustained extreme pressure during the migration crisis that peaked in 2015 and several serious dysfunctions were exposed, in particular in the Dublin system. Accordingly, in its Communication of 6 April 2016 entitled "Towards a reform of the Common European Asylum System and enhancing legal avenues to Europe" , the Commission set out its priorities for reforming the CEAS, aimed at harmonising standards in the European Union and speeding up procedures.

As part of this reform, which is a key element of the comprehensive migration strategy, the Commission presented seven legislative proposals on 4 May and 13 July 2016. These included the overhaul of the Dublin system, the conversation of the Qualification Directive and Asylum Procedures Directive into Regulations, the recast of the Reception Conditions Directive and the Eurodac Regulation, a new proposal for a Union Resettlement Framework, and the transformation of EASO into a fully-fledged European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) with increased competences.

Taking into consideration the state of play of the inter-institutional negotiations on the CEAS package at the end of 2017, it was expected that the EUAA Regulation would be adopted in mid-2018. However, as several MS are of the view that the CEAS legislative package, which also includes the proposal for a EUAA Regulation, must be adopted together in view of the direct and indirect links between the different legislative proposals, the adoption was delayed further until there is agreement on all legislative proposals. At the beginning of the Finnish Presidency the state of play on the seven CEAS proposals is as follows. Five proposals are in the final stages of reaching an informal political agreement between Council and European Parliament: the Qualification Regulation, the recast Reception Conditions Directive, the recast Eurodac Regulation, the Union Resettlement Framework Regulation and the EUAA Regulation. Further work is required in Council on the proposal for a recast Dublin regulation and the Asylum Procedures Regulation proposal before the negotiations with the European Parliament can commence.

Therefore the first full year of implementation of the new EUAA Regulation is not expected to be 2019. The resource demand for implementation will depend on progress made in 2019 and the additional preparatory actions are scheduled for 2019 and early 2020.

The other legislative proposals that constitute the CEAS - the recast of the Dublin Regulation, the recast EURODAC Regulation, the Regulation establishing a common procedure in the EU, the Qualification Regulation, the recast of the Reception Conditions Directive and the Regulation establishing a Union Resettlement Framework – will all have an impact on the EUAA to varying degrees. This means that the additional tasks foreseen in these proposals need also to be factored in the planning and implementation of the EUAA Regulation.

Considering the extent of the proposed changes to the founding Regulation, the operationalisation of the new Agency will be gradual. Several preparatory measures are already underway, others will be put in place upon entry into force, and yet other measures will be implemented progressively in the months following entry into force.

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[4] COM(2015) 240 final.

The Agency's budget and staff will grow significantly to reflect its additional competences, tasks and responsibilities. According to the Legislative Financial Statement annexed to the Commission proposal for a Regulation establishing the EUAA, by the year 2020[5], the Agency's budget is expected to grow to more than **€138 million** and the staff of the Agency to **500.**

The transition of the Agency from its current mandate to the new one might present a number of challenges both from an administrative and operational perspective. The following are assumptions and risks that the Agency has identified for 2019.

Assumptions

- The **new EUAA Regulation** will not have entered into force in 2019. The Agency will be proceeding with preparatory work for the **operationalisation and implementation** in line with the priorities identified by the EASO Management Board and related Roadmaps.

- **Core business activities[6]** will remain at least at the same levels as in 2018, provided that the operational needs in Italy, Greece and Cyprus are not greater than planned and in the absence of a new migration crisis elsewhere in the EU or increased Agency involvement in third countries.

- **Additional activities** on top core-business activities will be restricted to high priority non-core initiatives and projects.

- **Financial and human resources in 2019** will be at the level established in the Legislative Financial Statement annexed to the Commission proposal for new Regulation establishing the EUAA.

- The Agency will maintain the pace of **recruitment** achieved during 2017 to fill new staff posts.

Risks

- Entry into force of the **new EUAA Regulation may be significantly delayed**, thus slowing down the operationalisation of the new Agency.

  - *Mitigation: EASO will proceed with its internal processes to prepare for the operationalisation of the new EUAA Regulation, in cooperation with the Commission and the Management Board.*

- The **workload** arising from core-business activities will not permit additional non-core initiatives and projects, thus limiting the Agency's capacity to take on unplanned activities.

  - *Mitigation: EASO will prioritise the work and tasks in 2019 and review the situation regularly to address changing and emerging priorities.*

- New tasks will be added by the co-legislator that were not foreseen in the programming document.

  - *Mitigation: Where applicable EASO will re-prioritise its activities and if necessary request additional resources to deliver on the new tasks.*

- Lack of sufficient numbers of **Member States' experts** to be deployed in operations managed by the Agency, particularly those in the hotspots, thus slowing and limiting the Agency in setting up asylum support teams.

  - *Mitigation: EASO will continue to engage with the Member States via the National Contact Points and the Management Board to ensure sufficient numbers of experts are deployed and made available for the asylum support teams. The Agency will also continue to complement Member State experts with interpreters, cultural mediators, interim*

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[5] Budgets 2020 and 2021 depend on the adoption of the new EUAA proposal and are therefore subject to a revision.

[6] The Agency defines core business activities as those activities that have been operational for at least one full year and are to be repeated year after year. Other activities, such as projects or new activities that are being operationalised, are considered as non-core initiatives or projects until such time as they are transformed into core business activities.

caseworkers and interim support staff engaged from service providers by means of framework contracts.

- **No earmarked contingency funds in the EASO budget** to cover the financing of unforeseen urgent requests for operational and technical support.

    - *Mitigation: EASO will continue to engage with the Commission to identify options for funding situations requiring rapid operational intervention or major unforeseen operational expenditure, such as earmarking emergency reserve funds within the Agency's budget.*

- There may be **insufficient numbers of posts at the required grades** to attract the right candidates for the new job profiles foreseen in the new EUAA Regulation that were not in the original Commission proposal, thus impacting on the preparations for the operationalisation of the EUAA.

    - *Mitigation: EASO will continue to engage in discussions with the Commission and the Management Board on a review of the human resource requirements of the Agency to address the needs arising from the new mandate.*

SECTION III. MULTIANNUAL PROGRAMMING 2019-2021

1 Multiannual programme and objectives

1.1. EASO's Key Performance Indicator

EASO's overall Key Performance Indicator represents the Agency's ability to conduct its core business and to meet the specific objectives set out in the annual work programme.

Consequently, EASO's Key Performance Indicator is represented by a qualitative indicator aiming at demonstrating the impact of the Agency's support to the implementation of the CEAS, taking into account:

- the tasks laid down in the EASO Regulation, the recast EU asylum acquis and other related EU documents and the Agency's progress in implementing activities to fulfil these tasks;
- the requests made by the EU+ countries, the European Commission, the Council of the EU, the European Parliament and other EU institutions, agencies and bodies to develop and execute additional EASO activities in order to support the implementation of the CEAS;
- the opinions expressed by the EU+ countries, the European Commission, the Council of the EU, the European Parliament, other EU institutions, agencies and bodies and other EASO partners on the Agency's work.

The work programme identifies a number of specific objectives which are structured according to the **SMART** (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) principle. In order to measure the Agency's performance, indicators are developed for each objective, together with the expected output and timeframe.

1.2. Operational support

Operational support to Member States

Multiannual strategic objective: MA01	
Description of objective	Fully implement EASO operational support to Member States and enhance the quality of support provided to increase the effectiveness of operations thus enabling Member States to respond to particular pressure on their asylum and / or reception systems.
Expected results	- Operating plans are developed and in place and deliver assistance to meet the needs of Member States requiring support, based on an agreed project management methodology. - Experts are deployed as a part of asylum support teams, as and when required. - Enhanced planning, monitoring and evaluation result in increased impact, improved efficiency and effectiveness of EASO operations.
Performance indicators	**Targets**
Continued implementation of the provisions in the EASO Regulation relating to operational support to Member States is sustained, and preparations for the implementation of the provisions foreseen in the EUAA Regulation are in place.	Provisions fully implemented by the end of 2020.
Timely and efficient deployment of asylum support teams is maintained.	The asylum support teams deployed on time and as per the prioritised needs on the ground.
Operating plans with the respective Member States are agreed and in place, and follow an agreed project management methodology. Other *ad hoc* operations can be delivered in a structured manner.	Legal deadlines met (for new plans) or plans extended without delays/interruptions. Mechanisms in place for *ad hoc* operations.

All monitoring and evaluation of operating plans are completed.	All monitoring and evaluation due are completed on time. Results from monitoring and evaluation feed back into the planning of operations.
Satisfactory outcome of operating plan evaluations.	Operating plans are fully delivered and achieve the stated objectives.

EASO will continue to **enhance its operational support** to EU Member States based on emerging needs to fully implement the EU Asylum Acquis and to respond to particular pressure on EU Member States' asylum and reception systems, taking into account the trends in arrivals and migration routes.

This programme is based on the assumption that the situation in Greece will have stabilised at the same high level, with continued operational support to asylum and reception services including continued support for EU Turkey and new support to the regular asylum procedure following the amendment of the national legislation in June 2018. Similarly, in the case of Italy, the level of engagement will remain at a high level in 2019, with focus increasingly being placed on capacity building and operational support to the regular asylum procedure, family reunification under Dublin Regulation and reception. Alternative funding mechanisms will be explored during 2019 to potentially reduce EASO's operational support, with the aim of reducing the budget incrementally by securing alternative funding through AMIF administered by Greece and Italy instead of EASO.

In this regard the Agency will tailor its operational support to the specific arising needs, as well as to requests from EU Member States. EASO's activities will range from immediate measures in a crisis situation to long-term planning and preventive capacity building for the receiving Member States with regard to both their asylum and reception systems. All will be based on entry and exit strategies and sustainability planning based on thorough needs assessments. The Agency will continue its tasks as regards the implementation of its current mandate and in preparation for the new mandate, with a major focus on the provision of operational support to Member States that may be facing disproportionate pressure. Specific focus will be provided to EU front-line Member States, in particular to Italy, Cyprus, Greece and Malta[7] as per the European Agenda on Migration and the hotspot approach.

This will include the agreement and implementation of **operating plans**, comprising support measures in a number of areas such as:

- Assisting Member States with identification and registration of third-country nationals and the examination of applications for international protection;
- Facilitating the examination of applications for international protection or providing national authorities with the necessary assistance in the procedure for international protection;
- Facilitating Member States' technical cooperation in processing applications for international protection;
- Assisting with provision of information on the procedure for international protection;
- Advising and coordinating the setting up or provision of emergency reception facilities by the Member States;
- Assisting Member States to ensure that children's rights and child protection are safeguarded, in particular as regards unaccompanied minors;
- Assisting with the relocation or transfer of beneficiaries of international protection within the territory of the European Union;
- Deploying asylum support teams at hotspot areas in collaboration with the relevant Union agencies;
- Providing interpretation services, administrative support, the necessary infrastructure and logistics, and technical equipment.

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[7] From June 2019.

Budgetary allocations required for the implementation of Operating Plans are estimated from the outset, when agreeing specific support measures with each Member State.

In Member States where UNHCR is operational and has the capacity to contribute to the request for operational and technical assistance, the Agency will consult and **coordinate with UNHCR** as regards the implementation of the operating plan, where appropriate, and upon agreement of the Member State concerned.

The Agency will continue to **deliver training** within the framework of emergency and/or special support to EU+ countries facing unexpected migratory pressure, including within the context of the 'hotspot' approach. This training includes pre-deployment training for deployed experts and interim staff as well as tailor made training sessions and specialised training programmes for different profiles. Furthermore, EASO will further expand its offer of trainings for national authorities receiving emergency and/or special support, in view of building sustainability of the national asylum systems.

EASO will **further develop and make use of a number of tools** to implement its operational activities, including the end to end electronic system for deployment and reimbursement of experts (EAIPS), the updated pool of experts, the List of Available Languages and the Agency will explore technical solutions that will enhance operational support and joint processing carried out by Asylum Support Teams, such as a case management systems, entry/exit, flow management and scheduling tools. In addition, improved coordination with stakeholders in the requesting Member State will be pursued to enhance the quality and speed with which support can be delivered. Mobile teams, including facilities and personnel, to be deployed even more rapidly when required to address emergency situations or short term interventions on the ground, will continue to be delivered. Whenever possible, the Agency will aim to have a permanent presence in the country requesting support to allow for dedicated and continuous support, liaison and coordination.

Given the increase in large-scale operational activities which EASO is leading on the ground in Greece Cyprus and Italy and the new operations in Malta, further refinement of planning, monitoring and evaluation operations will be necessary. Planning activities covering human and financial resources, procurement of services and goods, as well as Agency operational and logistical preparedness will be reviewed continually to ensure they continue to meet operational needs using an agreed project management methodology. EASO will fully implement its system for the monitoring and evaluation of operations, allowing for regular review and continuous feedback to ensure improvement of operational performance and proper measurement of impact. The Agency will also carry out a comprehensive comparative analysis of monitoring and evaluation results and include the analysis in the annual report on the situation of asylum in the Union.

External dimension

Multiannual strategic objective: MA02	
Description of objective	Enhance the implementation of the external dimension of the CEAS by supporting third countries' capacity in the field of international protection and supporting increased resettlement efforts by Member States.
Expected results	- Working arrangements established and capacity-building activities implemented in support of third countries' capacities in the field of international protection. - Member States are supporting the implementation of the European and national resettlement schemes and other legal pathways to international protection.
Performance indicators	**Targets**
Number of capacity-building activities, including those embedded in the working arrangements.	85
Number of working arrangements signed.	4

Number of activities implemented by the Agency to support Member States in the implementation of national and European Resettlement Schemes.	10

EASO will **support the external dimension of the CEAS** in agreement with the European Commission and within the framework of the EU external relations policy and taking into account the Working Arrangement for cooperation on external action signed with the Commission on 11 January 2018, in accordance with the Common Approach on decentralised Agencies. Consequently, the activities of EASO in the external dimension are targeted and limited to the priority areas that have been agreed in the EASO External Action Strategy. Such actions are well coordinated with all relevant services of the European Commission to ensure complementarity and avoid a dispersal of efforts and resources.

The Agency shall furthermore facilitate and encourage operational cooperation between Member States and third countries, within the framework of the EU external relations policy, including with regard to the protection of fundamental rights, and in cooperation with the European External Action Service (EEAS). This will be done in a coordinated way, with a view to promote EU standards on asylum and assist third countries as regards expertise and capacity building for their own asylum and reception systems as well as to implement activities complementary to the Regional Development and Protection Programmes (RDPPs) and other actions. Implementation of notably capacity building activities included in such programmes in third countries remain subject to the decision of funding mechanisms supporting the RDPP.

EASO will update its External Action Strategy which provides the strategic framework for the external dimension activities and development a planning document. Subsequently EASO will embed the project management methodology currently being applied in the other Operations to the identified External Dimension activities.

The geographical priorities lie in the Western Balkans (WB) region, Turkey, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and, as appropriate, other third countries, as outlined in the EU external relations policy documents. The Agency will continue to provide support to third countries, including through training, by progressively building and developing knowledge, skills and competences of the staff of national authorities working on international protection. As appropriate, EASO will assist with improving the quality of the asylum process in countries of origin, transit and destination, as highlighted in EU external relations policy documents, such as the 2016 Commission Communication[8] and the Valletta Summit Action Plan of November 2015. Any EASO support will be targeted and limited to priority countries and coordinated with the European Commission and the EEAS, including EU Delegations.

More direct operational support will be explored as and when appropriate, in particular to support the WB countries with identification, registration, reception and referral, in cooperation with Frontex, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Modalities and tools for providing appropriate and rapid operational support will be explored together with relevant stakeholders in third countries, the European Commission and the EEAS, in line with the broader EU external relations policy.

In the field of resettlement, the Agency may support Member States in the implementation of the Union Resettlement Framework[9], the future Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme with Turkey and other national and/or European resettlement schemes, upon the request of the Member State concerned. EASO will prioritise specific support for Member States to improve resettlement programmes in close coordination with UNHCR with a specific focus on operational resettlement support and coordination for Member States in Turkey through the establishment of a resettlement support facility.

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[8] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council and the European Investment Bank on establishing a new Partnership Framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration. COM(2016) 385 final.
[9] COM(2016) 468 final.

The Agency will continue to support the development of common information and training materials for the different phases of the resettlement process to be used by EU Member States engaging in resettlement programmes, including as part of the EU-FRANK project[10].

EASO will explore how to best facilitate cooperation with third countries on matters related to asylum, both to promote EU standards on asylum and assist third countries as regards expertise and capacity building for their own asylum and reception systems, as well as to improve resettlement programmes and other legal pathways as appropriate. This will include considering increasing EASO's presence on the ground in prority third countries, as appropriate and in close coordination with the European Commission, EU delegations as well as international organisations such as UNHCR.

1.3. Information, analysis and knowledge development

Country of Origin Information and Country Guidance

Multiannual strategic objective: MA03	
Description of objective	Provide information on third countries at Union level and Convergence through Common Analysis and Guidance Notes
Expected results	- Reports and other products on relevant third countries and thematic issues prepared and regularly updated using a common format and common methodology - A web portal for the sharing of information. - Managed networks for the coordination of national Country of Origin Information (COI) initiatives that also contribute to the development and updating of EU-level products, as well as to a Union-level query system. - Finalised transfer of the relevant parts of the MedCOI project to the Agency. - A common analysis on the situation in specific countries of origin and guidance notes to assist Member States in the assessment of relevant applications.
Performance indicators	**Targets**
Number of reports and other products on third countries produced annually.	18-20
Updates of common format and methodology.	As needed, taking into account feedback received on Agency reports.
Web portal on third country information, with increased functionalities both as regard the public and the restricted sections.	Portal fully functional.
Networks on third country information contributing to both EU-level COI production and query system.	Networks running on all key third countries.
Evaluation of added value of networks on third country information.	Positively evaluated by network members.
Transfer of the relevant parts of the MedCOI project with the Agency fully responsible for the MedCOI query system, database, and relevant products and activities.	Full transfer finalised by 2020.
Number of countries of origin per year covered by new, updated or revised guidance notes and common analysis, and endorsed by the Management Board.	2
Development and further refinement of standard methodology and format.	As needed.

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[10] European Union Action on Facilitating Resettlement and Refugee Admission through New Knowledge, financed by the European Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (January 2016-June 2020).

In the area of **Country of Origin Information**, the Agency will further consolidate its position as a centre for gathering relevant, reliable, objective, accurate and up-to-date information on relevant third countries. It will draw up and regularly update reports and other products on relevant third countries and thematic issues (such as child protection systems, gender, vulnerable and minority groups), using information from a wide range of sources, as well as information obtained through fact-finding missions.

The Agency will build on existing tools in providing a common format and methodology for developing reports and other products. For the sharing of information, the Agency will manage and further develop a web portal, which will have both a public and a restricted section. Through networks among Member States on third country information, the Agency will ensure the coordination of national initiatives producing third country information. These networks will ensure the exchange of national reports and other products, will contribute to a Union-level query system on third country information, and will contribute to the development and updating of Union-level products providing information on relevant third countries.

The Agency will also provide the Commission with information relevant for the designation of safe countries of origin and safe third countries. In addition, the Agency will further implement and finalise the transfer of the relevant activities of the MedCOI project to the Agency, while ensuring that all Member States benefit from the services provided, including information on the availability and accessibility of medical treatment in countries of origin.

On **Country Guidance**, the Agency will, through coordinated efforts among Member States, develop a common analysis on the situation in specific countries of origin and guidance notes to assist Member States in the assessment of relevant applications. The Agency will ensure that the common analysis and guidance notes are kept under regular review and updated as necessary.

Information and Documentation System

Multiannual strategic objective: MA04	
Description of objective	Further develop and consolidate the EASO Information and Documentation System (IDS), i.e. information on the implementation of the CEAS.
Expected results	- IDS providing a single point of comprehensive information on the organisation of EU+ countries' asylum and reception systems, as well as an overview of the practical implementation of all key aspects of the CEAS for relevant stakeholders. - IDS, with public and restricted parts, containing information on Union, national and international asylum instruments, including information on asylum statistics, national law and legal developments in the field of asylum, including selected national and international case law. - EASO Query System further promoting information exchange between EU+ countries and embedded in the IDS. - IDS acting a primary information source for the Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU.
Performance indicators	**Targets**
Extent of EU+ countries as well as EU overview that are covered, relevant case law and legislation referenced, and visualisations of asylum data included in the system.	All 30 EU+ countries as well as EU overview fully covered; most relevant case law and legislation referenced; relevant visualisations included in the system.
Percentage of validation of information by EU+ countries.	100%
Usage of both the public parts of the IDS and the restricted parts, as measured by usage statistics as well as regular user surveys.	Active use of both the public parts of the IDS and the restricted parts.

The **Information and Documentation System** will provide a single point of comprehensive information on the organisation of EU+ countries' asylum and reception systems, as well as an overview of the practical implementation of all key aspects of the CEAS for relevant stakeholders (EU+ countries, EU institutions, and agencies, international organisations and, ultimately, civil society and general public).

IDS will act as a database and web portal on Union, national and international asylum instruments, and shall have publicly accessible parts which shall contain information on asylum statistics, on national law and legal developments in the field of asylum, including selected case law, and relevant case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Court of Human Rights.

Information in IDS is updated in real time and validated within the shortest feasible timeframe by the Agency and the IDS Advisory Group. All information in IDS includes comprehensive and standardised references to the source materials used serving as a library of all relevant documentation, enabling quick search and retrieval.

The EASO Query System, which further promotes the information exchange between EU+ countries, is imbedded in the IDS. The IDS acts as a primary information source for the Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU. Duplication of efforts in the gathering of data and information is avoided, where possible. Based on information in IDS, topical and/or comparative analyses are made.

Data hub, strategic analysis and research on early warning and root causes

Multiannual strategic objective: MA05	
Description of objective	Enhancing the data hub, research on early warning and root causes and strategic analysis.
Expected results	- Updated Early warning and Preparedness (EPS) data exchange, including indicators on all major aspects of the CEAS (including appeal and review), and reflecting the new legislative framework, including requirements stemming from the Agency's future monitoring role. - Electronic data products, such as dashboards, big data and web visualisations, designed for external and internal stakeholders, as well as the EASO Situation Centre. - Regularly monitored quality of data. - Analytical deliverables combining quantitative data with recent and accurate qualitative information. - Research activities (e.g. surveying, modelling, forecasting) supporting the early warning function and contributing to an understanding of root causes for asylum-related migration.

Performance indicators	Targets
Areas of the CEAS and additional areas needed for monitoring covered by the data exchange.	All areas of the CEAS covered.
Frequency and timeliness of reporting according to set deadlines and quality standards.	Regular and timely reporting.
Quality and added value of analysis.	A variety of high standard analytical reports are produced serving both recurrent and ad hoc requests.
Status of early warning functionality.	A system is in place that allows for early identification of important changes in flows or other developments that may cause pressures on national asylum systems, and allows the Agency to address issues in a timely manner.
Level of understanding of root causes, other drivers and enabling factors.	Through research and analysis the Agency has a good understanding of

	root causes, other drivers and enabling factors of asylum-related migration, and regularly shares these insights with Member States.

As regards data exchange, strategic analysis and research on early warning and root causes, the Agency's data exchange system (EPS – Early warning and Preparedness System), which includes indicators on all major aspects of the CEAS (including appeal and review), will be updated to reflect the new legislative framework, and further extended to include indicators particularly relevant for the Agency's monitoring role. That latter will include data on capacity available in EU+ countries to register and process asylum applications and manage reception systems, as well as timeframes for different processes.

The quality of EPS data will be regularly monitored and increased where possible. Strategic analysis will be enhanced and analytical deliverables will combine quantitative data with recent and accurate qualitative information from countries of origin and transit, such as open-source intelligence and outsourced reports.

Research activities support the early warning function, e.g. through modelling and forecasting of EPS data and Big Data, and contribute to an understanding of root causes for asylum-related migration, e.g. through regular surveys of asylum applicants. The aim for the early warning system is to warn as early as possible of an impending phenomenon before individuals arrive in the EU and start applying for asylum. For example, Big Data will be harvested to monitor the frequency of very specific types of media reports in certain regions of third countries (Open APIs), and search engine use in third countries will be monitored as a proxy for the likelihood of asylum related migration. These research activities build further upon the asylum data and feed back into the analysis. For all data-related activities, overlaps with existing information will be ensured and synergies will be sought through active collaboration with other actors in the migratory and research field.

Data, analysis and research will help provide an accurate and up-to-date situational picture of the situation of asylum in the EU, which will support the Agency in its planning of operational activities and allow for better preparedness in Member States to address pressures. Data and analysis will feed into the EASO Situation Centre. Data visualisations are made available on the IDS, the COI Portal and the EASO website, as part of an **integrated asylum information system**.

1.4. Training

Multiannual strategic objective: MA06	
Description of objective	- Provide training support to asylum and reception officials through the European Asylum Curriculum to ensure that they have the required knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy to perform their duties enabling greater convergence across Member States. - Continue to support Member States in the framework of emergency or special support in response to specific situations, as well as other ad hoc support, also in the framework of the EASO External Cooperation Strategy. - Initiate the design and development of a governance of EASO's training activities by developing a Training Governance System based on the European standards and guidelines for quality assurance in education and vocational training.

Expected results	- The strengthening of knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy of asylum and reception officials and use of the Training Curriculum by Member States. - The delivery of various training programmes (as referred under points 1.2 and 1.3) in order to support operating plans in various Member States and capacity building in the framework of EASO external action strategy. - Design and validate together with Member States a European Sectorial Qualification Framework for asylum and reception officials to identify training needs and potential gaps. - The setup of a Training Governance System based on the European standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the area of education and vocational training. - Development of a fully-fledged certification and accreditation system for EASO Training Curriculum.
Performance indicators	**Targets**
Implementation of the European Asylum Curriculum.	Number of participations in EASO Training Curriculum including national training sessions.
Design, update and evaluate new training developments and upgrades.	80% satisfaction rate for new developments and updates.
Design and deliver training programmes for experts working in EASO operations as well as on the request of particular EU+ countries.	At least 10 training programmes designed and delivered by 2021.
Development and initiation of the implementation of a Training Governance System for quality assurance.	Mapping and development of terms of reference for the set-up of a Training Governance System ensuring the European quality standards in higher education and vocational training. Mapping and setting up the IT infrastructure to support the implementation of the training governance system.
Development of a Sectoral Qualification Framework for Asylum and Reception Officials.	Completed by 2021.

In this programming period, EASO will continue to consolidate and further develop its Training Curriculum as the main training programme for building and supporting the development of knowledge, skills and responsibility and autonomy of asylum and reception officials working in national administrations, experts to be deployed in asylum support teams and deployed experts and officials working in operations. In further developing its Training Curriculum for asylum and reception officials, EASO will revise its Training and Learning Strategy.

EASO will continue to work closely with Member States to assess training needs and develop training material in collaboration with Member States and external experts and where appropriate, with the relevant JHA Agencies, academic institutions and other relevant training networks and organisations. EASO will continue to collaborate with the Reference Group, members of the academia and civil society when developing and upgrading training material.

In order to further support EU+ countries in implementing the core parts of the curriculum within their national training programmes, EASO will, upon request and depending on available resources, support national administrations by **providing national language versions** of the EASO Training Curriculum. Moreover, based on budget availability, EASO will support Member States in translating other modules, aimed to be used in national trainings.

EASO is committed to strengthen its work with EU+ countries, particularly through its Training National Contact Points Network, Trainer's Network and Certification and Accreditation Working Group. The Agency will consult national administrations to analyse training needs, and where required develop and implement general, thematic or ad hoc training activities including the possibility of on-the-job coaching. Through this approach, EASO will further adhere to methods that promote practical cooperation and facilitate the sharing of good practices among EU+ countries. Similar training activities could be foreseen for third countries.

In line with the EASO Training and Learning Strategy, EASO will engage in guided group discussions with Training National Contact Points and Member States' working groups, particularly the Certification and Accreditation Working Group to develop a European Sectorial Qualification Framework (ESQF) for asylum and reception officials. This involves mapping occupational standards and matching them with relevant educational standards/learning outcomes. The ESQF will provide guidance on what asylum, reception officers should know, and they should be able to do, in order to perform their duties and tasks, under a specified degree of responsibility and autonomy. This common framework, will serve as a guide when designing training and assist in identifying potential training needs and gaps. Additionally, EASO will maintain focus on the learner and what the learner should know and able to do at the end of a learning sequence, and how this can be demonstrated.

Throughout this programming period, EASO will also focus on the development of a Training Governance System based on the European standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the field of educational and vocational training. This will enable the full and valid certification and accreditation of its Training Curriculum, in line with the Bologna and Copenhagen principles and the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning. As part of a comprehensive training programme in higher education, EASO will further explore the feasibility for the future development of a certified and accredited Master's Degree programme. To ensure a sustainable governance system, EASO will also seek to strengthen its e-learning processes and IT architecture, aiming to have all processes and procedures supporting the training cycle fully automated and able to facilitate the automatisation of monitoring and reporting on training related activities.

EASO will continue to develop training programmes for different profiles of experts working in operations to ensure that they have received the necessary training relevant to their duties and functions. EASO operational training will be further consolidated and updated in order to reflect the scope of the Agency's involvement in supporting national asylum authorities.

EASO will also continue to further consolidate and deliver structured and formalised operational induction training for Member States experts, as well as interim staff involved in the Agency's operations. Moreover, EASO will continue to provide operational thematic training based on the profiles of the experts tasks to be undertaken and their specific training needs. Such training is carefully tailored for different categories of experts that EASO deploys, to ensure that they correspond well to the needs whilst maintaining the highest possible quality standards. Operational thematic training will also be delivered, upon request, to the local authorities in charge of various steps of the asylum process, such as registration of the application for international protection, Dublin procedure, reception, and collection of country of origin information. EASO will continue delivering on-job coaching to targeted audiences in order to further assist in the transfer of knowledge and skills into responsibility and autonomy in their day-to-day job.

EASO will start developing a structured and formalised online pre-deployment training for Member States' experts in preparation for possible future deployment.

EASO will strengthen its training need assessment in the framework of the operational training and will established a comprehensive need assessment methodology, which should feed into need assessment and preparations of the operating plans.

The Agency will also consider the need to translate related training material in the national languages of Member States, where the operational training is delivered, for the sake of efficiency and sustainability.

EASO will also continue, in cooperation with EBCG and Europol, development of a joint training for members of the Migration Management Support Teams (MMSTs).

1.5. Asylum support

Multiannual strategic objective: MA07	
Description of objective	Provide asylum support to EU+ countries with the aim of enhancing their capacities to implement the CEAS.
Expected results	- Knowledge, skills and competence of asylum practitioners are developed. - Practical cooperation and analysis of the implementation of the CEAS are enhanced and asylum processes are improved. - Aspects related to vulnerable applicants are mainstreamed. - Convergence in quality standards and decision-making by members of courts and tribunals in the field of international protection are increased.
Performance indicators	**Targets**
Engagement of relevant stakeholders in practical cooperation activities organised by the EASO thematic networks (i.e. Asylum Processes, Dublin, Reception, Exclusion, and Vulnerable Groups).	At least 15 practical cooperation activities organised per year during the reference period.
Operational standards, indicators, guidelines and best practices developed or updated to align with the new CEAS legislation and made available.	At least 5 guidance documents developed/updated and made available per year during the reference period.
Professional development materials for members of courts and tribunals developed/updated and implemented.	At least 4 sets of professional development material developed, reviewed or updated per year during the reference period.
Engagement of members of courts and tribunals in professional development sessions organised by EASO	At least 200 members participating every year during the reference period.

During these three years, EASO will continue to provide asylum support to EU+ countries with the aim of enhancing their capacities to implement the CEAS, including in the framework of emergency and/or special support activities, and to strengthen capacities of third country national authorities on protection-related matters.

Asylum processes

EASO will further support Member States in achieving common standards and high-quality processes within the CEAS. To that end, the Agency will:

- Continue to enhance practical cooperation activities with the view of collecting and exchanging information on Member States' current practices and policies in relation to the CEAS, including mapping activities and thematic meetings where Member States' experts discuss best practices and current challenges and share information and expertise.
- Continue to develop operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and common practical tools to support the implementation of the CEAS based on identified needs and good practices. EASO operational standards and indicators provide a practical perspective on key provisions of the common legal instruments and thus help Member States to assess whether their national asylum and reception systems are set up and functioning in line with the CEAS. In addition, EASO guidelines and common practical tools are meant to translate the requirements of the common legal instruments into user-friendly practical instruments to be used by Member States' officials across the EU and beyond in their daily work building on best practices.

- Further support Member States in the quality management of the national asylum processes through the organisation of specific activities and the development of targeted products.

Cooperation with members of the courts and tribunals

EASO will continue to further strengthen cooperation with EU+ countries' courts and tribunals in line with the objective of contributing to the coherent implementation of the CEAS and advancing practical cooperation among EU+ countries on asylum. The Agency's activities in this field will be undertaken in line with the established cooperation framework with courts and tribunals and with full respect for the independence of the judiciary.

The materials to be developed are intended to provide members of courts and tribunals with a European understanding of the asylum acquis in light of the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union. This will, in turn, lead to increased harmonisation of the interpretation of European asylum law within the wider framework of international protection.

EASO activities on vulnerable applicants

The Agency will continue to mainstream aspects related to vulnerable applicants in all activities to promote policy coherence in this field, including in the operational context such as the hotspot approach. Practical cooperation activities will include facilitation of expert networks and workshops, information exchange and the development of operational standards, indicators, guidelines and best practice, in order to promote convergence with EU standards related to the identification and support to vulnerable applicants in the asylum and reception systems of the Member States. All activities will take into account the rights of the child and the special needs of vulnerable persons.

Other areas of practical cooperation and support to asylum processes

In addition to the abovementioned areas, EASO will implement activities of practical cooperation in other specific areas. Through meetings, setting up of networks, promoting the exchange of best practices and developing specific operational standards, indicators, guidelines and best practice the Agency will foster cooperation and improved capacities in the EU+ countries.

EASO will continue to facilitate a **dedicated network of national Dublin Units**. The network aims to enhance practical cooperation and information-sharing among the 32 national Dublin Units participating in the network as well as supporting the implementation of the Dublin Regulation through the development of specific operational standards, indicators, guidelines and best practice.

Through the EASO **Network of Reception Authorities**, the Agency fosters the exchange of information and best practices on reception systems within the framework of the CEAS, practical cooperation and the development of developing specific operational standards, indicators, guidelines and best practice on reception.

EASO will further develop the **Exclusion Network** with the aim of reinforcing cooperation, information-sharing and exchange of best practices on exclusion as well as promoting common standards and practices by developing specific operational standards, indicators, guidelines and best practice in relation to the implementation of the legal provisions on exclusion.

Furthermore, the Agency will also promote the **use of other tools**, such as the use of EASO queries, the List of Available Languages and more technical solutions with the aim to support various steps in the asylum procedure.

In order to facilitate the coherent application of the CEAS, asylum support activities in the framework of emergency and/or special support plans will further build on and promote EASO guidance, tools and best practice.

1.6. Horizontal activities

Multiannual strategic objective: MA08	
Description of objective	Adapt EASO horizontal activities to prepare for the implementation of the new founding Regulation.

Expected results	- Reinforced EASO governance with enhanced and integrated management systems. - Extended role and responsibilities of the EASO Management Board are fully implemented. - EASO communication and stakeholders plan adopted by Management Board and updated regularly. - Preparations for the provisions of the EUAA Regulation implemented, subject to timely agreement of the CEAS legislative package.
erformance indicators	**Targets**
The Agency's quality management system meets the requirements of the ISO 9001:2015 standard and fully integrated with the Internal Control Framework.	Implemented by end of 2020.
Management Board work practices adapted to fulfil the responsibilities.	Implemented by end of 2020.
EASO communication and dissemination plan.	Updated annually.

Consultative Forum and cooperation with civil society

EASO will continue to engage with civil society in a constructive two-way dialogue. This is done primarily through the Consultative Forum, which provides a structured platform for the exchange of information and sharing of knowledge.

With a view to bringing relevant knowledge, information, and independent expert advice from civil society to the Agency's work, various types of consultations and information exchange activities will continue to be implemented, including the organisation of Consultative Forum meetings, electronic consultations on key Agency documents and the involvement of select civil society organisations in various areas of EASO's work.

Increased focus will be placed on the organisation of regional and/or thematic Consultative Forum meetings. The Consultative Forum secretariat will continue to promote the participation of civil society representatives in relevant meetings/activities and will also participate and contribute to civil society networks and activities of other Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) agencies' Consultative Fora, channelling relevant information to the Agency.

Cooperation with the European Commission, the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament

As a decentralised EU Agency having its own governance structure, EASO acts within the policies and institutional framework of the EU.

In this context the political responsibility for the area of asylum lies with the European Commissioner responsible for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship. Thus strong cooperation links exist with the European Commission on all EASO activities. The European Commission is invited to give its opinion on specific documents to be adopted by the Management Board in line with the relevant provisions of the EASO Regulation as well as the EASO Financial Regulation..Cooperation and coordination takes place, in particular through consultation, regular meetings and videoconferences, through coordinated drafting or reports, through organising joint Contact Committee meetings and practical workshops and participation and exchange of information within the framework of the European Migration Network (EMN).

The Agency also maintains close relations and exchange of information with the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament, in particular in view of the revision of the CEAS, which has a direct impact on the activities and work of the Agency. The Agency sends its single programming document, including the annual work programme and budget, the consolidated annual activity report, the annual report on the situation of asylum in the EU, and the final accounts to the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission and the European Court of Auditors. The Executive Director is regularly invited to report to the European Parliament and to the

Justice and Home Affairs Council with regard to the CEAS. Moreover, the Executive Director is invited to present the EASO work programme, annual report, as well as specific topics related to the Agency's work, to the European Parliament. The Executive Director also meets and maintains contacts with MEPs working in the field of asylum policy to keep them abreast on the EASO.

Cooperation with Associate Countries

EASO will continue its cooperation with the Associate Countries[11] on the basis of the working arrangements that were signed between the EU and the respective countries. These working arrangements permit the Associate Countries to participate in the Agency's work and their entitlement to support from the Agency.

The Associate Countries are represented on the Management Board as observers. Moreover, their nationals may be engaged under contract by EASO.

Cooperation with EU agencies

EASO promotes strong cooperation with other EU agencies in the light of the European Agenda on Migration and relevant Council Conclusions. It is a member of both the EU Agencies' network and of the JHA agencies' network. EASO will continue participating actively in the relevant activities organised in the context of these networks and of their working structures. Furthermore, the Agency will continue having mutual contacts and relations on a bilateral level with the JHA agencies, in particular via the channels of the JHA inter-agency cooperation. EASO will continue developing and strengthening this cooperation also in the light of the European Agenda on Migration and of relevant Council Conclusions, which call for more cooperation between the Agencies, and taking into account their reinforce mandates.

On the basis of the working arrangement signed by Frontex and EASO in September 2012, the two Agencies will continue to maintain their existing cooperation and will enhance it in the light of joint actions foreseen in the European Agenda on Migration. EASO and Frontex (the European Border and Coast Guard, EBCG) will continue their coordinated efforts when providing support to EU+ countries and will explore further synergies in border management and identification of international protection needs, in particular in the hotspots. Furthermore, EASO and Frontex will maintain their sustainable cooperation on data and analysis sharing in the context of the Early warning and Preparedness System and COI Information, as well as their cooperation on training programmes, quality initiatives, in the field of the external dimension and on activities vis-à-vis civil society and their consultative fora.

FRA (the European Agency for Fundamental Rights) and EASO will build upon the existing cooperation in line with the working arrangement signed by both agencies in June 2013. The two agencies will continue sharing information, providing input to research activities and sharing research and data collection methodologies. Both organisations will continue their cooperation primarily in the field of training. Additionally, the cooperation with regard to each other's consultative activities will continue.

EASO and eu-LISA (the European Agency for operational management of large IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice) will continue implementing activities detailed in the working arrangement signed by both agencies in November 2014, also in the light of joint actions foreseen in the European Agenda on Migration. The two agencies will also continue to conduct joint activities within the framework of the EASO Dublin Network.

Cooperation with UNHCR and other international organisations

In fulfilling its tasks, EASO acts in close cooperation with UNHCR and with other relevant international and intergovernmental organisations. The Agency will develop a strategy for relations with international organisations.

With regard to UNHCR, the Agency cooperates closely with and involves UNHCR in all areas covered by the working arrangement with UNHCR. The UNHCR participates in the Management Board as a

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[11] Principality of Liechtenstein, Kingdom of Norway and Swiss Confederation. The working arrangement with Iceland has not yet entered into force.

non-voting member and has a permanent liaison office to the Agency based in Malta. In 2013, EASO and UNCHR signed a working arrangement. Regular technical meetings and senior management meetings are organised to promote cooperation and coordination in the areas of training, asylum processes, unaccompanied children and other vulnerable applicants, resettlement, the external dimension of the CEAS and in operations including special and emergency support, in particular cooperation in the hotspots, as well as high level discussion on EU asylum policy.

The Agency is also in close contact with other relevant international and intergovernmental organisations working in areas of asylum, such as the Council of Europe, the General Directors of Immigration Services Conference (GDISC), the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC) and the IOM. The Agency is exploring possibilities for formalised cooperation with IOM, building on experiences of coordination in relocation. EASO regularly exchanges views, participates in meetings and conferences and actively contributes to their work to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of work.

Communication and stakeholder relations

The Agency ensures that its communication strategy is coherent, relevant and coordinated with the strategies and activities of the European Commission and the other institutions, in line with the Common Approach on Decentralised Agencies. It is aligned and coordinated with respective communication services of the European Commission when external communication relates to major policies of the Union or its image as a whole.

EASO shall continue to ensure the visibility of the Agency's role, tools, values and work by communicating in a consistent, efficient, transparent and accurate manner through the flow of easily intelligible messages. It will continue to promote the achievements of the Agency and transmit information in a timely manner to EASO target groups. One of the main challenges will be to ensure that EASO is increasingly portrayed as an operational agency, particularly in preparation for the EUAA Regulation, which provides real added value to the Member States under particular pressure on their asylum and reception system.

In order to reach this objective EASO will continue to send clear messages, communicate through the right channels and strive to communicate proactively via modern communication tools, including active use of the web and social media channels. EASO will also place a greater focus on mainstreaming public familiarity of the Agency's name and operations through more use of major international and European news networks and distribution services.

Furthermore, the Agency will continue ensuring professional quality in all publications, and progressively shift to more modern, interactive, publication tools. Moreover, the network of journalists and the communication multipliers network in the Member States will be strengthened. Relationship and coordination with the European Commission and other JHA agencies will be further strengthened. EASO will also contribute to the creation of an EU public sphere by engaging with the public, contributing to and stimulating discussion on the EU asylum policy.

The Agency's efforts will be aligned to the core objectives highlighted in the EASO External Communication and Stakeholders Plan. In 2019, EASO will continue to specialise in the key areas and the objective will be to become a reference point, together with other information providers including the Commission and stakeholders, for information on the situation of asylum in Europe. The Agency will coordinate efforts with the Commission's communication service particularly for external communication relating to important policies of the Union or its image as a whole.

EASO governance

During 2017 and 2018, the agency experienced serious governance and management-related problems, which led to the resignation of the former Executive Director and had a direct impact on the staff, the agency's work and its reputation. An investigation by the EU Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) was launched in October 2017. The agency did not manage to get its budget discharge for the year 2016.

On 27 February 2018, the Management Board instituted interim measures with regards to the former Executive Director through Management Board Decision no 35 in areas of recruitment and procurement, restricting the discretion of the Executive Director in these areas.

On 6 June 2018, upon taking up duty, the interim Executive Director elaborated, a Governance Action Plan and presented it to the EASO Management Board in September 2018. The overall aim of this plan is to bring the agency back to normal functioning by restoring trust internally and externally, reinforcing the governance structure, and rebuilding internal capacity. It proposes a set of 56 measurable objectives and deliverables along a timeline. The findings and recommendations of recent audit reports from the Internal Audit Service (IAS), preliminary findings of the European Court of Auditors (ECA) on 2017, the staff engagement survey, and the recently conducted Internal Control Self-Assessment on the year 2017 by EASO's Executive Director a.i. have all been taken into consideration. The Action Plan is living document and will be updated as necessary.

The agency is investing heavily in ensuring full implementation of the Action Plan within the indicated timeframes.

Internal Control Framework

In July 2018, the interim Executive Director signed a Decision concerning the methodology of carrying out a self-assessment of the agency against COSO 2013 Internal Control-Integrated Framework. This assessment, whilst compulsory according to EASO Financial Regulation, had not been implemented in previous years. The self-assessment, was carried out and communicated together with corrective actions, to the Management Board in November 2018.

One of the outcomes of this self-assessment was to propose a new internal control framework to the Management Board, duly documented and aligned with Article 44 of the EASO Financial Regulation, which will allow Executive Director to implement the majority of new minimum standards by the end of 2019. To this end, the Management Board will be requested to adopt a Decision with the new Internal Control Framework for EASO in December 2018.

The new Decision will *inter alia*:

- allow full compliance with the EASO regulatory framework;
- foresee the appointment of an internal control coordinator;
- explain the roles and responsibilities of the different actors involved in Internal Control, including the Management Board, the Executive Director, the Internal Control Coordinator and EASO Management;
- foresee an overall assessment of the functioning of all internal control components at least once a year and report the outcome to the MB;
  allow to take appropriate action to define the monitoring criteria and baselines for the minimum standards (both principles and characteristics), taking into account their specificities and risks.

EASO will consequently improve the awareness and understanding of Internal Controls Standards by all staff, in particular through training, information and support activities

The quality management system, which is being implemented in compliance with the ISO 9001:2015 standard, will be further enhanced and full integration with the Internal Control Framework will be further improved. Possibilities to progress to compliance with ISO 9001:14001, the environmental management standard, or similar standard will be explored. During 2018, an Internal Control Standards Assessment for the period 2017 was conducted.

The 2018-2020 three-year audit cycle of the Commission's Internal Audit Service will continue to run and is expected to be followed by the triennial risk assessment in preparation for the next cycle. The Agency will continue to work on implementing actions to address previous audit findings and collaborate as best as possible with the Internal Audit Service to ensure that annual audits provide added value for the Agency.

EASO will maintain its positive working relationship with the European Court of Auditors in their role as the Agency's external auditor. In the light of EASO's commitment to combatting fraud, cooperation with the European Antifraud Office (OLAF) will continue, as and when required.

The Agency is fully committed to ensuring excellent working relations with the European Ombudsman. A dedicated EASO contact person coordinates all requests and recommendations thus ensuring that they continue to be followed up on with the utmost diligence.

The Agency will further improve its programme and project planning, monitoring and reporting capabilities including forecasting and prioritisation exercises.

Preparations for the implementation of the new EUAA Regulation

The Regulation establishing the EUAA will assign several new competencies, responsibilities and tasks to the Agency and extends existing ones.

In order to ensure a smooth transition, the Executive Director established an internal EUAA Implementation Task Force (EITF) in the first half of 2017 to steer and oversee planning for and implementation of the EUAA Regulation. The EITF also monitors the state of play of the other CEAS legislative proposals to ensure internal alignment on horizontal themes.

Implementation will take place over a number of years, starting with an initial focus on higher priority actions followed by implementation of lower priority actions in subsequent years. As part of the preparatory work, four key areas were identified by EASO's Management Board at its 26th meeting as requiring a number of steps to be developed before the EUAA can become fully operationalised. The areas include, Monitoring, Country Guidance, Operational and Technical Assistance including, an Asylum Reserve Pool, Development of Operational Standards, Indicators and Guidelines. Concept papers on the priority areas were submitted and discussed by the Management Board. Furthermore, an internal Roadmap was further elaborated by the EITF which provides details about the activities and related steps foreseen in the operationalisation of the four priority areas. An indicative timeframe, main actors, planned procedure, impact on resources on the Agency and on Member States and possible risks are indicated for each activity. The Roadmap is a living document and is updated on a regular basis. takes each of the four priority areas and defines the activities and related steps leading to operationalisation. The Roadmap is put before the Management Board for approval. At its 30th meeting, the Management Board identified additional priority areas (the role of the Management Board, Fundamental Rights, External Dimension and Information System, information security and data protection) on which concept papers will be submitted to the Management Board. The Roadmap will be further developed along with other strategy documents to ensure that the Agency is prepared for a rapid operationalisation to fulfil its new tasks.

The Management Board will have more responsibilities under the EUAA Regulation. The working methods and tools at the Board's disposal will have to be enhanced in order to provide the necessary support as early as possible.

2 Human and financial resources – outlook for the years 2019-2021

2.1. Overview of the past and current situation

Financial resources

The total contributions from the EU Budget necessary to enable the Agency to fulfil its mission under the expanded mandate amount to €364 million[12] for the period 2017 to 2020.

However, experience gained has demonstrated that the foreseen resources do not fully reflect the Agency's needs to deliver its mandate. Indeed, budget amendments were required to ensure that EASO had the required resources to deliver operational and technical support to Member States and run its administration during 2016 and 2017. The initial budget for 2016 amounted to €19.4 million and was subsequently amended four times to reach a total of €66.0 million in commitment appropriations and €53.7 million in payment appropriations. The budget for 2017 was initially €69.2 million and was amended twice to reach €86.7 million in commitment appropriations and €79.1 million in payment appropriations.

Based on EASO operations carried out in 2016 and 2017, budget shortfalls to fund operational expenditure might be expected in 2019 and 2020 as these years will be covered by the estimate in the Legislative Financial Statement. The Agency will work closely with the Commission to evaluate any additional budget needs.

The estimated budget for 2021 has been proposed in the communication of 2 May 2018 on "A Modern Budget for a Union that Protects, Empowers and "Defends" of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 amounting to €116.4 millions. The budget 2021 depends however on the adoption of the new EUAA and is therefore subject to a revision.

The following table shows the expected evolution of the budget in the period 2018 to 2021.

Title	Expenditure type	2018 (€)	2019[13] (€)	2020[14] (€)	2021[15] (€)
1	Staff expenditure	22,648,982	28,209,300	44,807,200	45,425,568
2	Infrastructure and operating expenditure	10,872,500	11,973,200	14,279,200	14,300,176
3	Operational expenditure	64,182,035.43	61,834,503.34	79,671,906	82,388,590
Total expenditure		**97,703,517.43**[16]	**102,017,003.34**	**138,758,306**	**142,114,334**

For the Agency to carry out its new tasks effectively, the number of staff members is foreseen to increase to 500 by 2020[17]. As a consequence the staff component of the expenditures will absorb a considerable part of the resources allocated in each financial year.

As shown in the above table, whereas the staff expenditure on Title 1 and the infrastructure and operating expenditure on Title 2 in the period 2018-2020 are foreseen to increase in line with the increase in size of the Agency, a decrease in operational expenditure was forecasted for 2019.

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[12] As foreseen in the Legislative Financial Statement of the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Union Agency for Asylum; does not include contribution from Associate Countries (R0 of 2018 €5.7M, R0 of previous years €3.3M).

[13] Composed of the initial budget €96.68M and 5.33M of Associate Countries' contribution (R0).

[14] Budget 2020 depends on the adoption of the new EUAA proposal and is therefore subject to a revision.

[15] *Ibid.*.

[16] Including EUR 5,732,517.43 of R0 stemming from Associate Countries' 2018 contributions.

[17] As foreseen in the Legislative Financial Statement of the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Union Agency for Asylum.

Moreover, the multiannual forecast does not take into account funding for on-going crisis situations and operational needs that were not foreseen at the time of preparation of the work programme.

A major operational expense on Title 3 of the Agency's budget is the provision of experts for asylum support teams deployed in the operational hotspots. The resources engaged by the Agency include Member State experts, as well as interpreters, cultural mediators, interim caseworkers and interim support staff engaged from service providers by means of framework contracts.

The successful implementation and sustainability of the new fully-fledged Agency will depend on the availability of the required resources and the specific issue of the discrepancy between planning figures in the original work programme and the current realities of continuing large scale operations will need to be addressed.
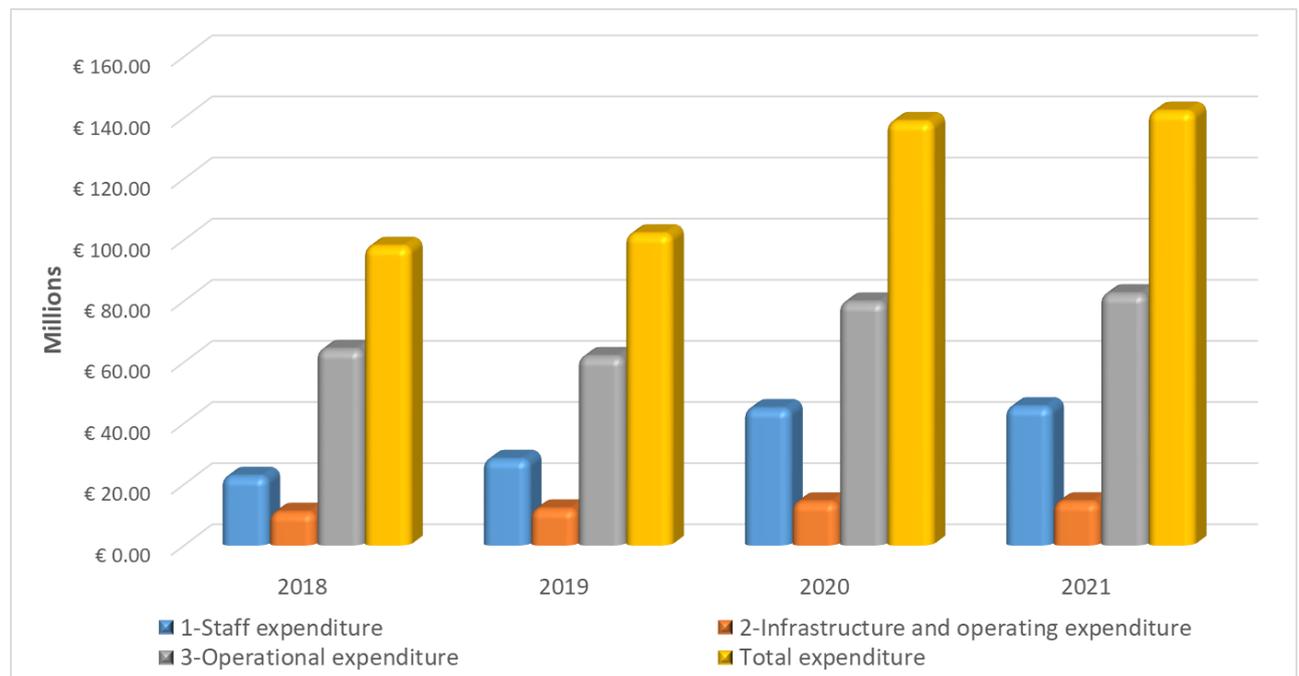
Human resources

The Agency will require more resources in this programming period to fulfil its mandate. Since the Agency is growing, a certain critical mass is being achieved; more resources will be allocated to operational units and also to support activities in preparation for the new EUAA mandate.

The Legislative Financial Statement annexed to the Commission proposal for a new EUAA foresaw 500 staff in total by 2020. The total number of staff in 2019 is expected to be 390, i.e. 284 temporary agents, 95 contract agents and 11 seconded national experts.The Agency estimates that up to an additional 50 temporary agents and contract agents could be required on top of the 500 that were foreseen in the LFS in order to implement the new Regulation. These are reflected in the Agency's proposed staff overview for 2021 in Annex III.

At the request of the Commission, the Agency has provided its staff plan for the period to be covered by the new post-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework. It is envisaged that around 10% cumulative increase on the total staff in 2021 will be required by 2027.

The following table and graph summarise the increase in human resources 2019-2021.

Staff	2018	2019	2020	2021[18]
Temporary agents (posts)	214	284	366	403
Contract agents (FTEs)	72	95	123	135
Seconded national experts (FTEs)	11	11	11	12
Total	**297**	**390**	**500**	**550**

Growth compared to previous year (posts/positions)	+93	+110	+50
Growth compared to previous year (%)	31.3	28.2	10.0
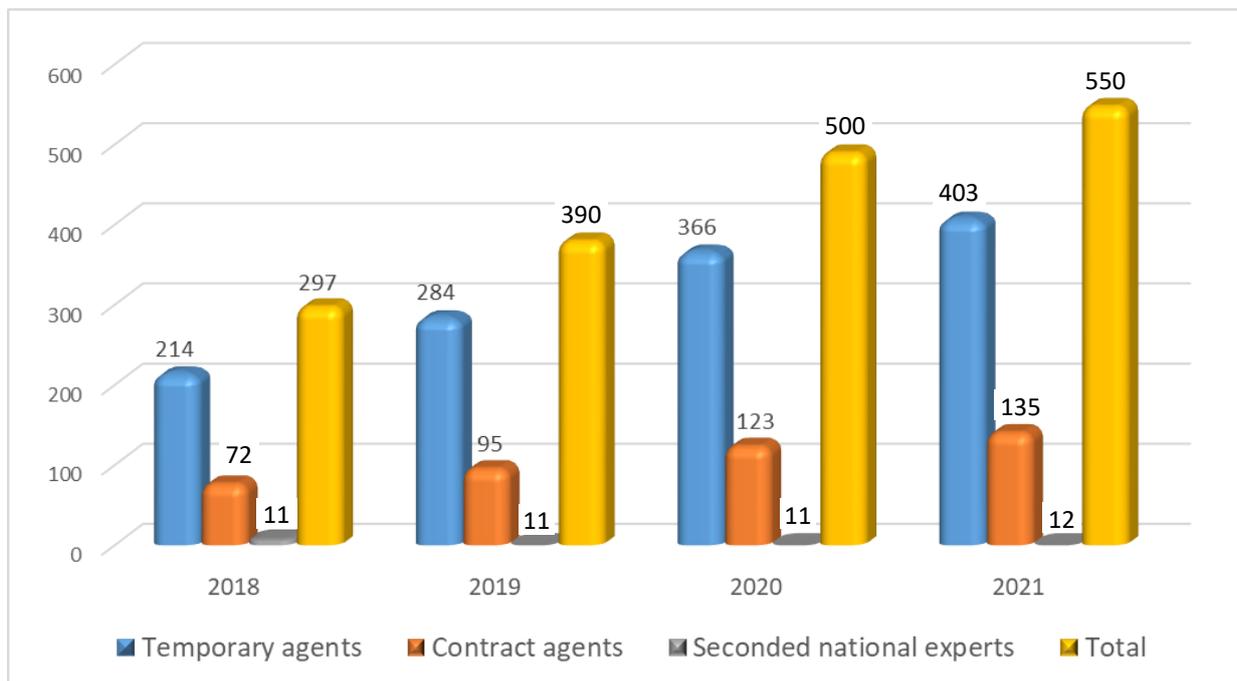
2.1.1. Expenditure 2017

The EASO budget 2017, initially amounted to €69.2 million. By the end of the year, after two amendments, it reached a total of €86.8 million in commitment appropriations and €79.2 million in payment appropriations. The first amendment increased the budget by €3.8 million, namely derived from the Associate Countries contributions. The continued high level of activity in the area of migration placed an unforeseen strain on the Agency's operational budget (Title 3). Following a mid-year review of the budget, the Management Board adopted a second amendment to the EASO Budget that included an additional €13.78 million in commitment appropriations and €6.17 million in payment appropriations.

The budget execution (including the changes in amendment 2) is as follows.

Fund Source	CA budgeted (€)	CA consumed (€)	CA %	PA budgeted (€)	PA consumed (€)	PA %
C1 - EU general budget contribution	82,989,989.52	80,404,139.42	96.9	75,379,989.52	69,375,750.68	92.0

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[18] Estimate by the Agency.

Fund Source	CA budgeted (€)	CA consumed (€)	CA %	PA budgeted (€)	PA consumed (€)	PA %
R0 – Grants and contributions from Associate Countries	8,198,367.61	5,100,109.02	62.2	8,198,367.61	3,432,185.63	41.8
Total	**91,188,357.13**	**85,504,248.44**	**93.8**	**83,578,357.13**	**72,807,936.31**	**87.1**

In 2017, the execution of commitment appropriations reached 96.9% and that of payment appropriations reached 92% on the EU general contribution to the Agency.

2.1.2. Staff population overview 2017

On 31 December 2017 the staff headcount was 198. Statutory staff as well as Seconded National Experts were represented. The composition was 125 Temporary Agents, 68 (64 FTE) Contract Agents, and 5 Seconded National Experts.

2.2. Resource programming for the years 2019-2021

2.2.1. Financial resources

Revenue

The Agency's revenue is expected to increase as foreseen in the proposal for the new mandate, reaching a total of €138.8 million in 2020. Based on the current level of operational activities, the Agency estimates that by 2021 the total budget could reach €142 million. This would enable the Agency to fulfil the new mandate and tasks entrusted to it by the European Union. The Agency will continue to engage with the Commission in the context of discussions on the Multiannual Financial Framework post-2020 and the implications of EU Budget constraints and challenges.

The contribution from the general budget of the European Union has always represented by far the major share of the Agency's budget and will continue to be so in 2019 to 2021. The said contribution will be proportionally complemented by the one due from the Associate Countries: the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Kingdom of Norway and the Swiss Confederation. The Agency may also be managing resources stemming from grants signed with other entities such as the European Commission to continue existing projects or start new ones.

Expenditure

The Agency is expected to expand its activities in all areas outlined in this programming document. Operational expenditure in Title 3 at current levels is expected to continue at least for 2019 and it needs to be recognised that a new planning mechanism for budgeting for the fluctuations in Title 3 expenditure needs to be instituted.

The increases in Title 1 and Title 2 will reflect the planned growth in human resources and the related increase in infrastructure to accommodate all recruited staff (including office space, equipment, meeting rooms, etc.).

In 2016 the Agency received the approval of the European Parliament and the Council to expand its premises. As a consequence rental costs are expected to increase to €2.5 million per year.

Detailed data on expected expenditures are provided in Annex II.

2.2.2. Human resources

Resource outlook for the years 2019-2021

Growth of existing tasks

The Agency filled 125 temporary agent postitions, 68 contract agent positions and 5 seconded national expert positions of the 227 agreed for 2017. Annex III reflects the detailed staff plans for the years 2019 to 2021.

Due to the recruitment freeze, the Agency was not able to recruit new staff during the first half of 2018, while the existing staff was leaving. The situation normalised from July 2018 onwards, however, a lower than expected acceptance rate has been experienced, potentially affected by the image problem created by the previous situation.

Despite the above slowdown in recruitment, the remaining vacant posts allocated to the Agency through the 2017 EU Budget are expected to be filled and the Agency would gradually reach the total number of staff authorised for 2018, which is set at 297 staff members. Most of the posts have been allocated to the operational units aiming at maximising, firstly, the availability of resources for the hotspots and, in addition, the strengthening of operational and capacity building support. To ensure this, the recruitment function has been enforced considerably.

The annual audit published by the European Court of Auditors on 9 October 2018 highlighted shortcomings in the Agency's internal controls, mainly in relation to public procurement and recruitment procedures. To address this, EASO adopted a recruitment procedure which guarantees separation of roles and functions between different actors, better fraud prevention, and increased quality control together with increased sourcing and selection tools. An e-Recruitment tool will be implemented to increase efficiency and transparency.

As the Agency's mandate and tasks are forseen to be expanding, it envisages that in the period 2019 to 2020 the staff will increase in line with the legislative financial statement. Additional staff will be required for the new roles and tasks that were not previously foreseen and were introduced during the inter-institutional discussions. EASO estimates that this number could reach 50 to cover new roles.

Efficiency gains

In the coming years, EASO will continue to identify and implement improvements to its systems and procedures to further increase efficiency in its operations and administrative activities. A principal objective is to simplify processes and procedures as much as possible, while ensuring full compliance with the applicable rules as well as effective internal controls. In doing so the Agency will ensure that:

- Less time is spent on repetitive and labour-intensive tasks; thus more time will be available to work on tasks that have higher added value;
- Fewer human errors are made through the reduction of procedural steps and automation of processes, where possible;
- A risk-based approach is taken to ensure that efforts are more focused on tasks that require enhanced control;
- The proportion of staff working in Administration is reduced insofar as possible compared to staff working in core operations, without jeopardising the essential deliverables of the Agency.

EASO will in the first instance continue to build and reinforce its quality management system and risk management processes as the basis for effective and efficient administrative and core operations. The Agency will also invest further in the automation of several administrative processes (Human Resources, Procurement and Finance) and processes in operational areas (e.g. deployment of experts), where several initiatives have already been taken and will be further developed. The Agency will take the opportunity to improve its business process as it re-designs key processes for the future operationalisation of the EUAA Regulation.

Negative priorities/decrease of existing tasks

The new EUAA Regulation and the changes to the EU asylum legislative framework will increase the tasks of the Agency. A reduction in legally-required tasks during the period 2019 to 2021 is not foreseen. The Agency, in collaboration with the Commission, will seek to identify tasks and activities that could be postponed. In the context of the recurrent need for more resources, negative priorities along with potential efficiency gains shall be identified and appropriately addressed as and when the new mandate draws closer to adoption.

Redeployment

The Agency has implemented the mandatory 5% staff reduction, i.e. a loss of 2 posts between 2014 and 2017. As the Agency was initially in the start-up phase and later on received new tasks, the additional staff resulted in an overall net increase that did not require measures for redeployment of staff. The Agency expects an annual increase in staff all the way to 2020 in line with the legislative financial statement for the new EUAA Regulation, and beyond based on an anticipated increase in workload. Identification of opportunities for redeployment of staff assigned to horizontal and administrative activities may be considered. Administrative support, however, shall remain proportionally reinforced.

Conclusion on evolution of resources compared to the Commission Communication 2014-2020

The 2013 Commission Communication on Programming of human and financial resources for decentralised agencies for 2014 to 2020 allocated to the Agency financial resources amounting to 0.7% of the Multiannual Financial Framework Heading 3 - Security and Citizenship[19]. EASO used to be one of the smallest agencies under Heading 3, both in terms of financial and human resources.

The developments in the migration situation and the EU's political response have changed the situation significantly. The ceilings set by the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014 to 2020 for the Agency were exceeded by all EASO budgets in the period 2015 to 2018 due to the measures taken to face the unprecedented migratory pressure and an increased number of tasks allocated to the Agency. An even larger growth in the Agency's activities can be realistically expected in the coming years under the new mandate.

The following table shows the evolution of the Agency's budget vis-à-vis the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 currently in force. Budgets 2020 and 2021 are subject to a revision.

	2018 (€ M)	2019 initial (€ M)	2020 (€ M)	2021 (€ M)
Current MFF 2014-2020	86.9	96.7	114.1	-
New MFF 2021-2027	-	-	-	116
New EASO budget request	91.9	96.7	138.8	142

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[19] Total of €109.35 million.

[20] As foreseen in the Statement of Estimates of the European Commission for the financial year 2020 SEC(2019)250 - June 2019.

SECTION IV. WORK PROGRAMME 2019

1   Executive Summary

Besides consolidating its core business activities, during 2019 the Agency will further develop its operational and technical capability, and start engaging in a number of activities foreseen in the new mandate. Moreover, the Agency will maintain the pace of recruitment of staff, which is estimated to reach 500[21] by the year 2020, and expedite budget absorption, which should reach €138 million in revenue by the year 2020. The Agency will maintain a flexible approach and, if necessary, will adapt its activities in line with the preparations needed for the implementation of the EUAA Regulation.

Five proposals of the CEAS legislative package are in the final stages of reaching an agreement between Council and European Parliament, but more work is required in the Council on the proposal for a recast Dublin regulation and the Asylum Procedures Regulation proposal. Due to the linkages between the different proposals, several Member States are of the opinion that all proposals need to be adopted together, which delays the entry into force of the EUAA Regulation.

During the European Council meeting of end of June 2018, the leaders called for further measures to reduce illegal migration and prevent a return to the uncontrolled flows of 2015. Key points of importance to EASO were adopted, such as the setting up of regional disembarkation platforms outside Europe and controlled centres on the EU territory.

Those transferred to the EU territory should be received in controlled centres set up by Member States on a voluntary basis with the full financial support from the EU. Such centres aim to ensure that all third country nationals disembarked in the EU are registered and processed in an orderly and effective way that allows differentiating rapidly and securely between irregular migrants, who have no right to stay in the EU, and persons who may be in need of international protection within a maximum period of between four and eight weeks.

The centres would be managed by the volunteering Member State with full support from the EU and EU Agencies, as well as Member States, with the deployment of support teams, including, when feasible and necessary, mobile teams (EBCGA for identification and return, EASO for asylum processing and Europol for security checks), to facilitate and accelerate the processing of asylum claims and the effective implementation of returns. Other actors could also provide support (e.g., UNHCR and IOM for information provision/legal aid, vulnerability assessment, best interest of the child assessment or assisted voluntary returns and reintegration).

One key area for the Agency is **operational and technical assistance** to the Member States, which includes facilitating the examination of applications for international protection that are under examination by the competent national authorities and also support for Member States' reception systems under particular pressure. The Agency will deploy asylum support teams to support concerned Member States, in line with the agreed Operating Plans. The Agency will also further facilitate the planning and deployment of asylum support teams to guarantee rapid support, at any time and in sufficient numbers, to other Member States. Moreover, appropriate project management, planning, monitoring and evaluation and support tools will be developed to implement operational activities. Specific operational support for the implementation of the CEAS and operations in the hotspots will be maintained.

The Agency will further develop its operational support based on the emerging needs of Member States and to respond to particular pressure on their asylum and reception systems. The Agency will adjust its operational support to the specific arising needs as well as to the requests from Member States. EASO will therefore continue to support Greece, Italy and Cyprus and from mid-2019 also provide support for Malta. EASO will also provide *ad hoc* support for short term emergency operations as required.

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[21] COM(2016) 271 final.

With the aim of becoming a key component of the asylum and reception monitoring systems, the Agency will continue to ensure the development of its **Early warning and Preparedness System** (EPS), in cooperation with Eurostat and Frontex, through the reinforcement or addition of new data exchanges.

The Agency will also collect and validate information on third country nationals effectively resettled. The information analysis on the situation of asylum will include information on root causes, migratory and refugee flows, the presence of unaccompanied minors, the overall reception capacity and resettlement needs of third countries, as well as on arrivals of large numbers of third country nationals which may cause disproportionate pressure on Member States' asylum and reception systems. To effectively generate timely and reliable information to Member States and to identify possible risks to the Member States' asylum and reception systems, an EASO data hub will be established combining EPS data with data from other sources, the Agency's research activities on early warning and understanding root causes will be strengthened, and the Agency's capacity in terms of strategic analysis will be further consolidated.

During 2019, the Agency will continue and further enhance its collection and exchange of information on Member States' procedures and practices in relation to the CEAS. The **Information and Documentation System** (IDS) will serve as a database and web portal on Union, national and international asylum instruments.

The Agency will continue to build capacity and assume a key role in the gathering of relevant, reliable, accurate and up-to-date information on countries of origin, including information on existence and functioning of child protection systems and targeted information on vulnerable groups. The Agency will therefore start preparations for developing a comprehensive **EU-wide Country of Origin Information (COI) system** while raising and harmonising standards of COI together with EU+ countries and other key stakeholders. Steps will be taken to strengthen the role of the Agency as a **clearing house of national COI** as requested in the European Agenda on Migration. During 2019, the Agency will continue developing the COI Portal and related tools and platforms, and further integration will be sought with other EASO asylum information systems, such as the data hub and the IDS.

Based on the outcomes of the **convergence exercise** mandated by the 21 April 2016 Council Conclusions, the Agency will take measures to foster convergence in applying assessment criteria by coordinating efforts among Member States to engage in and develop a common analysis providing guidance in the situation in specific countries of origin.

The Agency will also provide the Commission, upon request, with information relevant for the designation of **Safe Countries of Origin and Safe Third Countries**.

During 2019, training will continue to be delivered to support capacity building in Member States. The **European Asylum Curriculum** will be consolidated by keeping it abreast of new developments, such as the changes in the EU asylum legal framework and the asylum situation in the EU. The Agency will continue to support EU+ countries in fulfilling their obligation to include the core parts of the curriculum into their national training programmes. Moreover, EASO will also continue to analyse and address the general needs of the EU+ countries and develop, update or upgrade new training modules, in cooperation with EU+ countries, while ensuring that issues related to vulnerable groups are streamlined throughout its training material. Specialised training on international protection will be provided to Member State experts being deployed by the Agency and also to its own staff. The Agency will be strengthening the design and infrastructure of the **e-learning management system** with the aim of providing a single source of information for the management of e-learning courses, data storage, and sharing and compilation of data for statistical purposes.

The Agency will advance the joint preparation of **professional development materials for members of courts and tribunals**, as well as their subsequent dissemination to identified partners. In addition, professional development workshops will continue, as well as increased support to their organisation on a national level. Cooperation with relevant partners in the field will be strengthened and every effort will be made to facilitate avenues for judicial dialogue and exchange.

The Agency will continue to mainstream aspects related to **vulnerable groups** in all activities. Cooperation activities will be undertaken to foster convergence in line with EU standards related to the identification and support to encourage policy coherence in this field. Efforts to encourage practical cooperation and information sharing among EU+ countries and other relevant experts on issues relating to vulnerable applicants will continue.

The practical cooperation activities organised within the framework of the **Dublin Network, the Exclusion Network** and the **Network of reception authorities** will be consolidated and further enhanced. Through these networks, the Agency will foster the exchange of information and best practices, pool expertise and develop specific tools and guidance on these themes.

During 2019, the Agency will strengthen its cooperation with, and increase its support to, **third countries of origin and transit**. Based on the EU external relations policy documents, including the 2016 Commission Communication on establishing a new Partnership Framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration, the Agency will, as appropriate, support the approach of renewed partnerships with third countries that will be developed according to the situation and needs of each partner third country, depending on whether it is a country of origin or transit. As part of this, the Agency will support **capacity building** and, as appropriate, provide more **operational support** in key EU neighbouring third countries' asylum and reception systems. Moreover, the Agency will continue providing support to the Western Balkans region and Turkey, including through the implementation of IPA Programme 'Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey' (IPA Programme), as well as in relation to the implementation of the Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) in North Africa, and to other countries specifically targeted in the partnership framework approach.

In 2019, EASO will aim to strengthen the EU's role in **resettlement**, in cooperation with the European Commission and UNHCR, with a view to meet the international protection needs of refugees in third countries and show solidarity with their host countries. EASO will implement a number of support activities such as facilitating Member States' resettlement missions; liaison with other stakeholders including UNHCR and IOM and national authorities; developing, validating and supporting the implementation of best practices in resettlement including training and capacity building and finally, the enhancement of the resettlement process to maximise the actual volume of resettlements undertaken. The Agency will continue to contribute to the exchange of information and other actions taken by Member States including schemes that are carried out at EU level. Building on the achievements of the pilot project on private sponsorship schemes initiated in 2018, the Agency will continue to explore additional legal pathways to international protection. EASO will also continue to support Member States in fulfilling resettlement pledges.

In the implementation of its work, the Agency will work in close cooperation with other actors in the field, in particular the Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, EU Member States, Frontex, eu-LISA, FRA, UNHCR, IOM and other relevant actors. The Agency will build on its excellent working relationship with the UNHCR and IOM and will continue promoting strong cooperation amongst EU agencies, in particular the JHA agencies network and activities organised within this framework. EASO will increase cooperation with the European Migration Network and its different Expert Groups, IGC, GDISC and other players. Likewise, the Agency will further strengthen the partnership with the International Association of Refugee Law Judges (IARLJ), the Association of European Administrative Judges (AEAJ), and the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN).

The Agency will further develop its positive relationship with civil society in various areas of its work through more targeted consultations, transparency, and outreach activities.

This programming document constitutes the framework financing decision for the implementation of the identified activities. In view of the largely unpredictable nature of developments in the migration field in the EU, which have a direct impact on the Agency's operations, the Agency will have to continue to respond in a timely and proactive manner to evolving circumstances. Changes to the Work Programme 2019, including financial implications, are likely to occur and will have to be discussed with the Management Board. The implementation of the Work Programme remains the responsibility of the Executive Director.

This Work Programme 2019, which is an integral part of the Single Programming Document 2019 to 2021, takes into account the opinion of the Commission, which was delivered to EASO on 31 October 2018. This document was adopted by the EASO Management Board on 27 November 2018 and revised on 31 July 2019.

2   EASO's priorities for 2019

During 2019, the Agency will deliver the multiannual programme with the main focus being the continuity and expansion of its key activities for the benefit of the EU+ and third countries, as well as preparations for the operationalisation and implementation of the new EUAA Regulation.

- **Preparations for the implementation of the EUAA Regulation**

  - Continue preparations to operationalise and implement the agreed actions in all areas of activity, according to the agreed priorities in the action plan, in collaboration with the Management Board and the Commission, and in consultation with stakeholders, where required.

- **Reinforcing internal governance and management systems**

  - Continue to build on the Agency's internal governance with an emphasis on further improvement of quality, risk, financial, document and records management, as well as full implementation of all actions as required by audits of the European Court of Auditors and the Internal Audit Service of the Commission.

  - The Agency is committed to prevent any future irregularities and inform the European Commission without delay of any cases of fraud, financial irregularities and investigations. To mitigate fraud and irregularities' related risks, and facilitate adequate prevention and detection, the internal control process shall be applicable at all management levels within the Agency. The primary measures to achieve this will be, but not limited to, reinforced systematic controls, risk analyses, awareness-raising and training.

- **Maintaining core business activities**

  - Continue to deliver core-business activities across the Agency, with a focus on maintaining the quality of service and the output level, and where feasible, improve performance.

- **Operational support, planning and evaluation**

  - Continue to support Member States under particular pressure in terms of their asylum and reception systems, and upon specific requests, using an agreed full-cycle project management methodology.

- **External dimension**

  - Increase the Agency's support to Member States in the implementation of national or European resettlement schemes and the future Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme with Turkey, private sponsorship schemes and third country support within the defined geographical areas of the Western Balkans, Turkey and MENA region.

- **Information, analysis and knowledge development**

  - Develop a comprehensive EU COI system, gathering relevant, reliable, objective, accurate and up-to-date information on relevant third countries.

  - Foster the creation of an effective situational picture on asylum-related migration, as well as an early warning functionality, through the development of a data hub in synergy with the EASO Situation Centre.

  - Further integrate different asylum information systems focusing on improving the functionalities of individual entities and creating additional interlinkages between constituent parts, notably IDS, COI Portal and the data hub.

- Foster convergence in applying assessment criteria by coordinating efforts among Member States to engage in and develop a common analysis on the situation in specific countries of origin and guidance notes to assist Member States in the assessment of relevant applications.

- **Asylum support**

  - Continue and enhance the development of training activities, including for all EASO operations.

  - Develop operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and common practical tools to support the implementation of the CEAS based on identified needs and good practices and act as a centre of expertise on asylum matters.

  - Enhance the professional development series for members of courts and tribunals.

- **Horizontal activities**

  - Increase support to the Management Board in view of their increased governance responsabilities foreseen in the future EUAA proposal.

  - Enhance external communication and strengthen coordination, flow of information, convergence and coherence of policies and practices related to EASO's mandate.

  - Deliver the ICT systems and solutions prioritised for development.

3   Operational support

3.1. Italy

EASO's operational support to Italy is provided across the whole national territory, including Sicily and Sardinia. The Agency is present with mobile teams for the provision of registration support and has the capacity to respond to at ports of disembarkation throughout the territoty. Interim caseworker staff have also supported a large number of Questura and Territorial Commissions in 2018 providing specific registration support (Questura) and file preparation in support of first instance applications (Territorial Commissions). Support is provided to the Dublin Unit in Rome with MS experts and interim staff and the Ministry of Interior in Rome in different departments and institutions in addition to further support in the field of reception and Unaccompanied Minors.

EASO will **further develop its operational support** based on identified and emerging needs of Italy to fully implement the EU asylum acquis and to respond to particular pressure on its asylum and reception systems in a sustainable manner in accordance with an operating plan to be agreed with the Italian authorities and taking into account the appraisal of the plan for the previous year.

Within this context EASO will operationalise its support in agreement with the Italian authorities, aiming to address specific arising needs. EASO will provide operational support by deploying asylum support teams, or by providing other support as required, including by maintaining and/or providing logistics (such as mobile or reception offices, rental and setting-up of facilities, and equipment) as well as providing the necessary services (such as cultural mediators, administrative support, interim support staff and transport). The Agency will cooperate with the relevant bodies in the provision of such support, devoting special attention to operational cooperation with Frontex and other stakeholders. All such operational support will be developed with a rigorous project management methodology and a clear prioritisation of needs.

Within the rapidly evolving situation in Italy and upon agreement with the Italian authorities, EASO will adjust its intervention reducing support where analysis shows that such support is no longer warranted and providing appropriate support to address emerging needs where analysis shows EASO intervention is necessary. In parallel, in accordance with the revised CEAS and based on its practical experience in operations taking place in Italy and established good practices, the Agency will provide support in amending relevant working instructions, working procedures and workflows. Moreover, the Agency will maintain its regular participation in the EU Regional Task Force. EASO will also explore with DG HOME and national authorities the possibility of progressive handover of elements currently funded by EASO that could be funded through alternative funding mechanisms such as National AMIF envelopes.

A detailed description of the support measures agreed by EASO and the Italian Authorities is provided in the signed operating plan published on the EASO website.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA01
Budget line and allocated amount	3301 Operational Support: **EUR 22 252 000**[22]
Allocated human resources[23]	**6 AD, 4 AST, 2 CA, 1 SNE**

A breakdown of estimated expenditure for operational support in Italy, for the above allocated amount, is provided below.

It shall be noted that the below number and figures are based on the existing budget for 2019. The Agency is currently holding discussions with the European Commission (DG HOME) to increase the budget for EASO operations in 2019 from savings in other EASO titles and allocation of R0 funds, in line with foreseen needs outlined in the Operating Plan 2019. Such support will be ultimately based on the request of the Member State, the specific needs and situation in the country and EASO's prioritised needs assessment.

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[22] Budget for this activity in the Work Programme 2018 Amendment 1 was €27 253 829
[23] Including personnel based in the headquarters, as well as the operational locations.

Type of cost	Estimated expenditure (EUR)
Experts (Member States)	1,400,000
Interim staff	17,800,000
Cultural mediators	2,024,400
Training and other events (participants and venues)	700,000
Infrastructure, equipment	21,000
Transport	6,600
Administrative costs (e.g. missions)	300,000
Total	**22,252,000**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Maintain close relations with the Italian authorities and other relevant stakeholders on asylum and reception-related matters.
2	Support the implementation of operating plans through effective management of resources, including human, financial, and material.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of monthly inter-agency coordination meetings attended.	1	1	1
1	Number of thematic meetings organised.	3	3	3
2	Percentage utilisation and consumption of resources versus the operating plan.	80%	90%	90%

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Contribute to enhanced capacity of the Italian authorities to implement the CEAS and to manage their asylum and reception systems.
Expected results in 2019	- Improved skills and technical knowledge of relevant authorities regarding various elements of the CEAS. - Harmonisation of procedures and workflows in place at national level for the enhanced implementation of the CEAS. - Delivery of relevant support through capacity-building activities, inter alia, on COI and identification of vulnerabilities.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Operating plan reflects priority needs and delivers support that has measurable impact on the Italian authorities' capacity to manage the asylum and reception systems.	2017: Forecast of resources and activities adequate to initial needs. Additional support was requested and formalised through an amendment, according to the evolving needs.	Forecast of resources and activities is adequate to meet the needs. Impact can be demonstrated and measured.	Monthly monitoring reports, mid-term review and/or final evaluation, internal records, feedback

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Percentage of support measures implemented as planned, including amendments, if applicable.	2017: Specific measures under implementation.	90%	Internal records, progress reports, including monitoring reports.
Operating plan 2019 planned results achieved.	2017: 100%	90%	Monitoring and evaluation reports.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Provision of operational and technical support to Italy to implement the CEAS, with specific support to manage their asylum and reception systems.	Q1-Q4
Implementation of activities in accordance with the logical framework of the operating plan signed with the Italian authorities.	Q1-Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 2	Taking into account the situation on the ground, and at the request of the Italian authorities, provide relevant support to alleviate the pressure on the national asylum and reception systems, based on a full-cycle project management methodology.
Expected results in 2019	- Enhanced capacity of authorities in asylum and reception. - Entry and exit strategies for each measure clearly defined and implemented. - Increased applications for international protection registered and files prepared for the Italian authorities by asylum support teams deployed by EASO. - Enhanced skills and knowledge of the relevant authorities to process applications and assess the quality of decisions on applications for international protection. - Enhanced operational skills and technical knowledge of asylum and reception authorities as a result of dedicated professional development pathways. - Strengthened capacity of the relevant national authorities to enhance and monitor reception conditions.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Operating Plan signed based on prioritised needs assessment with defined logic model for intervention.	2017: N.A.	100%	Signed Operating Plan
Percentage of support measures implemented as planned, according to the logical framework of the operating plan, including amendments, if applicable.	2017: 100% of measures implemented	90%	Internal records, progress reports.
Quantitative and qualitative indicators per costed measure met by the actions implemented in the framework of the Operating Plan.	2017: N.A.	90%	Internal monitoring records, statistics, progress reports.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Provide support to Italy to enhance the capacity to manage and monitor the asylum and reception systems.	Q1–Q4
Cooperate and coordinate the implementation of the 2019 operating plan activities with all stakeholders active in Italy (such as the Italian authorities, the European Commission, UNHCR, IOM, Member States, EU agencies, such as Frontex, Europol, FRA) within the context of the operations in Italy, with the agreed project management methodology.	Q1–Q4

3.2. Greece

The Agency's operational support to Greece is provided on the mainland and islands. The Agency is present in five hotspots on the Aegean islands, as well as in Athens and other locations on mainland.

EASO will **further develop its operational support** based on the emerging needs of Greece to fully implement the EU asylum acquis and to respond to particular pressure on its asylum and reception systems, in accordance with an operating plan to be agreed with the Greek authorities and taking into account the Review of the plan from the previous year and a thorough needs analysis.

Within this context, EASO will operationalise its support in agreement with the Greek authorities, aiming to address specific prioritised needs using a robust methodology. EASO will provide operational support by deploying asylum support teams or by providing other support, as required, including maintaining and providing logistics (such as mobile offices, rental, fit-out and maintenance of facilities and equipment), as well as providing the necessary services (such as interpreters, administrative support, interim caseworkers and support staff, transport and security). All such operational support will be developed with a rigorous project management methodology and a clear prioritisation of needs.

The Agency will cooperate with other relevant bodies in the provision of such support to avoid duplication of efforts, devoting special attention to operational cooperation with Frontex and other stakeholders. Moreover, the Agency will maintain its regular participation in the EU Regional Task Force and other relevant inter-agency fora.

EASO will also explore with DG HOME and national authorities the possibility of progressive handover of elements currently funded by EASO that could be funded through alternative funding mechanisms such as National AMIF envelopes.

EASO will adjust its intervention and provide appropriate support to address emerging needs in line with the evolving situation in Greece and upon agreement with the Greek authorities. The main areas of the Agency's support will include activities as follows:

- Continue to provide targeted support to the Greek authorities in the implementation of the CEAS, addressing those aspects of the CEAS identified by the prioritised needs assessment and jointly agreed with the Greek authorities.
- Support the implementation of the respective measures of the operating plan and any possible amendments.
- Continue to provide targeted support to the Greek Authorities in terms of capacity building on the implementation of the CEAS.

A detailed description of the support measures agreed by EASO and the Greek Authorities will be included in the signed operating plan and will be available on the EASO website.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA01
Budget line and allocated amount	3301 Operational Support: **EUR 26 463 129**[18]
Allocated human resources[24]	**10 AD, 9 AST, 7 CA**

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[24] Including personnel based in the headquarters, as well as the operational locations.

A breakdown of estimated expenditure for operational support in Greece, for the above allocated amount, is provided below.

It shall be noted that the below number and figures are based on the existing budget for 2019. The Agency is currently holding discussions with the European Commission (DG HOME) to increase the budget for EASO operations in 2019 from savings in other EASO Titles and R0 Funds, in line with foreseen needs outlined in the Operating Plan 2019. Such support will be ultimately based on the request of the Member State, the specific needs and situation in the country and EASO's needs assessment. Instead, the figures provide an estimate of the potential level of support that could be provided with the available funds as identified in the Work Programme.

Type of cost	Estimated expenditure (EUR)[25]
Experts (Member State)	3,800,000
Interim staff	14,720,000
Cultural mediators/interpreters	5,725,000
Training and other events (participants and venues)	420,000
Buildings and infrastructure in hotspots	90,000
Transport	160,000
Administrative costs (e.g. missions)	1,548,129
Total	**26,463,129**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Maintain close relations with the Greek authorities and other relevant stakeholders on asylum and reception-related matters.
2	Support the implementation of the operating plans through effective management of resources, including human, financial, and material.

| Link to activity no | Core business indicators | Actual | | Forecast |
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of monthly inter-agency coordination meetings attended.	1	1	1
1	Number of thematic meetings organised.	3	3	3
2	Percentage utilisation and consumption of resources versus the operating plan.	80%	90%	90%

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Contribute to enhanced capacity of the Greek authorities to implement the CEAS, and to manage their asylum and reception systems.
Expected results in 2019	- Enhanced skills and technical knowledge of relevant authorities regarding various elements of the CEAS. - Enhanced procedures and tools for the effective implementation of the CEAS.
Indicators	

Indicator	Latest known result	Target for 2019	Means and frequency of verification
Operating plan reflects priority needs and delivers support that has measurable	2017:	Forecast of resources and activities is	Mid-term review and/or final

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[25] Including personnel based in the headquarters, as well as in operational locations.

	Indicators		
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
impact on the Greek authorities' capacity to manage the asylum and reception systems.	Forecast of resources and activities was adequate to meet the needs.	adequate to meet the needs. Impact can be demonstrated and measured.	evaluation, internal records, feedback
Percentage of support measures implemented as planned, according to the logical framework of the operating plan, including amendments, if applicable.	2017: 100%	90%	Internal records, progress reports
Percentage of outputs, including tools to support asylum and reception systems, agreed with the Greek authorities delivered.	2017: 100%	100%	Internal records, progress and/or evaluation reports
Operating plan 2019 planned results achieved.	2017: 100%	90%	Monitoring and evaluation reports

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Operating Plan Greece	
Provision of operational and technical support to the Greece authorities to implement the CEAS and manage the asylum and reception systems.	Q1–Q4
Implementation of activities in accordance with the logical framework of the operating plan signed with the Greek authorities.	Q1–Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 2	Taking into account the specific needs in 2019, contribute to enhance the capacity of the Greek authorities to process applications for international protection and to strengthen the national reception system, based on a full-cycle project management methodology.
Expected results in 2019	- Increased rate of processing applications for international protection. - Enhanced procedures and tools for implementation of asylum procedures (i.e. admissibility and eligibility assessment). - Enhanced skills and knowledge of the relevant authorities to process applications for international protection (i.e. admissibility and eligibility assessment). - Enhanced operational skills and technical knowledge of the relevant authorities for reception management. - Strengthened capacity of the relevant national authorities to enhance and monitor reception conditions.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Operating Plan signed based on prioritised needs assessment with defined logic model for intervention.	2017: N.A.	100%	Signed Operating Plan

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Percentage of support measures implemented as planned, according to the logical framework of the operating plan, including amendments, if applicable.	2017: Specific measures under implementation	90%	Internal records, progress reports
Degree of adoption and implementation of the outputs of the support measures.	2017: 90%	90%	Internal records, progress and/or evaluation reports
Percentage of asylum interviews at first instance processed with the support of EASO.	2017: 65%	50%	Internal records, statistics, reports
Qualitative indicators per measure met by the actions implemented in the framework of the operating plan.	2017: N.A.	90%	Internal monitoring records, statistics, progress reports.
Main outputs/actions in 2019			
Main outputs/actions			**When**
Provide support to Greece to enhance the capacity to manage the asylum and reception systems.			Q1–Q4
Cooperate and coordinate the implementation of EASO the 2019 operating plan activities with all stakeholders active in Greece (e.g. Greek authorities, Commission, UNHCR, IOM, Member States, and EU agencies, such as Frontex, Europol and FRA) within the context of the operations in Greece, with the agreed project management methodology.			Q1–Q4

3.3. Cyprus

The Agency's operational support to Cyprus is provided in Nicosia in support of backlog management at the premises of the Asylum Service, in Kofinou Reception Centre (currently suspended) and the transit reception centre in Kokkinotrimithia in addition now to registration support in six sites in various locations (Limassol, Paphos, Nicosia) in partnership with the Police authorities.

EASO will continue to provide operational and technical assistance to the Cypriot authorities based on an Operating Plan and **further assess whether its operational support** needs to be developed based on the emerging needs of Cyprus to fully implement the EU asylum acquis and to respond to particular pressure on its asylum and reception systems. The Agency will implement its role as mandated by the EU institutions and in line with the legislative framework in place.

Within this context, EASO will operationalise its support in agreement with the Cypriot authorities, aiming to address specific arising needs. EASO will provide operational support by deploying asylum support teams or by providing other support, as required, including maintaining and/or providing logistics (such as mobile offices, rental, fit-out and maintenance of facilities and equipment), as well as providing the necessary services (such as interpreters, cultural mediators, administrative support, interim caseworkers and support staff, transport and security). The Agency will cooperate with other relevant bodies in the provision of such support. It is envisaged, *inter alia*, that the support will also include developing case and file management systems to enhance processing capacity and reduce backlog.

In addition, EASO will deploy asylum support teams to assist the Asylum Service in the building of effective reception management systems and specifically in support for the management of the reception centres in Kofinou and the transit centre of Kokkinotrimithia. This intervention will involve

developing, supporting and handing over reception management systems to the concerned parties and establishing and supporting required social work and community work flows.

A detailed description of the support measures agreed by EASO and the Cypriot Authorities will be included in the signed operating plan and will be available on the EASO website.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA01
Budget line and allocated amount	3301 Operational Support: **EUR 3 000 000**
Allocated human resources	**1 AD, 1 AST, 1 CA**

Type of cost	Estimated expenditure (EUR)
Experts (Member State)	595,000
Interim staff	1,200,000
Cultural mediators/interpreters	840,000
Training and other events (participants and venues)	55,000
Buildings and infrastructure in hotspots	190,000
Transport	5,000
Administrative costs (e.g. missions)	115,000
Total	**3,000,000**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Maintain close relations with the Cypriot authorities and other relevant stakeholders on asylum and reception-related matters.
2	Support the implementation of operating plans through effective management of resources, including human, financial and material.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual 2017	Actual 2018 (est.)	Forecast 2019
1	Number of monthly inter-agency coordination meetings attended.	1	1	1
1	Number of thematic meetings organised.	3	3	3
2	Percentage utilisation and consumption of resources versus the operating plan.	80%	90%	90%

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Contribute to enhanced capacity of the Cypriot authorities to implement the CEAS, with particular focus on support for registration, the examination of applications for international protection and support for reception.
Expected results in 2019	- Enhanced skills and knowledge of the relevant authorities on various elements of the CEAS. - Enhanced procedures and tools for the effective implementation of the CEAS.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Operating plan takes into account the needs on the ground and foresees adequate operational and technical support.	2017: Forecast of resources and activities was adequate to meet the needs.	Forecast of resources and activities is adequate to meet the needs.	Mid-term review and/or final evaluation, internal records, feedback
Percentage of support measures implemented as planned, according to the logical framework of the operating plans, including amendments, if applicable.	2017: Specific measures under implementation	100%	Internal records, progress reports
Qualitative indicators per measure met by the actions implemented in the framework of the operating plan.	2017: N.A.	90%	Internal monitoring records, statistics, progress reports.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Provide operational and technical support to Cyprus to implement the CEAS, with specific support for registration, for the processing of applications for international protection and support in the field of reception.	Q1–Q4
Implementation of activities in accordance with the operating plan signed with the Cypriot authorities.	Q1–Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 2	Taking into account the specific needs in 2019, contribute to enhance the capacity of the Cypriot authorities to process applications for international protection including registration and backlog management and to strengthen the national reception system, based on a full-cycle project management methodology.
Expected results in 2019	- Increased rate of registration of applications for international protection - Increased rate of processing applications for international protection. - Enhanced procedures and tools for implementation of asylum procedures (i.e. admissibility and eligibility assessment). - Enhanced skills and knowledge of the relevant authorities to process applications for international protection (including registration and the backlog of asylum applications). - Enhanced operational skills and technical knowledge of the relevant authorities for reception management. - Strengthened capacity of the relevant national authorities to enhance and monitor reception conditions

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Operating Plan signed based on prioritised needs assessment with defined logic model for intervention.	2017: N.A.	100%	Signed Operating Plan

Percentage of support measures implemented as planned, according to the logical framework of the operating plan, including amendments, if applicable.	2017: Specific measures under implementation	90%	Internal records, progress reports
Degree of adoption and implementation of the outputs of the support measures.	2017: 90%	90%	Internal records, progress and/or evaluation reports
Percentage of registrations processed with the support of EASO.	2017: n/a	New measure – to be agreed	Internal records, statistics, reports
Percentage of backlog asylum interviews processed with the support of EASO.	2017: 65%	50%	Internal records, statistics, reports
Qualitative indicators per measure met by the actions implemented in the framework of the operating plan.	2017: N.A.	90%	Internal monitoring records, statistics, progress reports.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Provide support to Cyprus to enhance the capacity to manage the asylum and reception systems.	Q1–Q4
Cooperate and coordinate the implementation of the 2019 operating plan activities with all stakeholders active in Cyprus (e.g. Cypriot authorities, Commission, UNHCR, IOM, Member States, and EU agencies, such as Frontex, Europol and FRA) within the context of the operations in Cyprus, with the agreed project management methodology.	Q1–Q4

3.4. Malta

EASO has been assisting the Office of the Refugee Commissioner since 2017 in terms of for example training support and involvement in a number of EASO Networks. In 2019 EASO and Malta cooperated in *ad hoc* voluntary relocation exercises taking place in the Maltese territory. This cooperation included support for the registration and lodging of applications for international protection, information provision, support for vulnerability assessments, and wider support for the Dublin Unit.

On 5 June 2019, the Maltese authorities submitted a formal request to EASO for support in the area of processing of applications for international protection, including support for the registration and lodging of the application, the Dublin procedure and interviews. The Maltese authorities also requested support in the decision making process through drafting of Evaluation Reports[26] on individual applications submitted to the Refugee Commissioners Office for decision. An Operating Plan was signed on 24th June 2019 and is intended to contribute to the overall objective, or main impact result, of ensuring that persons in need of protection in Malta have access to the international protection determination procedure, and that the procedure at first instance is concluded as swiftly as possible, as per indications in the CEAS. The Plan has the following specific objectives:

1. Ensuring swift access to the procedure for international protection in Malta, including the registration and lodging of the application;
2. Increasing Malta's capacity to deal with its asylum backlog;
3. Enhancing the capacity of the Maltese Dublin Unit in line with the CEAS asylum standards.

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[26] 'drafting Evaluation Report' is the term used by the Refugee Commissioner for the drafting of legal opinion concerning individual applications for asylum.

Support provided under EASO's mandate envisages tailor-made assistance, capacity building, technical expertise and quality control tools - in line with the needs indicated to EASO by the Maltese authorities - up to the end of 2019. A new Operating Plan for 2020 may be signed upon the request of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security, following a needs assessment exercise to be conducted at the appropriate time in 2019.

Within this context, EASO will operationalise its support in agreement with the Maltese authorities, aiming to address specific arising needs. EASO will provide operational support by deploying asylum support teams or by providing other support, as required, including maintaining and/or providing logistics (such as mobile offices, rental, fit-out and maintenance of facilities and equipment), as well as providing the necessary services (such as interpreters, cultural mediators, administrative support, interim caseworkers and support staff, transport and security). The Agency will cooperate with other relevant bodies in the provision of such support. It is envisaged, inter alia, that the support will also include developing case and file management systems to enhance processing capacity and reduce backlog.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA01
Budget line and allocated amount	**NA[27]**
Allocated human resources	**1 AD**

Type of cost	Estimated expenditure (EUR)
Experts (Member State)	280,000
Interim staff	800,000
Cultural mediators/interpreters	350,000
Training and other events (participants and venues)	65,000
Buildings and infrastructure in hotspots	0
Transport	35,000
Administrative costs (e.g. missions)	71,340
Total	**1,601,340**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Maintain close relations with the Maltese authorities and other relevant stakeholders on asylum related matters.
2	Support the implementation of operating plans through effective management of resources, including human, financial and material.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of monthly inter-agency coordination meetings attended.	-	-	1
1	Number of thematic meetings organised.	-	-	2
2	Percentage utilisation and consumption of resources versus the operating plan.	-	-	90%

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Contribute to enhanced capacity of the Maltese authorities to implement the CEAS, with particular focus on support for registration, the examination of applications for international protection and support the Dublin Unit

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[27] Composed of €1,601,340 of R0 funds (Associate Countries' contribution received in 2018).

Expected results in 2019	- Enhanced skills and knowledge of the relevant authorities on various elements of the CEAS. - Enhanced procedures and tools for the effective implementation of the CEAS.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Operating plan takes into account the needs on the ground and foresees adequate operational and technical support.	2017: n/a	Forecast of resources and activities is adequate to meet the needs.	Mid-term review and/or final evaluation, internal records, feedback
Percentage of support measures implemented as planned, according to the logical framework of the operating plans, including amendments, if applicable.	2017: n/a	100%	Internal records, progress reports
Qualitative indicators per measure met by the actions implemented in the framework of the operating plan.	2017: N.A.	90%	Internal monitoring records, statistics, progress reports.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Provide operational and technical support to Malta to implement the CEAS, with specific support for registration, for the processing of applications for international protection and support for the Dublin Unit.	Q1–Q4
Implementation of activities in accordance with the operating plan signed with the Maltese authorities.	Q1–Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 2	Taking into account the specific needs in 2019, contribute to enhance the capacity of the Maltese authorities to process applications for international protection including registration and backlog management and to strengthen the Dublin Unit, based on a full-cycle project management methodology.
Expected results in 2019	- Increased rate of registration of applications for international protection - Increased rate of processing applications for international protection. - Enhanced procedures and tools for implementation of asylum procedures (i.e. admissibility and eligibility assessment). - Enhanced skills and knowledge of the relevant authorities to process applications for international protection (including registration and the backlog of asylum applications). - Strengthened capacity of the Dublin Unit

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Operating Plan signed based on prioritised needs assessment with defined logic model for intervention.	2017: N.A.	100%	Signed Operating Plan

Percentage of support measures implemented as planned, according to the logical framework of the operating plan, including amendments, if applicable.	2017: n/a	90%	Internal records, progress reports
Degree of adoption and implementation of the outputs of the support measures.	2017: n/a	90%	Internal records, progress and/or evaluation reports
Percentage of registrations processed with the support of EASO.	2017: n/a	Full registration backlog as at 24/6/19 processed by end year	Internal records, statistics, reports
Percentage of backlog asylum interviews processed with the support of EASO.	2017: 65%	25% of backlog as at June 24 2019 processed	Internal records, statistics, reports
Qualitative indicators per measure met by the actions implemented in the framework of the operating plan.	2017: N.A.	90%	Internal monitoring records, statistics, progress reports.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Provide support to Malta to enhance the capacity to manage the asylum systems.	Q1–Q4
Cooperate and coordinate the implementation of the 2019 operating plan activities with all stakeholders active in Malta (e.g. Maltese authorities, Commission, UNHCR, IOM, Member States, and EU agencies, such as Frontex, Europol and FRA) within the context of the operations in Malta, with the agreed project management methodology.	Q1–Q4

3.5. Other Operational Activities

The Agency will further develop its operational support based on the emerging needs of Member States to fully implement the EU asylum acquis and to respond to particular pressure on their asylum and reception systems. EASO will tailor its operational support to the specific needs that arise as well as the requests from Member States.

Support will take the form of targeted measures to Member States with certain identified and specific needs related to the coherent and comprehensive implementation of the EU asylum acquis (including tailor-made assistance, capacity building, specific support and special quality control processes).

EASO will provide emergency support to EU+ countries subject to particular pressure by deploying EU+ countries' experts in the form of asylum support teams or by providing other support as required, within the CEAS legislative framework. The Agency will cooperate with relevant bodies in the provision of such support, devoting special attention to operational cooperation with Frontex and other stakeholders.

EASO will develop its operational capacity to respond to requests for support by building the necessary rapid response capacity, internal capacity on operational contingency planning and increased flexibility to enter and exit from operations as required. This will further facilitate EASO's capacity to respond to *ad hoc disembarkations/voluntary relocation* events upon the specific request of the Commission in support of Member States as has occurred six times in the first half of 2019[28]. In these responses EASO provides support to the hosting Member State in the form of support for registration

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[28] EASO has responded to two such events in Malta and four in Italy between January and June 2019.

and related information provision, implementation of the selection and matching tool for relocation and further support for Member State selection missions and to the concerned Dublin Unit in processing voluntary relocations.

EASO will respond as needed to specific requests for operational support in line with the provisions in its founding Regulation and at the request of relevant authorities and/or Member States.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA01
Budget line and allocated amount	3301 Operational Support: **EUR 300 000**
Allocated human resources	**1 AST**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Strengthen operational capacity and systems across structural, human, financial and logistical resources.

| Link to activity no | Core business indicators | Actual | | Forecast |
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Operational procedures in place to provide support when a rapid response is required.	N.A.	Needs assessment completed	1 procedure in place

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Enhance EASO capacity to respond effectively to different operational scenarios across Member States whose asylum and reception systems are facing disproportionate pressure.
Expected results in 2019	- EASO's operational capacity and administrative systems are aligned in order to provide effective and rapid support across Member States. - EASO has expertise to support Member States in designing response strategies to address disproportionate pressure on their asylum and reception systems.

Indicators			
Indicator	Latest known result	Target for 2019	Means and frequency of verification
Number of timely operational responses put in place	2017: N.A.	1	Operational records and activity reports.
Number of modules of the operational toolkit developed	2017: N.A.	3	Operational records and activity reports.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Provide operational support to requesting Member State(s) with certain identified and specific needs related to the implementation of the EU asylum acquis.	Q1–Q4
Provide the necessary support to Member States to develop operational contingency systems as relevant.	Q1-Q4
Develop an operational toolkit that can be used to provide the necessary framework of support for Member States that might experience disproportionate pressure on their asylum and reception systems.	Q1-Q4

3.6. External dimension

3.6.1. External Action Strategy and External Dimension Network

Within the framework of the EU external relations policy, the Agency will facilitate and encourage operational cooperation between Member States and third countries. EASO will update the External

Action Strategy (EAS) with reference to its current and future regulation. This will involve the development of a draft Strategy in 2019 through extensive consultation. Subject to wider developments in respect of the proposed EUAA this will be finalised through further consultation and ratification by the EASO Management Board to provide an updated overarching strategic framework for the External Dimension work programme. This Strategy will then be implemented through the preparation and implementation of a EAS Programming Document. The full-cycle project management methodology developed in operations will be progressively embedded within the external dimension activities as the EAS is updated.

EASO will also further develop and manage the External Dimension Network of EU+ National Contact Points (NCPs). EASO will manage and further develop its network of EU+ NCPs and of Member States' experts involved in activities relating to the Agency's external dimension mandate. This will be done by organising External Dimension Network meetings for EU+ NCPs and other relevant stakeholders in order to present EASO's activities and discuss practical cooperation, as well as provide relevant information on such activities. EASO will organise one External Dimension Network meeting per year and provide the External Dimension network with bi-monthly external dimension activity planning calendars. More thematic practical cooperation meetings will be organised for specific activities as described in sections below.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA02
Budget line and allocated amount	3203 External dimension and resettlement: **EUR 100 000**
Allocated human resources	**1 AD, 2 AST**

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Update the External Action Strategy with reference to its current and future regulation.
Expected results in 2019	- Revised External Action Strategy in place. - Project management methodology embedded in External Dimension activities

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number meetings to complete revisions including consultative meetings with stakeholders	2017: 2	4	Operational/ administrative records
Number meetings to embed PM Methodology		8	Internal records

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Revised External Action Strategy	Q3-Q4
Project management methodology embedded in External Dimension activities	Q1,2,3,4

Objectives and results	
Objective 2	Manage and further develop practical cooperation and information sharing among EU+ countries on activities pertaining to the Agency's external dimension mandate.
Expected results in 2019	- Enhanced network of NCPs and Member State experts involved in external dimension activities. - Enhanced information sharing on EASO external dimension activities.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of external dimension meetings implemented	2017: 2	1	Operational/ administrative records.

| Level of satisfaction of the partner countries involved. | 2017: 80% | 80% | Surveys, statistical data collection. |
| Number of issued External Dimension Activity Planning Calendars, and other information sharing tools, as appropriate | 2017: 3 | 6 | Operational/ administrative records. |

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Organise EASO External Dimension meeting with EU+ countries/NCPs	Q2
Send bi-monthly External Dimension Activity Planning Calendars	Q1-Q4

3.6.2. Third country support

In line with the EASO External Action Strategy and within the framework of the EU external relations policy, the Agency will strengthen its cooperation with and increase its support to third countries of origin and transit, in full respect of fundamental rights principles. EASO will, as appropriate, support the approach of renewed partnerships with third countries, through the partnership framework approach that will be developed according to the situation and needs of each partner third country, depending on whether it is a country of origin or transit. As part of this, the Agency will support **capacity building** in key EU neighbouring third countries' asylum and reception systems. EASO will continue to provide support to the Western Balkans region and Turkey, including through the implementation of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) Programme[29], in partnership with Frontex, IOM and UNHCR, as well as the Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) in North Africa, and to other countries specifically targeted in the partnership framework approach.

The IPA Programme specifically aims to support the development of increased capacity for strengthening identification, registration and referral mechanisms in the Western Balkans region and Turkey, with a view to improving the protection-sensitive operational response to mixed migratory flows. To follow up on the Valletta Summit Action Plan of November 2015, EASO will support, as appropriate, third countries by providing training and improving the quality of the asylum process, in countries of origin, transit and destination.

In addition to the above mentioned capacity building support, which will be provided on a number of international protection related topics, the Agency will assess and deliver direct operational support, as and when appropriate, in particular to support the WB countries with identification, registration, reception and referral, in cooperation with Frontex, UNHCR and IOM.

EASO's interventions to support third countries will be done in cooperation with the European Commission, EEAS, EU Member States, Frontex, UNHCR, IOM and other relevant actors.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA02
Budget line and allocated amount	3203 External dimension and resettlement: **EUR 1 000 000** *4102 IPA programme: Regional Support to protection-sensitive migration management in the Western Balkans and Turkey: **EUR 919 913** (Title IV, Phase I and Phase II combined)*
Allocated human resources	**3 AD 2 CA**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Enhance technical cooperation and strengthen capacities of third country national authorities and other relevant stakeholders on protection-related matters.
2	Enhance external dimension information and coordination tools, including Country Factsheets and information-sharing tool.

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[29] Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	**2018 (est.)**	**2019**
1	Number of technical cooperation meetings with national authorities from third countries.	15	15	20
1	Number of assessment completed in respect of requests for capacity building and/or operational support	N.A.	2	2
2	Number of country fact sheets developed and available for EASO staff and EU+ experts on EASO/IDS platform.	N.A.	2	3
2	Number of third countries for which the information sharing tool has been officially launched.	N.A.	1	1
2	Level of satisfaction of the External Dimension Network on the information and coordination tools	80%	80%	80%

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Improve coordination and provision of clearer frameworks for cooperation with third countries, and enhance information sharing and coordination between Member States, as well as with other relevant stakeholders.
Expected results in 2019	- Working arrangements methodology developed and in place. - Working arrangements signed with key third countries. - Member States, and other stakeholders, as appropriate, share information and increasingly coordinate activities, using EASO information coordination tools.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of working arrangements signed, with at least one including a roadmap document (i.e. action plan).	2017: Preparatory work on format of working arrangements.	3, of which 1 includes a roadmap document.	Operational and administrative records.
Level of satisfaction of national authorities with which a working arrangement has been signed.	2017: N.A.	80%	Satisfaction survey, evaluation of a working arrangement.
Number of EASO practical cooperation workshops and meetings with EU+ countries and third countries.	2017: N.A.	3	Operational and administrative records.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Establish official, high-level contacts and exchanges with key third countries with the aim of signing working arrangements.	Q1-Q4
Develop and integrate roadmaps within working arrangements, as appropriate, in order to operationalise the working arrangements.	Q1-Q4
Further enhance and operationalise information and coordination tools, based on developments in 2018 and on needs and interests of the External Dimension Network.	Q1-Q4
Organise EASO practical cooperation workshops and meetings with EU+ countries and third countries, including as a follow-up to the Valletta Summit Action Plan of November 2015 by providing, as appropriate, training and capacity-building support in order to improve the quality of the asylum process in countries of origin, transit and destination.	Q1-Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 2	Provide capacity building and, where appropriate, support to enhance third countries' capacities to manage fluctuating migration movements and to develop and adopt improved asylum and reception systems.
Expected results in 2019	- EASO support is delivered within the framework of projects and programmes, as well as jointly developed roadmaps, leading to strengthened asylum systems in third countries. - Jointly developed roadmaps leading to the establishment or adjustment of national asylum systems and practices. - Improved skills and knowledge of authorities in third countries in the field of asylum and reception.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of roadmaps, plans and projects integrated into the Operations Unit Project Management Methodology.	2017: N.A.	4	Plans Project and Roadmap documents and internal monitoring reports
Feasibility Studies into direct operational support completed and conclusions actioned or implemented.	2018: 1	2	Feasibility Study reports
Number of new roadmaps or plans developed or under development.	2017: 2	Up to 4 for Western Balkan countries; Up to 2 for Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.	Periodical activity reports.
Number of capacity building activities and other support measures implemented.	2017: 30 as part of roadmaps for Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; 6 as part of IPA/external funded projects and programmes; 14 as part of roadmap for Turkey.	45 within the framework of roadmaps; 20 as part of the roadmap for Turkey; 12 in MENA region; 5 in other priority countries.	Periodical activity reports.
Level of satisfaction of the partner countries involved.	2017: 85% for Western Balkan countries	80%	Activity evaluation reports; mid-year and end-of-year satisfaction surveys.
Number of third countries that have taken clear steps to establish or adjust their national asylum systems and practices.	2017: N.A.	At least 4 in Western Balkan countries; At least 1 in MENA region.	Operational/ administrative records and surveys, Commission statistical data collection; periodic reporting documents.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Feasibility Studies completed	Q1-Q4
Roadmaps, project plans prepared within the defined Operations Unit Project Management Methodology	Q1-Q4
Implement capacity building activities and support measures in relevant countries within the framework of jointly developed roadmaps, including activities under the framework of the IPA project "Regional support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey"[30] Phase II, and building on lessons learned from EASO's previous engagement in the region[31].	Q3-Q4
Implement support measures, as appropriate, to contribute, *inter alia*, to the Mobility Partnerships[32] and the Partnership Framework Approach in strategically targeted third countries, in coordination and cooperation with the Commission and other relevant stakeholders, including UNHCR and IOM.	Q1-Q4
Provide operational support to manage mixed migration flows, with a focus on persons in need of international protection, and, in particular, vulnerable applicants, including the development of standard operating procedures.	Q1-Q4

3.6.3. Resettlement and other legal pathways to international protection

EASO aims to **strengthen the EU's role** in the area of resettlement and other legal pathways to international protection, in cooperation with the European Commission, UNHCR and other implementing partners, including IOM, with a view to meeting the international protection needs of refugees in third countries and showing solidarity with their host countries.

The Agency will continue to coordinate the exchange of information and other actions taken by Member States including schemes which are carried out at EU level. At the request of Member States, EASO will keep providing additional bilateral support to national schemes at operational level.

In the light of the 2017 Commission Recommendation[33] that calls upon Member States to offer at least 50,000 resettlement places to admit by 31 October 2019 persons in need of international protection from third countries, EASO has been tasked with supporting Member States in fulfilling their pledges as soon as possible together with the cooperation of UNHCR. This will require a pro-active approach and the consideration of direct operational support to enhance Member States capacity to deliver on resettlement pledges.

The Agency will support the implementation of Private Sponsorship Programmes with concerned Member States, building on the pilot launched in 2018 at the invitation of the Commission. EASO's role will largely be determined by the pilot carried out with interested Member States and in close cooperation with the Commission and other parties.

At the request and based on the needs of Member States, EASO will provide assistance in coordinating technical cooperation and facilitating the sharing of infrastructure, including by ensuring a quality service in terms of, for example, file management, scheduling, back-office support, interpretation, cultural orientation and security-related services. EASO will facilitate coordination, effectiveness and efficiency of EU Member States' resettlement efforts, including in Turkey, by further developing resettlement-related support in Turkey including through the establishment of a Resettlement

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[30] IPA II Programme (phase I) "Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey" is a multi-agency initiative that started in January 2016 and ended in June 2019. Within this framework, the Agency implemented asylum-related capacity building actions in the Western Balkans and Turkey. EASO had a specific focus on Serbia and North Macedonia). The IPA project phase II (July 2019-June 2021) is now under implementation. .

[31] Applicable, *inter alia*, to Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan.

[32] The objective will also contribute to other regional processes, such as the Prague and the Budapest processes, the Rabat and the Khartoum processes, and the Euromed activities.

[33] Commission Recommendation of 27.9.2017 on enhancing legal pathways for persons in need of international protection (C(2017) 6504).

Support Facility in 2019. This could be extended to other third countries at the request and based on the needs of Member States.

EASO will participate in the implementation of international agreements concluded by the European Union with third countries in the area of resettlement, subject to prior approval of the Commission and after consultation with the Management Board.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA02
Budget line and allocated amount	3203 External dimension and resettlement: **EUR 900 000**
Allocated human resources	**3 AD, 1 AST, 1 SN E**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Support Member States in the implementation of the European and national resettlement schemes, including operational support.
2	Develop training, practical tools and data collection.
3	Organise practical cooperation meetings with Member State experts and other relevant stakeholders on resettlement and legal pathways to protection.
4	Deliver where appropriate targeted operational support to assist Member States in fulfilling resettlement obligations

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of Member States supported.	2	4	6
2	Number of practical and data collection tools developed and adapted.	N.A.	2	1
3	Number of practical cooperation meetings on resettlement and legal pathways to protection organised with relevant stakeholders.	2	1	2
4	Feasibility Studies into direct operational support completed and conclusions actioned or implemented	0	1	1

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Support to the implementation of the Union Resettlement Framework including through piloting sharing of infrastructure between Member States and ensuring of quality services (project to implement the resettlement facility in Turkey is subject to approval by the Management Board).
Expected results in 2019	- Enhanced technical cooperation among Member Statesin the field of resettlement. - Facilitated sharing of infrastructure among Member States. - Cooperation with third countries and relevant international organisations in the area of resettlement[34].

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of activities aimed at assisting Member States in the implementation of their commitments under the Union Resettlement Framework.	2017: N.A.	2	Operational/ administrative records
Level of satisfaction of Member States involved in the above activities.	2017: N.A.	80%	Operational/ administrative records and surveys

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[34] Based on the draft Regulation establishing the Union Resettlement Framework.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of activities aimed at enhancing technical cooperation among Member States under the Union Resettlement Framework.	2017: N.A.	2	Operational/ administrative records
Level of satisfaction of Member States involved in the above activities.	2017: N.A.	80%	Operational/ administrative records and surveys
Number of activities aimed at facilitating the sharing of infrastructure and cooperation with third countries	2017: N.A.	1	Operational/ administrative records
Level of satisfaction of the Member States involved in the above activities.		80%	Operational/ administrative records and surveys

Main outputs/actions	When
Offer bilateral support to Member States resettling under the Union Resettlement Framework.	Q1-Q4
Enhance technical cooperation among Member States on specific topics of interest to Member States.	Q1-Q4
Facilitate sharing of resettlement infrastructures in selected third countries.	Q1-Q4
Cooperate with third countries and relevant international organisations in the area of resettlement.	Q1-Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 2	Support the implementation of the Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme (VHAS) with Turkey.
Expected results in 2019	- Member States' planning for the implementation of VHAS is supported. - When relevant, assessment of cases by Member States is supported. - Cooperation and coordination between Member States with regard to pre-departure and departure is supported when requested. - Cooperation with UNHCR is established in matching cases with the participating countries.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of activities aimed at supporting Member States' planning for the VHAS.	2017: N.A.	2	Operational/ administrative records
Number of activities aimed at supporting Member States' assessment of cases.	2017: N.A.	1	Operational/ administrative records
Number of activities aimed at supporting cooperation and coordination between Member States with regard to pre-departure and departure.	2017: N.A.	1	Operational/ administrative records
Number of activities aimed at cooperating with UNHCR in matching cases with the participating countries.	2017: N.A.	1	Operational/ administrative records

Main outputs/actions	When
Support Member States in planning for implementation of VHAS.	Q1-Q4
Support Member States' assessment of cases.	Q1-Q4
Support, upon request, cooperation and coordination between Member States with regard to pre-departure and departure.	Q1-Q4
Cooperate with UNHCR in matching cases with participating countries.	Q1-Q4

4   Operational Support & Tools, Monitoring & Evaluation of Operations, Operational Training & Quality Support to Operations

4.1. Operational Support and Operational Tools

The Agency's operational and technical assistance to Member States is governed by **operating plans**, agreed upon by the Agency and the host Member State. Support to third countries is agreed in **working arrangements**.

The drafting of an operating plan can be initiated at the request of a Member State, with the agreement of the Member State concerned. The plan sets out in detail the conditions for the provision of the operational and technical assistance and the deployment of asylum support teams. The participating Member States, where necessary, are consulted during the drafting process.

In Member States where UNHCR is operational and has the capacity to contribute to the request for operational and technical assistance, the Agency coordinates with UNHCR as regards the implementation of the operating plan, where appropriate, and upon agreement of the Member State concerned.

The Agency aims to **continually improve the planning of operational support** and will further refine its working methodologies for drafting of operating plans and working arrangeemnts and roadmaps. The plans will be based on thorough defined needs assessments and full-cycle project management, implementation and M & E methodology, in full consultation with the participating Member States and concerned stakeholders. EASO will further develop robust financial planning methodologies in terms of budgeting and contingency budgeting and financial management building on the existing knowledge, experience gained and lessons learned. EASO will look into creating synergies with other tools and/or capabilities within EASO to ensure the most efficient use of resources and outputs.

EASO will continue to build on its ability to rapidly provide support to Member States, in particular in situations of disproportionate pressure on their asylum and reception systems**. Operational contingency planning and preparedness** will be further developed to rapidly adapt its support to the needs of Member States that may emerge due to changed migratory routes.

EASO will make use of and **further develop or refine tools to implement its operational activities**. The Agency will continue to maintain an open channel of communication with the NCPs on all matters pertaining to experts deployed in operational support activities, and provide assistance on all issues relating to their deployment. The Agency will further develop the EASO Asylum Intervention and Reserve Pool System (EAIPS) to ensure the quality and coherence of deliverables in operational support, management and monitoring of deployments in a coherent manner.

EASO will also build capacity in respect of support tools that will enhance EASO support for reception, registration, resettlement and asylum systems and related planning and coordination systems that can assist Member States. In order to have access to wider **interpretation,** the Agency will continue to support EU+ countries in having easy access to all available languages for interpretation in the other EU+ countries through the **List of Available Languages** (LAL). The Agency will monitor the use of the LAL by EU+ countries and, depending on the outcome of the identification of tools, will work on technical solutions for EU+ countries to facilitate use of the LAL.

In implementing the abovementioned activities, EASO will build on its expertise in all areas of intervention and cooperate with other relevant JHA agencies, as appropriate.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA01, MA02
Budget line and allocated amount	3301 Operational support: **EUR 741 374**
Allocated human resources	**3.5 AD, 2 AST, 1 CA**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Plan, monitor, review and update operational and technical activities to ensure efficient use of budget and resources, as well as timely availability of goods, services and logistical support.

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
2	Organise practical cooperation meetings related to operational support, including with the NCP network in the EU+ countries.
3	Maintain country-specific information platforms for EASO operations created within the Information and Documentation System (IDS).
4	Deliver EASO EAIPS as an end to end deployment management system
5	Develop required tools to implement its operational activities
6	Review, update and monitor the LAL for interpretation services.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual 2017	Actual 2018 (est.)	Forecast 2019
1	Planning-monitoring reports on operational and technical activities.	N.A.	12	12
2	Number of practical cooperation meetings organised, including meetings with the NCP network in the EU+ countries.	2	2	2
2	Number of NCP network participants per meeting.	34	38	37
2	Level of satisfaction of NCP network participants.	90%	80%	80%
3	Percentage of experts having access to operational platforms developed to support information sharing with deployed experts within the IDS.	60%	100%	100%
4	EAIPS deployed as end to end deployment management tool	N.A.	50%	100%
5	Relevant Horizontal Tools developed and implemented	N.A.	1	2
6	Percentage of Member States providing updated information for maintenance of LAL.	20%	50%	50%

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Operating plans are established through a consultative process based on a robust and reliable needs assessment, full-cycle project management, implementation and M & E methodologies in a timely manner.
Expected results in 2019	- Enhanced needs assessments as basis for the drafting of operating plans. - All plans developed and implemented using Operations Unit validated project management methodology. Enhanced consultative process when establishing operating plans and communication of the long term needs with participating Member States. - Legal deadlines for new plans are met or existing plans are extended without delays or interruptions.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Project management methodology developed and validated as Operations Unit framework for all plans.	2017: 1	3	Finalised templates and methodologies
Percentage of new or amended operating plans that make use of the new project management templates/methodologies.	2017: N.A.	100%	Review of the established operating plans and supporting documents

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Percentage of new or amended operating plans that include the needs for specific support tools.	2017: N.A.	100%	Review of the established operating plans and supporting documents
Percentage of new or amended working instructions and roadmaps that make use of the new project management templates/methodologies.	2017: N.A.	50%	Review of the established working instructions and roadmaps and supporting documents
Framework developed for the provision of operational contingency planning for Member States.	2017: N.A.	50%	Internal draft developed on operational contingency planning

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Review and further develop the validated methodology for needs assessments in Member States prior to the agreement on an operating plan or the formulation of recommendations.	Q1-Q4
Develop and validate the comprehensive project management methodology as contained in the EASO Operations Manual.	Q1-Q4
Provide a framework for support on operational contingency planning to Member States on request.	Q1-Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 2	Enhance the deployment of experts to asylum support teams, in close collaboration with the NCPs.
Expected results in 2019	- EASO and Member State capability for deployment to asylum support teams enhanced. - Improved practical tool for the deployment of experts to provide operational support. - Improved monitoring of the deployment and reimbursement of experts for the asylum support teams.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Deployment of experts to asylum support teams meets the needs on the ground.	2017: N.A.	100%	Deployment records
Agreed EAIPS functionalities developed and tested.	2017: Version 1 developed	All agreed new functionalities developed and tested	Project documentation
Degree of satisfaction of EU+ countries with the EAIPS.	2017: N.A.	80%	Satisfaction survey

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Asylum Intervention Pool	
Further develop EASO's capacity to plan deployment of experts as part of the asylum support teams, in close collaboration with the NCPs.	Q1 – Q4
Complete the development of the EAIPS tool as an end to end deployment management tool.	Q1–Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 3	Deliver required additional horizontal support tools to ensure that EASO provides optimal support to Member States
Expected results in 2019	- Studies completed into requirements for horizontal tools - Practical tools designed and developed for enhanced operational support.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Studies completed into horizontal tool requirements	2017: N.A.	4	Studies produced
Horizontal Tools developed and tested	2017: N.A.	2	Products designed and implemented in operational support

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Horizontal Tools studies/business cases completed	Q1, Q2
Horizontal Tools designed and implemented in existing operations	Q1 – Q4
Complete the development of the EAIPS tool as an end to end deployment management tool	Q1–Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 4	Enhance the access of all Member States to interpretation services across the EU.
Expected results in 2019	- Partial delivery of a tool or pilot services to facilitate interpretation services across the EU, depending on the outcome of the solution identification exercise.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Business requirements for technical solution or pilot project on remote interpretation	2017: N.A.	Completed and agreed.	Internal records

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Work on implementing a technical solution or remote interpretation pilot for increased use of the LAL.	Q1-Q4

4.2. Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of Operations

EASO continues to evaluate activities that have been implemented to assess their impact and identify the lessons learned. The Agency will further enhance its capacity to **monitor the progress and correct implementation of operational activities**, conduct mid-term reviews, as necessary, and final evaluation of operating plans and working arrangements with third countries, in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its operational activities and consolidate lessons learned from implemented activities into the planning process.

Whenever internal monitoring activities indicate that operating plans are not being adequately implemented, a report will be made to the Executive Director. Moreover, if the conditions for carrying out the operational and technical measures are no longer fulfilled or if the operating plan is not

respected by the host Member State the Executive Director shall, after informing the host Member State, suspend or terminate, in whole or in part, the deployment of the asylum support teams.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA01, MA02
Budget line and allocated amount	3301 Operational support: **EUR 190 000**
Allocated human resources	**7 AD, 4 CA**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Monitor and report on the progress and correct implementation of operating plans and working arrangements with third countries.
2	Conduct mid-term reviews and evaluations of operating plans and working arrangements with third countries.
3	Carry out comprehensive comparative analysis of the results of evaluations performed in 2018 and report in the annual report on the situation of asylum in the Union.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual 2017	Actual 2018 (est.)	Forecast 2019
1	Percentage of planned monthly monitoring reports completed.	N.A.	100%	100%
1	Percentage of operating plans not requiring an Executive Director decision to suspend or terminate, in part or in whole, deployment of asylum support teams.	N.A.	< 25%	< 25%
2	Percentage of operating plans and working arrangements expiring before the end of 2019 for which a due mid-term review and/or final evaluation has been completed / will be completed.	100%	100%	100%
2	Percentage of evaluations completed on time.	0%	66%	100%
2	Percentage of expired operating plans and working arrangements for which lessons learned are identified.	100%	100%	100%
2	Percentage of operating plan and working arrangement evaluations with a satisfactory outcome, i.e. fully delivered and achieve the stated objectives.	0%	100%	100%
3	Comprehensive comparative analysis of 2018 operating plan evaluations completed	N.A.	On time	On time

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Ensure a robust monitoring and evaluation system that contributes to the delivery and effectiveness of EASO's operations and activities in the Member States and in the external dimension.
Expected results in 2019	- A monitoring and evaluation system that is adapted to further enhance its effectiveness.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Monitoring & evaluation chapters of Operational Manual developed, validated and implemented.	2017: N.A.	100%	Review outcomes; quarterly.
Monitoring & Evaluation methodology reviewed.	2017: N.A.	Review completed.	Review outcomes; year end.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Relevant Chapters of Operational Manual.	Q1–Q4
Continuous Review and updating of the methodology for monthly monitoring and mid-terms and final evaluations of operations to improve its effectiveness.	Q1–Q4

4.3. Operational Training

EASO operational training will be further consolidated and updated in order to reflect the scope of the Agency's involvement in supporting national asylum authorities benefiting from an Operating Plan.

EASO will also continue to further consolidate and deliver structured and formalised **operational induction training** for Member States experts, as well as interim staff involved in the Agency's operations. This training is delivered upon deployment and is aiming at introducing the experts to the national context and specific tasks and responsibilities they will be performing on the ground. Furthermore, the development of other types of trainings such as e.g. webinars might be considered.

Moreover, EASO will continue to provide **operational thematic training** based on the profiles of the experts tasks to be undertaken and their specific training needs. Such training is carefully tailored for different categories of experts that EASO deploys, to ensure that they correspond well to the needs whilst maintaining the highest possible quality standards. This will include training for interpreters and cultural mediators to ensure that interpretation during applicant's registration and personal interviews is performed professionally and in a harmonised manner. Operational thematic training will also be delivered, upon request, to the local authorities in charge of various steps of the asylum process, such as registration of the application for international protection, Dublin procedure, reception, and collection of country of origin information. EASO will continue delivering on-job coaching to targeted audiences in order to further assist in the transfer of knowledge and skills into responsibility and autonomy in their day-to-day job.

The Agency will start developing structured and formalised online **pre-deployment training** for Member States' experts in preparation for possible future deployment. Initially the pre-deployment training will be developed for the profile of asylum case officers and the development of pre-deployment training for other profiles will follow, depending to large extent on new tasks that will be assigned to EUAA. The aim will be to ensure that nominated experts receive a specialised training upon nomination to the Asylum Intervention Pool and prior to their actual deployment

EASO will strengthen its training need assessment in the framework of the operational training and will established a comprehensive need assessment methodology, which should feed into need assessment and preparations of the operating plans.

The Agency will also consider the need to translate related training material in the national languages of Member States, where the operational training is delivered, for the sake of efficiency and sustainability.

EASO will also continue, in cooperation with EBCG and Europol, development of a joint training for members of the Migration Management Support Teams (MMSTs).

Link to multiannual objectives	MA01, MA06, MA07
Budget line and allocated amount	3201 Training: **EUR 500 000**
Allocated human resources	**11 AD, 0.5 AST, 1 SNE**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Develop a comprehensive need assessment methodology for operational training.
2	Review operational induction training for deployed Member State experts and interim staff, in the framework of the Agency's operations, and further develop operational thematic training based on the outcome of needs assessments on the ground.

3	Deliver and evaluate operational induction training for deployed Member State experts and interim staff, as well as operational thematic training for various target groups involved in EASO operation, such as interpreters, cultural mediators, registration officers, Dublin officers and reception officers.
4	Provide on-the-job coaching for deployed Member State experts/officials, as well as interim caseworkers.
5	Assist national authorities in training their own staff.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Comprehensive need assessment methodology for operational training developed.	N.A.	N/A	YES
2	Number of training programmes/courses developed and/or reviewed.	5	5	3
3	Number of operational training sessions delivered.	N.A.	160	80
3	Number of trainers's deployments in training activities in operations, including EASO in-house trainers.	20	36	30
3	Number of participants trained.	1,513	1,500	1,000
3	Percentage participant satisfaction.	N.A.	80%	80%
4	Number of on-the-job coaching sessions conducted.	N.A.	N.A.	20
4	Number of participants at the on-the-job coaching sessions.	N.A.	N.A.	150
4	Percentage of participants' satisfaction form on the job coaching session.	N.A	N.A	80%
5	Number of representatives of national authorities receiving emergency and/or special support participating in EASO trainings.	N.A.	N.A.	180

4.4. Quality Support to Operations

EASO will strengthen the quality of the work of the asylum support teams through the provision of second line quality support. This quality support to operations aims at ensuring consistency of the work carried out by the asylum support teams with the EASO guidance and tools developed to support the implementation of the Common European Asylum System.

The quality support to operations includes the development of standard operating procedures, templates, guidance, information and ad hoc practical tools for the asylum support teams**.** It also includes a query system for deployed experts, where answers to the questions cannot be formulated locally.

In operations where asylum support teams conduct personal interviews and/or drafts opinions on the first instance the second line support may also consists of the quality review of a selected number of interviews and/or opinions. Feedback based on this quality review can be provided on an individual level, using the EASO Quality Assurance Tool, or through a synthesis report that is shared with all the members of the asylum support team.

Particular attention is given to the identification of vulnerable persons in the EASO operations, including the vulnerability assessments, the provision of adequate procedural guarantees and the necessary referral mechanisms.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA01, MA07
Budget line and allocated amount	3202 Asylum processes: **EUR 100 000**
Allocated human resources	**2 AD, 0.5 AST, 2 SNE**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Improve and develop procedures, tools and practices for the enhanced implementation of EASO operations, the hotspot approach and relocation procedures.
2	Quality management support through the regular monitoring and assessment of the quality of outputs of deployed experts.
3	Organise practical support activities and meetings in relation to vulnerable applicants to support Member State officials in relation to the hotspot approach and relocation.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of new tools developed or existing tools refined.	4	4	4
2	Number of reviewed acts.	100	100	120
2	Number of quality reports produced.	10	10	12
3	Number of support activities in relation to identification and adequate procedural guarantees for vulnerable applicants.	3	4	6

5 Information, analysis and knowledge development

5.1. Country of Origin Information (COI)

In preparation for the new EUAA Regulation, the Agency shall be a centre for gathering relevant, reliable, accurate and up-to-date information on countries of origin, including information on existence and functioning of child protection systems and targeted information on persons belonging to vulnerable groups. It shall draw up and regularly update reports and other products providing for COI, taking into account information from a wide variety of sources.

EASO aims to **develop a comprehensive EU COI system**, raising and harmonising standards of COI together with EU+ countries and other key stakeholders.

In line with the Council Conclusions of 21 April 2016, EASO COI production will need to be significantly boosted to be able to produce the factual basis on which guidance can be developed.

The Agency will further explore the use of analytical methodologies in the field of COI and will continue to develop or update research methodologies, common formats, practical guides, and/or other products on topics requiring advanced expertise, such as specific information on children and the existence and functioning of child protection systems, or on other persons belonging to vulnerable groups, or regarding possible tools used for COI research, such as online research tools and fact-finding missions. In addition, EASO will continue organising expert meetings, workshops and conferences, involving also external experts, aimed at sharing and generating knowledge on third countries as well as strengthening COI research capacity.

EASO's role as a clearing house of national COI will be strengthened as requested in the European Agenda on Migration. In practice, this role can be improved by effectively sharing national production plans on a dedicated platform, increasing the 'Europeanisation' of selected national COI products through the Agency's reviewing mechanisms, and boosting the joint production of EASO COI products. To this end the creation and sharing of COI will be further rationalised and harmonised via the Network Approach adopted by EASO. The Agency will, via specialist networks, accurately map needs for COI at EU level and help to fill gaps and avoid duplication. The COI network will also contribute to a COI query system.

In order to increase the access to COI for relevant stakeholders, EASO will continue to develop the COI Portal and related tools and platforms, which will be connected to other EASO asylum information systems.

The Agency will also provide the Commission with factual information relevant for the designation of Safe Countries of Origin and Safe Third Countries, as needed.

EASO will continue and intensify the transfer of key aspects of the MedCOI project, providing COI on the availability and accessibility of medical treatment together with the necessary quality assurance activities. The transfer of MedCOI will be done in accordance with the action plan established in consultation with Member States and adopted by the Management Board, and detailing the conditions for and method of transfer as well as the transfer timeline for each MedCOI activity.

Cooperation with civil society experts in the field of COI will be strengthened. More specifically, EASO intends to invite civil society organisations to a number of COI-related meetings, workshops and conferences, and will continue to involve external experts as speakers and panel members. Civil society actors specialised in the field of COI will be consulted on methodologies and may, where needed, be invited to contribute to EASO COI production as drafters or reviewers. In addition, regular informal consultation sessions will be organised with civil society actors in the field of COI.

Finally, the Agency will continue to provide COI support to the Agency's operations in frontline Member States as well as in third countries in the framework of the external dimension activities.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA03
Budget line and allocated amount	3103 Country of Origin Information: **EUR 1 390 000**
Allocated human resources	**15 AD, 6 AST, 3 CA, 1 SNE**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Produce COI reports and other products.
2	Update and/or further develop COI methodologies, as needed.
3	Manage COI networks.
4	Organise COI-related workshops, meetings and conferences.
5	Manage COI query system(s).
6	Manage the COI Portal.
7	Guarantee an efficient use of COI in its own operations as a best practice in the decision-making process.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of COI reports and other products produced/updated.	19	18	18
2	Number of COI methodologies/guides developed or updated.	1	1	1
3	Number of COI networks managed.	10	10	10
4	Number of COI-related workshops, meetings and conferences organised (including in the framework of operational support).	24	20	18
4	Level of satisfaction of participants.	t.b.a.	80%	80%
5	Number of queries processed (including in the framework of operational support).	59	30	Up to 100
6	Number of COI Portal visits.	31,576	t.b.a.	45,000

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Implement the transfer of the relevant parts of MedCOI to EASO.
Expected results in 2019	- Implementation of ICT project for As-Is migration and development of ICT project for re-engineering. - EASO producing factsheets and undertaking a MedCOI fact-finding mission. - EASO processing individual requests. - Online training rolled out.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of MedCOI factsheets produced.	2017: N.A.	4	EASO reports.
Number of queries processed.	2017: N.A.	600	Database statistics.
Number of validations of individual query responses.	2017: N.A.	40	Independent external cross-checks.
Level of satisfaction with query responses.		High level of satisfaction	User surveys.
Number of plenary/network/ steering group MedCOI meetings held.	2017: 2	3	Internal records, progress reports.
Number of Member State representatives trained using online module.	2017: N.A.	30	Training statistics.
Number of MedCOI fact-finding missions held.	2017: N.A.	1	Mission reports.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Produce MedCOI country factsheets.	Q1-Q4
Provide responses to individual requests.	Q1-Q4
Externally validate the quality of responses.	Q1-Q4
Perform end user survey.	Q1-Q4
Organise MedCOI-related plenary, network and steering group meetings.	Q2, Q4
Deliver online training module.	Q3
Conduct MedCOI fact-finding missions.	Q1-Q4
Complete EASO hosting of MedCOI database and portal.	Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 2	Enhancing information gathering from original sources by way of fact-finding missions to expand the source base.
Expected results in 2019	- Fact-finding missions to selected countries of origin conducted. - Network of contacts for the gathering of information.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of fact-finding missions held.	2017: N.A.	3	Mission reports.
Number of EASO COI products incorporating interview findings.	2017: N.A.	3	Internal records.
Number of local interlocutors met during missions.	2017: N.A.	30	Meeting and interview reports.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Conduct COI fact-finding missions.	Q1-Q4
Incorporate interview findings into reporting.	Q1-Q4
Establish a network of local interlocutors for the gathering of information.	Q1-Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 3	Provide information relevant for safe country designation.
Expected results in 2019	- Information delivered to Commission upon request.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Timeliness of information provision on relevant third countries to the Commission.	2017: N.A.	100%	EASO internal records and reports.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Deliver information relevant for safe country designation to the Commission upon request.	Q1-Q4

5.2. Country guidance for convergence

Recognition rate data provides evidence that recognition rates may vary considerably from Member State to Member State but also that there may be legitimate reasons for such national differences. A mapping of Member States' policy-making procedures revealed significant differences across Member States in the creation of policy and the use of COI in decision-making.

Based on the outcomes of the convergence exercise mandated by the Council Conclusions of 21 April 2016, EASO is to foster convergence in applying assessment criteria by coordinating efforts among Member States to engage in and develop a common analysis providing guidance in the situation in specific countries of origin.

The common analysis and resulting guidance notes should be kept under constant review, and updated to the extent necessary.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA03
Budget line and allocated amount	3103 Country of Origin Information: **EUR 170 000**
Allocated human resources	**2 AD, 2 AST**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Produce common analysis and guidance notes as a result of coordinated efforts among Member States.
2	Further develop and refine a methodology for the production, revision and updating of country guidance, including standard templates and formats.
3	Set up and coordinate Country Guidance Networks and drafting teams per third country on which guidance is produced.
4	Organise meetings and workshops for the networks and drafting teams.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	**2018 (est.)**	**2019**
1	Number of countries on which common analysis and guidance notes are produced, updated or reviewed, and endorsed.	N.A.	2	3
1	Time needed to reach sufficient level of acceptance needed for the guidance to be endorsed.	N.A.	1.5 years	8-12 months

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
2	Number of revisions or updating of methodology, as required.	1	1	1
3	Number of networks and drafting teams set up.	1	2	3
4	Number of network meetings organised.	2	4	5
4	Number of drafting team meetings organised.	7	10	12
4	Level of satisfaction with the network meetings.	N.A.	80%	80%

5.3. EASO Data Hub

The EASO Data Hub aims to unite data and information on

(i)   flows of asylum seekers to the EU (Frontex and MSs),
(ii) key elements of functioning of the CEAS (Eurostat and EPS data),
(iii) EASO research data (surveys and big data), and
(iv) support provided by EASO's operational activities.

These data are standardized, summarised and then visualised to produce data-driven products to illustrate various elements of asylum situation. In line with the data dissemination guidelines, these electronic visualisations will be bespoke for internal (i.e. EASO management, EASO analysts and the EASO Data Hub) and external (i.e. limited and public) stakeholders.

To this end, the Data Hub manages and oversees all situational data and information collected by and shared with the EASO. Fundamental to this work is the EPS Network, in which all EU+ counties standardise data into agreed indicators and exchange information on the key aspects of the CEAS. The EPS feeds into the early warning, preparedness and crisis management mechanism provided for in Article 33 of the Dublin III Regulation. With the aim of becoming a key component of the asylum and reception monitoring systems, the Agency will continue to ensure the development of the EPS, in cooperation with Eurostat and Frontex. This will be done through the reinforcement or addition of new forms of data exchange, in view of establishing effective monitoring of all key aspects of the revised CEAS. In line with the proposal for the new Dublin Regulation[35], the Agency will also oversee the exchange and validation of information on third-country nationals effectively resettled on a weekly basis.

The Agency ensures that activities related to the EASO Data Hub, including the research programme on early warning and root causes, are closely coordinated with other relevant actors in the area of data collection and forecasting. To the extent that personal data is involved in activities related to the such activities (if applicable), the Agency ensures that processing of such data complies fully with applicable EU legislation on the processing of personal data, and respects the limits of its legal basis for processing of such data.

To further contribute to an **effective situational picture on asylum-related migration**, the Data Hub will, in collaboration with relevant EU agencies, international organisations, and third countries, explore possibilities to gather and manage additional information, both quantitative and qualitative, on the migratory situation in third countries insofar as this may have an impact on the Union. For these analyses, data and information from a wide variety of sources will be managed by the Data Hub, including – besides statistical information – country of origin information and intelligence reports.

The Agency ensures that activities related to the EASO Data Hub are therefore closely coordinated with other relevant actors in the area of data collection and forecasting. There is a strong cooperation between different actors in the field of data, analysis and research, and EASO actively strives to seek complementarity and achieve synergies with e.g. ECBG, Eurostat, Commission, KCMD, EMN, JRC,

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[35]   Article 22(3) in the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person (recast). COM(2016) 270 final, 04.05.2016.

UNHCR, IOM, etc. This covers participation in meetings organised by different actors on a wide range of related topics, but also increasingly joint initiatives.

To improve EASO's response preparation and planning, the Data Hub will **further develop the exchange, processing and analysis** of information relating to support provided by Agency's operational activities, which will generate necessary inputs for planning and evaluation of the operations. In this field, cooperation with other EU agencies involved in EASO operations will facilitate the exchange of strategic and operational information on migratory movements and ensure a higher level of consistency of the situational picture.

To ensure the coherence and comparability of the information shared with the Agency, a dedicated quality and capacity-building project will be implemented, including visits to Member States, advisory group meetings, and joint training, with the aim of improving Member States' national data collection on asylum.

To reflect the extended scope of the shared information, the portfolio of data summaries and visualisations produced by the Data Hub will be expanded to cover flows of asylum related migration, key aspects of the CEAS, the EASO research activities and the Agency's operational activities. In addition, the range of stakeholders will also be expanded to include internal stakeholders such as EASO staff in the headquarters and coordinators in the operational areas, Member States and Management Board Members, and the general public via the EASO website. Importantly, to support informed decision making, a wide range of special electronic products combining data from research, operational, strategic sources with Big Data, will be designed for presentation and visualisation in the EASO Data Hub.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA05
Budget line and allocated amount	3102 Data analysis and research: **EUR 125 000**
Allocated human resources	**4 AD, 1 AST, 3 CA, 2 SNE**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Oversee and develop the EPS data exchange on key aspects of the CEAS.
2	Oversee and develop data exchange on the asylum situation with other agencies and international organisations in the field of asylum-related migration.
3	Oversee and develop data exchange on the asylum situation with third countries of origin and transit.
4	Manage and develop a portfolio of products, digital and otherwise, to summarise and visualise the migration-related situational picture to stakeholders.
5	Manage and develop a portfolio of products, digital and otherwise, to summarise and visualise data and information to illustrate key aspects of the CEAS.
6	Manage and develop a portfolio of products, digital and otherwise, to plan and evaluate support provided by EASO operations.
7	Organise EPS network meetings.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of indicators from EPS Network managed.	14	17	21
2	New indicators exchanged from agencies and international organisations.	0	2	5
3	New indicators exchanged from third countries.	0	3	8
4	Products delivered to summarise and visualise the situational picture.	0	5	10
5	Products delivered to illustrate key aspects of the CEAS.	15	25	30
6	Products delivered to quantify efficacy of support provided by EASO operations.	4	10	20
7	Number of EPS network meetings held.	2	2	2

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Expand and reinforce the EPS information exchange to cover all key aspects of the CEAS, including for the purpose of the monitoring exercise.
Expected results in 2019	- Complete coverage of main aspects of the CEAS with the new EPS indicators. - Expanded and improved dissemination channels

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Percentage of indicators covered developed or brought in line with the new *acquis*.	2017: N.A.	70%	Review of implementation of data collection from Member States (at end of year).
Number of advisory group meetings held.	2017: 2	2	Internal records and reporting.
Use of analytical products.	2017: Qualitative and quantitative information included in reports.	Qualitative and quantitative information included in reports.	
Percentage satisfaction with analytical products.	2017: N.A.	80%	User satisfaction survey.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Gather regular data from EU+ countries according to EPS indicators (Stage II, III and IV of EPS).	Q1-Q4
Organise EPS advisory group meetings on specific aspects of the CEAS.	Q1-Q4
Perform data quality visits and analyse quality of deliverables.	Q1-Q4
Contribute to the production of EASO Annual report on the situation of asylum in the EU with the expanded data.	Q1-Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 2	Develop an effective data-driven situational picture of asylum-related migration to the EU, as well as the efficacy of EASO's operational activities.
Expected results in 2019	- Situational monitoring of asylum-related migration set up. - Improved quality and presentation of operational analytical products.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of products on situation of asylum flows to the EU.	2017: N.A.	10	Digital products updated with data exchanged by other agencies, international organisations and third countries, internal records.
Number of operational areas providing data and information.	2017: N.A.	4	Review of implementation of data collection (at end of year).
Frequency of reporting on EASO operations.	2017: Weekly	Bi-weekly	Internal reporting (at end of year).
Use of analytical products.	2017: Qualitative and quantitative	Qualitative and quantitative information	

Indicators			
	information included in reports.	included in reports.	
Percentage satisfaction with analytical products.	2017: N.A.	80%	User satisfaction survey.
Main outputs/actions in 2019			
Main outputs/actions			**When**
Produce products on efficacy of EASO operations.			Q1-Q4
Produce products on asylum related flows to the EU.			Q1-Q4
Produce weekly report on operational progress.			Q1-Q4
Produce monthly analytical products, including gap analysis.			Q1-Q4

5.4. Research programme on early warning and root causes

The EASO research programme aims to build an early warning and forecasting system and develop a deep understanding of the root causes of asylum-related migration to the EU+. Such a system will facilitate much improved preparedness in terms of allocating funds, planning resources and launching operational responses. The need for early warning has been emphasised in the European Agenda on Migration, which notes that "identifying risk trends is increasingly necessary for effective operational preparedness. (…) The relevant agencies should develop an effective situational picture to feed into policy-making and response preparation at national and European levels".

Firstly, as an effective early warning system, the research programme monitors the movements and motivations of vulnerable communities before they arrive in the European Union. Contracting experts to analyse internet use in third countries and exploiting of big data streams to monitor new events in near-to-real time, offers tremendous research opportunities to monitor the movement and behaviour of entire populations, and foresee the arrival of vulnerable communities to the EU. Results from this novel research may also feed into Country of Origin reports, which would benefit from real time information on the situation in third countries.

Secondly, the research programme oversees a large-scale survey project, which targets asylum seekers in reception centres in the EU in order to extract information such as push and pull factors, routes taken and final destinations. This will provide important first-hand operational information on migrant experiences and expectations, which can be used to better understand at the EU level the motivations behind specific types of asylum seekers. Although some small-scale surveys already take place in some countries, no system currently exists to examine the situation at the EU level. At the external border, Frontex oversees the debriefing of newly arrived migrants, and so an agreement has already been reached to coordinate efforts, to have common questions in both surveys, and to share selected results, which will create for the first time an integrated EU picture of migrant/asylum seeker experiences.

Finally, the research programme will tender to a private company or research consortium, a research contract on third countries of origin and transit, to exploit open sources and local knowledge networks, to produce Country Intelligence reports. In order to pool resources and increase inter-agency cooperation, this activity will be carried out in cooperation with Frontex, underpinned by the 2019 cooperation plan.

The research programme generates vast amounts of real-time information: event monitoring (conflict/demonstrations/drought/famine/terrorist attacks), internet use (searching for asylum/migration related topics), and daily survey results (push/pull factors, routes, final destinations). These data streams are managed by the Data Hub, where they are combined with asylum applications (EPS and third countries), irregular border crossings (Frontex), and migrant populations (IOM and UNHCR) to produce an enhanced understanding as well as operational and strategic forecasts. Such insights will be used to generate Research Products, digital and otherwise, and will contribute to early warning and understanding of root causes.

The research programme draws on a network of national experts that regularly meet within the EPS network to facilitate exchange of information and best practices between member states and it will

oversee the formation of a sub-network to improve the capacity of prognosis at the national level. The research programme builds on collaboration with and exploits expertise of other actors, such as the Joint Research Centre and the KCMD, GDISC Prognosis subnetwork, Frontex, Europol, FRA, DG Research, Eurostat, IOM, UNHCR, Member States' asylum authorities and several universities. These intimate cooperation initiatives ensure that there are no major overlaps with other research being conducted at the EU level.

The research programme is organised in three clusters. The first cluster was completed in 2016 and provided a necessary first step in gathering literature to better understand asylum-related migration. The second cluster involves a direct survey of asylum-seekers in EU reception centres to obtain direct information on migration, motivations and expectations. The third cluster involves the development of the EASO early warning and forecasting system based on internet use in third countries and big data media monitoring.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA05
Budget line and allocated amount	3102 Data analysis and research: **EUR 350 000**
Allocated human resources	**2.5 AD, 2 AST**

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	To build an early warning and forecasting system based on big data/internet use in third countries, and to better understand the root causes of asylum related migration by surveying asylum seekers in EU reception centres, and produce Country Intelligence Reports by contracting out open-source research.
Expected results in 2019	- Implement pilot phase of surveying asylum seekers in reception centres in order to generate large volumes of survey data on root causes - Implement early warning and forecasting system of asylum-related migration flows to the EU based on big data and internet use in third countries - Publication of an expanded range of joint EASO – Frontex Country Intelligence Reports highlighting the situation in relevant third countries - Publication of reports highlighting trends from the early warning and forecasting system

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of surveys conducted.	2017: N.A.	3,000	Monthly contacts with service providers; mid-year review of progress; reports.
Number of electronic products based on surveys.	2017: N.A.	10	Monthly contacts with service providers; mid-year review of progress; reports
Number of datasets based on big data and internet use.	2017: N.A.	15	Monthly contacts with service providers; mid-year review of progress; reports
Electronic products based on big data monitoring.	2017: N.A.	10	Monthly contacts with service providers; mid-year review of progress; reports
Number of Country Intelligence Reports produced.	2017: 25	2-3 per month	Progress reports.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Conduct the Pilot Phase of the survey of asylum seekers and products and provide update reports to the Management Board.	Q1-Q4

Produce early warning and forecasting tool and products.	Q1-Q4
Produce joint EASO – Frontex Country Intelligence Reports.	Q1-Q4

5.5. Strategic analysis

Strategic analysis at EASO is an outward-facing activity, concerned with combining datasets generated by the Data Hub (EPS, Frontex and third-country data) and data and products generated by the Research Programme (surveys of asylum seekers, and early warning and forecasting) in order to strategically analyse and convey the asylum situation to a wide range of external stakeholders.

The current portfolio of analytical products includes the weekly and monthly overviews of the asylum situation, the Analytical Brief produced for the JHA Council and the monthly newsletter published on the EASO website. Strategic analysis is concerned with producing not only regular updates but also deeper analyses in order to produce qualitative explanations for trends, scenarios in which different future plans are proposed with associated knock-on effects, long term forecasting for more efficient planning and preparedness, and recommendations for further work. Ideally, strategic products are rarely constrained with reporting periods nor are they exclusively data driven. Rather, strategic products communicate in easy to digest formats, trends that are corroborated by multiple sources of information. Strategic reports contain executive summaries, citations, maps, graphs and tables, inputs from other institutions, and also media clippings in order to develop arguments, visualise any phenomena, and explain reasoning.

Strategic analysis is performed by the EASO supported by the expertise of the Member States that participate in joint analyses in order to ensure that their own detailed and valuable perspectives are taken into account. Joint trainings are also organised in order to increase the quality of strategic analysis performed across EU+ countries.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA05
Budget line and allocated amount	3102 Data analysis and research: **EUR 65 000**
Allocated human resources	**3 AD, 2 AST**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Review and expand the portfolio of strategic analysis products.
2	Produce weekly, monthly and bi-monthly overviews of the asylum situation, and the Analytical Brief for the JHA Council within the portfolio of analytical products.

| Link to activity no | Core business indicators | Actual | | Forecast |
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of new targeted products in portfolio.	2	4	5
1	Number of advisory group meetings held.	2	2	2
2	Number of weekly overviews of the asylum situation produced.	50	50	50
2	Number of monthly overviews of the asylum situation produced.	12	12	12
2	Number of bi-monthly overviews of the asylum situation produced.	6	6	6
2	Number of Analytical Briefs produced for the JHA Council.	3	4	4
2	User satisfaction with analytical products.	N.A.	80%	80%

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Underpin the production of high quality strategic analysis products for a wide range of external stakeholders.
Expected results in 2019	- EASO analytical methodology/framework developed. - Product descriptions produced and processes mapped for each analysis.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of product descriptions produced.	2017: N.A.	10	Internal records, reports.
Number of analytical trainings provided for EASO staff and network members.	2017: N.A.	5	Internal records, reports.
Number of scenario workshops delivered for network members.	2017: N.A.	1	Internal records, reports.
Main outputs/actions in 2019			
Main outputs/actions			**When**
Develop and publish an analytical methodology for integration of information from multiple sources.			Q1-Q4
Produce and publish Internally product descriptions for integration of information from multiple sources.			Q1-Q4
Organise workshops and training for staff and Member States on analytical methods.			Q1-Q4

5.6. Information and Documentation System (IDS)

In line with its original concept and work done so far, EASO's IDS aims to provide a single point of comprehensive information on the organisation of EU+ countries' asylum and reception systems in terms of policies and practices, relevant legislation and jurisprudence, as well as an overview of the practical functioning of all key aspects of the CEAS. Information gathered in IDS is made available via an online platform accessible to EU+ countries' asylum administrations, and, subject to a Management Board decision, to EU institutions, agencies, international organisations and, ultimately, to civil society and the general public.

EU+ countries gain easy access to comprehensive information of interest to them, updated on a regular basis and meeting quality standards in referencing and sourcing. This will add value in the future, by contributing to a new systematic system for monitoring of the operational and technical application of the CEAS, as called for in the European Agenda on Migration, thus meeting the challenge of gaining a comprehensive, up-to-date and easily-consultable overview of the state of play of national asylum systems across EU+ countries and at EU+ level as such.

In 2019, information gathered in IDS, including its operational platforms, should form the basis for operational analyses to be provided on current challenges and areas of potential crises, allowing for enhanced planning of EASO operational activities in view of those outputs. Inclusion of information provided by a wide range of stakeholders will facilitate the activities of EASO as an Agency, ensuring full access to all relevant information by all staff members, enhancing coherency of approach and assisting in replying to external queries. In addition to validation and contribution to updating of information in IDS by the IDS Advisory Group, thematic activities will be held on specific themes and areas, in coordination with other relevant activities of EASO, allowing for a horizontal approach by the Agency. The information in IDS will continue to form the basis of the EASO annual report on the situation of asylum in the EU.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA04
Budget line and allocated amount	3101 Information and Documentation System and annual report: **EUR 110 000**
Allocated human resources	**4 AD, 3 AST, 1 CA, 1 SNE**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Collect relevant information about the implementation of the CEAS from all relevant sources in real time.
2	Compile and validate gathered information by cross-checking across sources, referencing and validation by relevant stakeholders, as needed.
3	Manage the platform, consisting both of publicly accessible parts and restricted areas, and fully integrate data visualisations, a repository of selected case law, references to legislation, and a EASO query system.
4	Produce analytical outputs describing the implementation of the CEAS for a better overview of the current situation, in line with EASO and EU+ countries information needs.
5	Publish relevant information and outputs in an attractive and user-friendly manner and promote them in the relevant fora.

| Link to activity no | Core business indicators | Actual | | Forecast |
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Percentage share of thematic pages in IDS maintained fully up to date.	t.b.a.	90%	100%
2	Percentage of thematic pages in IDS validated by EU+ countries.	t.b.a.	90%	100%
3	Volume of daily consultations of IDS pages and platforms.	t.b.a.	60	100
3	Number of queries processed.	t.b.a.	25	25
4	Number of analytical outputs finalised	N.A.	10	15
5	Number of events where use of the platform is promoted.	N.A.	7	10

5.7. Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU

EASO is required to draw up an annual report on the situation of asylum in the EU for adoption by the Management Board. As part of that report, the Agency makes a comprehensive comparative analysis with the aim of improving the quality, consistency and effectiveness of the CEAS.

The report is based on information obtained from EU+ countries as well as material available from UNHCR, civil society (including members of the Consultative Forum), JHA agencies and other relevant sources. Statistical data is derived from Eurostat, supplemented with relevant data collected by the Agency in the framework of the EPS, allowing for more insight into the functioning of the CEAS and better understanding of the challenges faced by EU+ countries. Input on relevant national jurisprudence is obtained from the EASO Network of Court and Tribunal Members. Information collected in the EASO IDS also feeds into the annual report.

The report serves the purpose of having objective information and evidence-based analysis on the situation of asylum, including reflecting relevant developments of key importance in the reference year.

The report is published electronically and in hard copy and is launched during a public event and is further promoted by EASO in relevant meetings and fora.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA04
Budget line and allocated amount	3101 Information and Documentation System and Annual Report: **EUR 30 000**
Allocated human resources	**1 AD, 2 AST**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Collect relevant information about the implementation of the CEAS from all relevant sources in real time.
2	Compile and validate gathered information by cross-checking across sources, referencing, and validation by relevant stakeholders, as needed.
3	Produce analytical annual report describing the implementation of the CEAS for a better overview of the current situation, in line with EASO and EU+ countries information needs.
4	Publish the annual report in an attractive and user-friendly format and promote it in relevant fora.

| Link to activity no | Core business indicators | Actual | | Forecast |
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Percentage of Member States, as well as UNHCR, providing input to the annual report according to the methodology and within agreed timeframes.	100%	100%	100%
1	Number of civil society organisations providing input to the annual report according to the methodology and within agreed timeframes.	20	20	20
2	Percentage of sources used in the annual report that are fully referenced and made publicly available, as needed (i.e. bibliography made available in report and civil society inputs made available on Consultative Forum website).	N.A.	100%	100%
3	Level of satisfaction with use, quality and added value of annual report.	High level	High level	High level

5.8. Further development of a central Asylum Information System

EASO has developed several asylum information systems on COI (COI Portal), information on the EU's asylum and reception systems (IDS) and the data hub (including EPS data), which are at different stages of maturity. The integration of these asylum information systems was initiated in 2017 and will be continued in 2019, with developments focusing on further improving the functionalities of the individual entities while creating additional interlinkages between the constituent parts of the Asylum Information System.

The central Asylum Information System will be instrumental in providing a 360° situational picture of asylum in the EU, with information covering the situation of countries of origin, asylum and reception systems in countries of destination, asylum flows and factors influencing the flows, and EASO's own operational response capacity and outputs.

In addition, the Asylum Information System will play an important role in supporting the monitoring of the CEAS, by providing key information on the implementation of the CEAS in individual Member States, by identifying information gaps, and by storing all relevant information collected during the monitoring exercise.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA05
Budget line and allocated amount	3102 Data analysis and research: **EUR 150 000**
Allocated human resources	**1 AST, 1 CA**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Further develop the COI Portal: country home pages with integrated data visualisations, interactive maps, and online reports, as well as collaborative network spaces, including an integrated query system.
2	Further develop the IDS platform (both public and restricted parts), fully integrating data visualisations, a query system, a repository of case law references, and analytical overview pages.
3	Further develop dashboards and other types of visualisations in the data hub, feeding also into the other asylum information systems, the situation centre and the EASO website.

| Link to activity no | Core business indicators | Actual | | Forecast |
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of COI Portal country homepages with integrated data.	N.A.	0	1
1	Number of COI Portal collaborative spaces with link to a query system.	N.A.	11	11
1	Number of networks and active users of collaborative spaces.	N.A.	1 network: up to 20 users	11 networks: up to 220 users
2	Number of consultations per day by EASO users, including deployed experts and interims, and by registered users and public users.	N.A.	100	200
3	Percentage of existing regular reporting (weekly, monthly, and bi-monthly) made available through interactive dashboards.	N.A.	80%	80%

6 Training

6.1. EASO Training Curriculum

EASO will continue to develop, review and maintain its Training Curriculum, in line with its adopted Training and Learning Strategy for members of relevant national administrations and national authorities responsible for asylum and reception matters and its own staff members. The Curriculum will continue to target officials having different profiles in the field of asylum and reception, including reception officers, registration officers, Dublin officers, COI researchers, and officials working with vulnerable applicants, managers and/or team leaders, officials working in resettlement operations as well as interpreters and cultural mediators.

EASO will be consolidating learning paths and training modules for the identified target audiences ensuring a 'learner centred approach' through the development of a European Sectoral Qualification Framework (ESQF). This common framework, will map occupational and educational standards to serve as a guide when designing training and learning material. This framework will maintain focus on the learner and what the learner should know and be able to do at the end of a learning sequence, and how this can be demonstrated.

EASO will ensure that the legislative and practical changes in the field of asylum are reflected in the Training Curriculum and, in this regard, all modules will be kept updated/upgraded based on its module life-cycle. EASO will be relying on its own internal resources, on Member States experts, as well as external experts, to manage this demanding task within the shortest time possible. In its work on new developments, updates or upgrades, EASO will work closely with Member States experts and where appropriate cooperate with the relevant JHA Agencies, training entities and academic institutions. In this regard, EASO will continue to engage the Training Reference Group in reviewing the content of the modules as a part of its quality assurance mechanism.

In preparation of the fully-fledged certification system, EASO will aim to explore possibilities to strengthen its train-the-trainer methodology by launching a pilot project aiming to provide **targeted** training material for trainers. This will ensure that potential trainers achieve the required standard, have a deeper understanding of the subject matter and are more equipped to facilitate training sessions. In particular, this pilot project will focus on two modules, which are already part of the Curriculum and currently being upgraded.

EASO is committed to continue its work with EU+ countries, particularly through its National Contact Points Network, Trainers' Network and the Certification and Accreditation Working Group. The Agency will consult national administrations to analyse training needs, and where required develop and implement general, thematic or ad hoc training activities including the possibility of on-the-job coaching. The Agency further aims to strengthen its National Contact Points Network and Trainer and Experts' network by communicating and disseminating information on a regular basis through a quarterly newsletter. The trainer and expert list will continue be updated annually in cooperation with the Training National Contact Points. Moreover, a National Contact Point meeting will be organised to discuss developments and needs in the area of reception and asylum and an annual Trainer's Network meeting will be organised to reinforce knowledge, skills and competencies of trainers and by providing a platform where exchange of good practices can take place.

EASO will also continue to support Member States to include the core parts of the curriculum in their national training programmes, and will be additionally supporting national administrations, whenever feasible, by providing national language versions of the modules. Furthermore, based on funds available and the agreed criteria, additional support to national administrations will be provided for the translation of other modules.

EASO will also continue to organise training for staff members and to use its training curriculum internally to enhance the knowledge development among its staff, notably on the key aspects of the Common European Asylum System.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA06
Budget line and allocated amount	3201 EASO training: **EUR 500 000**
Allocated human resources	**7 AD, 5 AST, 1 CA**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Review/update/upgrade the curriculum and development of new training modules
2	Deploy content and didactic experts to develop/upgrade/update training modules.
3	Organise meetings to support new developments as well as updates and upgrades.
4	Coordinate with the Reference Group and other JHA Agencies, where applicable, to review the training material developed, updated or upgraded.
5	Deploy trainers and didactic trainers to deliver training sessions.
6	Manage the organisation and delivery of an annual and regional train-the-trainers programme.
7	Support the organisation and delivery of national training sessions or national train-the-trainer session.
8	Support, upon request and where possible, the implementation of the curriculum by providing module language versions.
9	Faciliate the NCP and Trainers Network Pool
10	Organise and facilitate an annual Trainer's Network meeting.
11	Organise and facilitate a Training National Contact Point meeting.
12	Manage the organisation and delivery of an annual training programme for EASO staff members.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of training material developed or reviewed/updated/upgraded.	8	5	5
1	Percentage satisfaction with the pilot session of newly developments, updates or upgrades	80%	80%	80%
2	Number of deployed content and didactic experts for module development and updates/upgrades/review.	17 Member State experts; 7 external experts	15 Member State experts; 6 external experts	12 Member State experts; 6 external experts
3	Number of meetings organised to support developments or reviews/updates/upgrades.	28	22	30
4	Number of training modules (reviews, updates, upgrades or new developments) consulted by the members of the Reference Group and/or JHA Agenices	5	5	5
5	Number of deployed trainers and didactic trainers for train-the- trainer sessions (including regionally and nationally).	62	72	90
6	Number of annual train-the-trainers sessions organised by EASO (including regional and national)	32	34	35
6	Number of persons trained in annual train-the-trainers sessions organised directly by EASO (including regionally and nationally)	484	524	550
6	Average satisfaction rate of participants trained in annual and regional train-the-trainer sessions	72%	77%	80%
7	Number of national training sessions organised in EU+ and third countries	338	457	300
7	Number of participants trained in national training sessions organised in EU+ and third countries	5,144	7,104	5,000
8	Number of module language versions available on the learning platform.	103	125	150
9	Production and dissemination of a Newsletter	N.A.	N.A.	3
9	Annual update of the Trainers and Experts Pools	N.A.	N.A.	1
10	Number of trainers and content experts participating in the annual Trainers Network meeting.	25	25	27
10	Percentage satisfaction of the trainers and content experts participating in the annual Trainers Network meeting.	83%	N.A.	80%
11	Percentage satisfaction of participants in the annual National Contact Point meeting.	93%	80%	80%
12	Number of training sessions organised for EASO staff	2	2	4
12	Number of EASO staff participations in staff training sessions	N.A.	50	55

6.2. Certification and accreditation

In line with its' Training and Learning Strategy, EASO will engage, together with the involvement of Training National Contact Points and Member State working groups, particularly the Certification and Accreditation Working Group, in the development of a European Sectoral Qualification Framework (ESQF) for asylum and reception officials. This involves mapping occupational standards and matching them with relevant educational standards/learning outcomes. The ESQF will provide comprehensive guidance, on what asylum and reception officials should know and be able to do, in order to perform their duties and tasks, under a specified degree of responsibility and autonomy,

Committed to the highest standards of quality, efficiency and transparency, in the design and delivery of training sessions, EASO will map the processes for the future development of a Training Governance System based on the European common standards and guidelines for quality assurance in education and vocational training. EASO will duly take into consideration the EU education and training instruments, including the Bologna and Copenhagen principles and the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning.

The development of the ESQF as well as the establishment of a Training Governance System will further capacitate EASO to move towards the development of a common EU asylum certificate, based on and awarded upon a valid and reliable assessment according to agreed and transparent learning outcome-based standards. The EU asylum certificate will encompass knowledge, skills, and autonomy and responsibility -based learning outcomes in order to target the practical implementation of the CEAS at the work place. Basing this development on the findings and lessons learned from the pilot project concluded in end of 2018, EASO will throughout this year move towards preparing EASO for the establishment of a fully-fledged certification and accreditation of the European Asylum Curriculum based upon the evaluation of the initial pilot.

To further strengthen, the European perspective on asylum, EASO will explore the possibility of developing a certified and accredited Master's Degree programme for asylum officials, based on the outcome of the feasibility study.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA06
Budget line and allocated amount	3201 EASO training: **EUR 150 000**
Allocated human resources	**2 AD, 1 AST, 1 CA**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Facilitate CAWG group meetings aimed to give advice and guidance for the external certifier and accreditor on all aspects of quality assurance and on the development of a European Sectoral Qualification Framework for Asylum and Reception Officials
2	Finalise and validate occupational and educational standards for asylum officials for the purpose of a European sectoral qualification framework (ESQF) for Asylum and Reception officials
3	Explore the feasibility of a Training Need Assessment Tool based on the ESQF
4	Mapping of quality assurance mechanisms for the establishment of a Training Governance System
5	Facilitate the validation, fully-fledged certification and accreditation of the EASO Training Curriculum.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of meetings of the Certification and Accreditation Working Group.	3	2	6
1	Overall satisfaction of participants to the meeting.	N.A.	N.A.	80%

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
2, 3	Development of a European Sectoral Qualification Framework for Asylum and Reception Officials (ESQF)	N.A.	N.A.	Validation of the ESQF by at least 60% of Member States
4	Creation of a base-line for Quality Assurance in training and an action plan for the development of a Training Governance System (TGS)	N.A.	N.A.	Establishment of a base line for QA and an action plan for the development of a TGS

6.3. e-Learning and didactic support

EASO will continue to administer and manage an e-learning management system (LMS). EASO will be evaluating the existing LMS, which is the backbone of the EASO Training Curriculum and based on the this evaluation, the Agency will strengthen its future learning environment.

EASO also aims to map and support the processes and procedures required to develop a business model, which support the entire training cycle with the aim of automating and facilitating processes, monitoring of and reporting on training related activities in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679. This development will further support the implementation of a training governance system.

EASO will also continue to support LMS users on a daily basis, through the provision of services such as the user registration process and helpdesk services. EASO will conduct a business analysis to explore the possibilities of investing in a robust infrastructure to extend the course authoring services (building of the online courses) and provide the services of instructional designer for transforming the manuscripts (drafts) into e-learning courses. The infrastructure will also include the service of creation of educational multimedia content, such as the production of educational audio-visual material. EASO will continue to offer in-house expertise in the area of instructional design and delivery of training in the field of didactics.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA06
Budget line and allocated amount	3201 EASO training: **EUR 750 000**
Allocated human resources	**3 AD, 2 AST, 2 CA**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Manage the development and building of training modules on the LMS.
2	Support the registration process for LMS users.
3	Administer training sessions on the LMS.
4	Provide a daily user helpdesk service for LMS-related issues.
5	Provide statistical data and analysis and produce an annual training statistical report.
6	Evaluate the current LMS and identify the needs for the future learning environment.
7	Map the architecture for the business process supporting a training governance system.
8	Provide instructional design and delivery of training in the field of didactics.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of modules built on the LMS.	30	29	38
2	Number of registrations supported.	4,200	8,359	6,000

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
3	Number of train-the-trainer sessions administrated	27	34	30
3	Number of national training sessions administered	329	462	275
4	Number of helpdesk requests handled and resolved.	1,300	2,277	1,750
5	Publication of annual training report.	1	1	1
6	Evaluation meeting and report on the current use of the LMS	N.A.	N.A.	Yes
7	Report of the business process on the future infrastructure supporting a training governance system	N.A.	N.A.	Yes
8	Number of development/update/upgrade meetings including participation of the didactic expert	25	22	50

6.4. Other training support

EASO will upon request further analyse and address specific needs of the EU+ countries and other users, including third country administrations, and in cooperation with the appropriate national training entities, will assist in the design of a training plan and delivery of training programmes using the European Asylum Curriculum. In this regard, EASO is committed to coordinate the available internal and EU+ countries' resources and, if necessary, deploy trainers to deliver training sessions and/or to provide coaching to national trainers.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA06
Budget line and allocated amount	3201 EASO training: **EUR 50 000**
Allocated human resources	**1 AD, 1 AST, 1 CA**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Develop ad hoc training plans.
2	Organise ad hoc training sessions.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of ad hoc training plans developed.	3	3	3
2	Number of ad hoc training sessions organised.	5	5	8
2	Number of participants in ad hoc training sessions.	114	350	400
2	Percentage satisfaction of participants in ad hoc training sessions.	N.A.	80%	80%

7   Asylum support

7.1. Asylum processes

In accordance with its overall aim of supporting Member States in achieving common standards and high-quality processes within the CEAS, EASO will **further continue and enhance its practical cooperation activities** with a view to collecting and exchanging information on Member States' current practices and policies in relation to the CEAS.

In 2019 practical cooperation activities will continue to be undertaken to cover specific topics in relation to the implementation of the CEAS by Member States. During thematic meetings Member States' experts will discuss best practices and current challenges and share information and expertise.

In addition, based on identified needs and best practices, the Agency will continue to develop common operational standards and indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools in relation to

asylum processes. EASO operational standards and indicators provide a practical perspective on key provisions of the common legal instruments and thus help Member States to assess whether their national asylum and reception systems are set up and functioning in line with the CEAS.

In addition, EASO guidelines and common practical tools are meant to translate the requirements of the common legal instruments into user-friendly practical instruments to be used by Member States' officials across the EU and beyond in their daily work building on best practices. EASO guidelines and common practical tools also serve as reference point for the development of specific country guidance notes.

EASO will also actively promote and support the application of operational standards and indicators, guidelines and practical tools in national administrations and evaluate their implementation. Furthermore, the Agency will continue its support to quality management mechanisms at EU and national levels.

EASO will consider all relevant sources of information during this process and may, where necessary, consult relevant stakeholders, such as competent international organisations, particularly UNHCR, FRA, academia and civil society. Synergies will be maintained with the work of the Contact Committees organised by the European Commission.

To effectively support practical cooperation between EASO and Member States on all activities relevant to the work on asylum processes, the Agency will continue to facilitate the work of the EASO Asylum Processes Network.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA07
Budget line and allocated amount	3202 Asylum processes: **EUR 385 000**
Allocated human resources	**8 AD, 3 AST, 2 CA**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Support practical cooperation and exchange of best practice between Member States on asylum processes and selected aspects of the CEAS through the facilitation of the EASO Asylum Processes Network.
2	Collect and analyse information about Member State's practices and policies on selected aspects of the CEAS in order to identify related needs and best practices.
3	Contribute to the promotion of a correct and effective implementation of asylum processes throughout the EU by developing common practical tools and guidelines, including on operational standards and indicators, targeted at certain aspects of the CEAS.
4	Support Member States in the quality management of their national asylum processes.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of meetings of the EASO Asylum Processes Network organised.	1	1	1
1	Level of satisfaction with the meeting of the EASO Asylum Processes Network.	t.b.a.	80%	80%
2	Number of thematic meetings organised.	1	1	1
2	Level of satisfaction with the thematic meetings.	89.4%	80%	80%
2	Number of thematic reports prepared and published.	1	1	1
3	Number of operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools in relation to asylum processes developed and published.	2	2	2
3	Number of working group meetings organised in order to develop operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools	5	6	6

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
3	Number of activities and products developed to promote operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools in relation to asylum processes.	2	2	4
4	Number of quality management related activities organised.	1	1	1

7.2. Practical cooperation networks

EASO will further foster the exchange of information and best practices on reception systems, pool expertise and develop specific tools and guidance and enhance data collection in the field of reception within the framework of the CEAS through the facilitation of the EASO Network of Reception Authorities.

EASO will continue to **mainstream aspects related to vulnerable groups** in all activities to encourage policy coherence in this field, including in the context of operational support, training and other asylum support activities.

The Agency will continue to **encourage practical cooperation and information sharing** among EU+ countries and other relevant experts on issues relating to vulnerable applicants.

Practical cooperation activities will be undertaken to foster convergence in line with EU standards related to the identification and support afforded to **vulnerable applicants** in the asylum and reception systems of the Member States.

Operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical support tools, including in the context of operational support, will be developed to assist Member States in dealing with vulnerable applicants.

EASO will focus on vulnerable applicants such as children, including unaccompanied children, victims of trafficking in human beings, persons subjected to torture, serious psychological, physical and sexual violence and other cruel and inhuman treatment, persons at risk because of their gender, gender identity or sexual orientation and any other groups of applicants with special needs.

EASO will also continue its cooperation with the European Commission and other EU institutions, bodies and agencies, such as CEPOL, Europol, FRA and Frontex, as well as UNHCR and IOM, with regard to vulnerable applicants. In doing so, it will take into account the general work on child protection and the protection of the rights of the child developed, inter alia, by the European Commission in the 2017 Communication on the Protection of Children in Migration[36]. It will also take an active part in the cooperation between the European Commission and the Justice and Home Affairs Agencies in actions aimed at the eradication of trafficking in human beings.

EU+ countries are responsible for allocating adequate resources to increase the number of Dublin transfers and reduce delays related to these transfers. EU+ countries also need to consistently apply the legal clauses related to family reunification and make broader and more regular use of the discretionary clauses which would contribute relieve the pressure on the Member States with external borders.

In 2019, EASO will continue to enhance the activities of the **Dublin Network** and reinforce the cooperation, information-sharing and exchanges of best practices between the participating national Dublin Units. In particular, EASO will continue its cooperation with eu-LISA in making the use of Eurodac and related technical solutions more efficient for Member States as well as improving the quality of the information exchanged by facilitating practical cooperation on those aspects within the Dublin Network.

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[36] COM(2017) 211

Furthermore, the Agency will promote common standards and practices by developing operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools targeting specific aspects of the Dublin system.

In 2019, EASO will continue to enhance the activities of the **EASO Exclusion Network** and reinforce the cooperation, information-sharing and exchange of best practices on exclusion-related issues between the participating EU+ countries.

Moreover, EASO will further promote common standards and practices by developing operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools in relation to exclusion considerations.

Through the **Reception network**, EASO will foster the exchange of information and best practices on reception systems, pool expertise and develop specific tools and guidance and enhance data collection in the field of reception within the framework of the CEAS, in line with the European Agenda on Migration.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA07
Budget line and allocated amount	3202 Asylum processes: **EUR 1 200 000**
Allocated human resources	**10 AD, 3 AST, 3 CA, 1 SNE**

EASO Network on Vulnerable Groups

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Support practical cooperation and exchange of best practice between Member States in dealing with vulnerable applicants through the facilitation of the **EASO Network on Vulnerable Groups**.
2	Contribute to the identification and the provision of adequate support to **applicants with special needs** throughout the EU by developing common operational standards and indicators, practical tools, guidelines and best practices, taking into account the reform of the CEAS.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of NCP meetings of the EASO Network on Vulnerable Applicants organised.	N.A.	1	1
1	Number of annual conferences on children in asylum processes organised.	1	1	1
1	Number of annual conferences on trafficking in human beings organised.	1	1	1
1	Number of thematic expert meetings organised.	1	1	1
1	Level of satisfaction with the meetings.	86%	80%	80%
2	Number of operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools in relation to vulnerable applicants developed and published.	2	2	2
2	Number of working group meetings organised in order to develop operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools.	1	6	6
2	Number of activities and products developed to promote operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools in relation to vulnerable applicants.	N.A.	2	4

EASO Network of Dublin Units

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
4	Support practical cooperation and exchange of best practice between Member States on reception through the facilitation of the **EASO Network of Dublin Units**, including maintaining an online platform and sharing a periodic newsletter with members of the network.
5	Contribute to the promotion of correct and effective implementation of the **Dublin Regulation** throughout the EU+ by developing common operational standards and indicators, practical tools, guidelines and best practices.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
4	Number of Steering Group meetings of the EASO Network of Dublin Units organised.	2	2	2
4	Level of satisfaction with the NCP meetings of the EASO Network of Dublin Units.	93%	80%	80%
4	Number of thematic expert meetings organised.	2	2	2
4	Level of satisfaction with the thematic meetings.	95%	80%	80%
4	Number of periodic newsletters shared with members of the Network of Dublin Units.	4	4	4
4	Exchange programme on thematic topic regarding the implementation of the Dublin regulation.	n.a.	n.a.	1
4	Number of participants during the exchange programme.	n.a.	n.a.	6
5	Number of operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools in relation to the Dublin Regulation developed and published.	1	1	1
5	Number of working group meetings organised in order to develop operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools.	2	3	3
5	Number of activities and products developed to promote operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools in relation to the Dublin Regulation.	N.A.	2	4

EASO Network of Reception Authorities

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
7	Support practical cooperation and exchange of best practice between Member States on reception through the facilitation of the **EASO Network of Reception Authorities**, including maintaining an online platform and sharing a periodic newsletter with members of the network.
8	Contribute to the promotion of correct and effective implementation of **reception conditions** throughout the EU by developing common operational standards and indicators, practical tools, guidelines and best practices, taking into account the reform of the CEAS.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
7	Number of NCP meetings of the EASO Network of Reception Authorities organised.	2	2	2

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	**2018 (est.)**	**2019**
7	Level of satisfaction with the NCP meetings of the EASO Network of Reception Authorities.	89%	80%	80%
7	Number of thematic expert meetings organised.	2	2	2
7	Level of satisfaction with the thematic meetings.	N.A.	80%	80%
7	Number of periodic newsletters shared with members of the Network of reception authorities.	4	4	4
7	Number of exchange programmes.	n.a.	2	2
7	Number of participants at exchange programmes.	n.a.	12	12
8	Number of operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools in relation to reception developed and published.	2	2	2
8	Number of working group meetings organised in order to develop operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools.	5	6	6
8	Number of activities and products developed to promote operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools in relation to reception.	N.A.	2	4

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Enhance the exchange of information and best practices through the establishment of an exchange programme of reception officials in the EU+.
Expected results in 2019	- Improved cooperation and good practices disseminated on reception

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of exchange activities.	2017: N.A.	4	Operational/ administrative records.
Number of participants.	2017: N.A.	40 participants	Operational/ administrative records.
Level of satisfaction of the participants.	2017: N.A.	80%	Satisfaction surveys.

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Reception Network exchange programme for reception officials	
Organise exchange activities for reception officials in the framework of the EASO Network of Reception Authorities.	Q1–Q3
Evaluate and report on the outcome of those activities and share updates with members of the Network of Reception Authorities	Q1-Q4

EASO Exclusion Network

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
10	Support practical cooperation and exchange of best practice between Member States on reception through the facilitation of the **EASO Exclusion Network**, including maintaining an

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
	online platform and sharing a periodic newsletter with members of the Network of Dublin Units.
11	Contribute to the promotion of a correct and effective implementation of the CEAS provisions regarding **exclusion** throughout the EU+ by developing common operational standards and indicators, practical tools, guidelines and best practices.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
10	Number of NCP meetings of the EASO Exclusion Network organised.	1	1	1
10	Level of satisfaction with the NCP meetings of the EASO Exclusion Network.	94%	80%	80%
10	Number of thematic expert meetings organised.	1	1	1
10	Level of satisfaction with the thematic meetings.	t.b.a.	80%	80%
10	Number of periodic newsletters shared with members of the Exclusion Network.	4	4	4
11	Number of operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools in relation to exclusion developed and published.	1	1	1
11	Number of activities and products developed to promote operational standards, indicators, guidelines, best practices and practical tools in relation to exclusion.	N.A.	2	2

7.3. Cooperation with members of courts and tribunals

In line with the methodology agreed with relevant stakeholders but primarily with members of national courts and tribunals in 2015 (as amended), EASO will advance the joint preparation of professional development materials, as well as their subsequent dissemination to identified partners. In particular, the Agency will continue to work towards the completion of all Judicial Analyses (and the associated Judicial Trainer's Guidance Notes) identified in the EASO Professional Development Series, in line with the proposed timeframe.

In addition, EASO will continue to organise professional development workshops, as well as increase the promotion of their organisation on a national level. The Agency will also, where necessary, initiate, implement and promote further practical cooperation activities that will serve to contribute to the coherent implementation of the CEAS and advance practical cooperation among members of courts and tribunals in EU+ countries.

At all times, EASO will continue to cooperate with relevant partners in the field and make every effort to facilitate avenues for judicial dialogue and exchange. EASO's practical cooperation activities will be undertaken in line with the established framework and with full respect of the principle of independence of courts and tribunals.

EASO will aim to maintain the complete representation of all EU+ countries within the EASO network of court and tribunal members and to ensure active engagement from as many EU+ countries as possible. In particular, emphasis will continue to be made on enhancing the distribution channels to ensure a wide dissemination of the materials, including through the engagement of national judicial training bodies, as well as supporting the implementation of sessions in the EASO Professional Development Series at national level.

The Agency will further strengthen the partnership with the International Association of Refugee Law Judges (IARLJ), the Association of European Administrative Judges (AEAJ), the European Judicial

Training Network (EJTN), FRA, UNHCR and other relevant international and intergovernmental organisations in order to promote professional development of members of courts and tribunals.

Considering the diverse professional development structures in place in the EU+ countries in the area of asylum law, EASO can bring a genuine added value in the harmonisation of professional development standards and by ensuring that the materials available both reflect a truly European understanding of the asylum acquis and are of a suitably high level of quality.

The diverse structures, or indeed lack of structures, in the EU+ countries represents a challenge, however, EASO already has a well-functioning and robust network of national contact persons representing each EU+ country as well as additional relevant stakeholders. Ensuring the successful implementation of the activities outlined above will further the objective of contributing to the coherent implementation of the CEAS and advancing practical cooperation among EU+ countries on asylum while at the same time ensuring full respect for the principle of the independence of the judiciary.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA07
Budget line and allocated amount	3202 Asylum processes: **EUR 550 000**
Allocated human resources	**3 AD, 4 AST, 2 CA**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Advance the creation of professional development materials for members of courts and tribunals.
2	Implement professional development meetings for members of courts and tribunals and stimulate dialogue with judicial stakeholders in the field of asylum.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	New sets of professional development materials consisting of a Judicial Analysis and/or a Judicial Trainer's Guidance Note developed and made available to relevant stakeholders on a topic to be agreed in consensus with the EASO network of court and tribunal members.	4	1	1
1	Existing sets of professional development materials reviewed and, if necessary, updated.	N.A.	4	3
2	Number of professional development workshops or conferences organised.	10	10	11
2	Number of participants in professional development meetings.	143	200	250
2	Level of satisfaction of participants in professional development sessions.	89%	80%	80%
2	Number of coordination and planning meetings of the Network organised.	1	1	1
2	Number of biannual newsletters shared with the Network.	4	4	2

8   Horizontal activities

8.1. Consultative Forum and Civil Society

In order to **reinforce the cooperation** between EASO and civil society, EASO will continue to engage with civil society through various types of consultations and activities, including the organisation of Consultative Forum meetings, electronic consultations on key EASO documents and direct involvement of civil society in various areas of the Agency's work.

The implementation of Consultative Forum information exchange and networking activities will be optimised. Civil society organisations (CSOs) will be invited to take part in the development of Consultative Forum meetings, with more focus being placed on the organisation of smaller-scale regional thematic meetings. The Consultative Forum registry will be expanded by involving new CSOs including refugee and diaspora-led organisations. The quality and effectiveness of electronic consultations on key EASO documents will be improved by reinforcing the feedback flow to responding organisations. The Agency will continue to promote the participation of civil society representatives in relevant EASO meetings and activities.

EASO will actively participate in civil society networks in the field of asylum, at EU and national levels, identifying developments relevant for the Agency, reviewing and channelling inputs, providing contributions where appropriate. Furthermore, EASO will contribute to the activities of the Consultative Forums of other JHA Agencies, of the European Migration Forum and other similar bodies.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA08
Budget line and allocated amount	3401 Cooperation with civil society: **EUR 135 000**
Allocated human resources	**1 AD, 1 AST**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Organise and implement Consultative Forum meetings (annual plenary and/or regional thematic meetings).
2	Consult relevant CSOs on key EASO documents, such as the work programme, the annual report on the situation of asylum in the EU, and the annual general report.
3	Facilitate, where appropriate, involvement of relevant CSOs in meetings, workshops, conferences related to different EASO activities (e.g. training, COI, asylum processes, vulnerable groups, Fundamental Rights Strategy, complaints mechanism, etc.)
4	Contribute to the activities of the Consultative Forum of other JHA Agencies, the European Migration Forum and similar bodies.
5	Participate in civil society networks in the field of asylum at EU and national levels identifying developments relevant for the Agency, reviewing and channelling inputs, providing contributions where appropriate.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of Consultative Forum meetings.	4	2	3
2	Number of consultations of CSOs.	6	8	10
3	Number of EASO activities in which CSOs participated.	120	150	170
3	Number of CSOs participating in EASO meetings and activities.	200	250	250
4	Number of activities of other JHA Agencies' Consultative Fora in which the Agency participated or contributed to.	4	4	4
5	Number of civil society networks in which the Agency participated.	4	5	6

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Reinforce cooperation between the EASO and civil society in line with the revised format of the Consultative Forum under the EASO.
Expected results in 2019	- Strengthened cooperation and two-way dialogue with CSOs in expanding areas, notably with regard to the Fundamental Rights Strategy and complaints mechanism. - Expanded Consultative Forum registry by involvement of new CSOs including refugee and diaspora-led organisations.

	- Relevant knowledge, information and expert advice from CSOs taken into account in EASO's work. - Consultative Forum information exchange and networking activities optimised and implemented.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Total number of Consultative Forum members registered in registry.	2017 133	160	Quarterly monitoring
Number of new contacts established with CSOs in the field of international protection.	2017: 10	15	Quarterly monitoring
Number of new contacts that constitute refugee or diaspora-led organisations.	2017: N.A.	4	Quarterly monitoring
Number of activities/consultations with regard to the Fundamental Rights Strategy and complaints mechanism.	2017: N.A.	2	Quarterly monitoring

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Consultative Forum	
Strengthen and further expand the Consultative Forum registry by involving new CSOs, including refugee and diaspora-led organisations.	Q1-Q4

8.2. EASO communication and events

EASO carries out communication activities in accordance with the internal annual communication and stakeholders plan.

EASO will continue establishing and maintaining excellent long-standing press relations, ensuring plentiful interaction with the press. Regular, accurate press coverage of the Agency's activities is crucial in order to gain visibility, legitimacy and credibility. In 2019, EASO will continue to pro-actively approach and invite the media regularly.

EASO will also continue aiming at harnessing the full potential of social media and further increase the number of followers on its social media channels. To this end, EASO plans to increase its social media outreach activities and run social media actions to support the Agency's stakeholder relations activities and events and reach out to the general public. Moreover, EASO is planning to develop and implement theme-based social media information campaigns.

EASO intends to continue guaranteeing the current outcomes of social media monitoring (producing regular reports, searching for specific topics and contributing to the development of information campaigns), while enhancing the final product, and adapting it to better suit the needs of the Member States and the EU Institutions. The activity will possibly be reinforced to cover additional languages. The aim is for the results to provide important input for EASO in its work as well as being of benefit to Member States, JHA Agencies, EU Institutions and UNHCR.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA09
Budget line and allocated amount	No allocated costs on Budget Title 3
Allocated human resources	**5 AD, 5 AST, 9 CA**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Organise the EASO Information Day in a Member State.
2	Global promotion of EASO via major news networks and agencies.

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
3	Organise the Communication Multipliers meeting, Journalist Network meeting, and thematic press conferences.
4	Organise press interviews with national and EU or Brussels-based journalists, as well as strategic press interviews to coincide with specific events and developments.
5	Organise press visits with particular focus on EASO operational activities
6	Issue press releases to coincide with major events, publications, developments, etc.
7	Maintain and continuously monitor EASO's website and consolidate EASO's presence on social media.
8	Coordinate translation and publication of EASO documents and related materials.
9	Produce and disseminate the EASO newsletter.
10	Monitor social media and produce weekly and monthly reports.
11	Organise social media campaigns.
12	Organise integrated communication campaigns.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1, 2	Number of information meetings and events held.	20	25	30
3	Number of press conferences and meetings.	4	4	6
4	Number of press interviews.	20	25	35
5	Number of press visits in Member States.	N.A.	2	4
6	Number of press releases.	16	20	25
7	Percentage change in EASO website page views.	+30%	+30%	+30%
7	Percentage change in EASO website average monthly users.	+30%	+30%	+30%
7	Percentage change in social media followers (on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube).	+50%	+50%	+50%
7	Percentage change in monthly average social media reach	+50%	+50%	+50%
8	Number of translated dossiers.	143	170	200
8	Number of published dossiers.	104	120	150
9	Number of EASO newsletters published.	11	11	11
10	Number of weekly social media reports produced.	25	50	50
10	Number of monthly social media reports produced.	5	10	12
11	Number of social media campaigns organised.	4	4	5
12	Number of integrated communication campaigns organised.	2	2	3

8.3. Stakeholder relations

EASO will promote multidirectional synergies among all relevant stakeholders of its cooperation network. The Agency will strengthen a coordinated approach, the flow of information, the convergence and coherence of policies and practices related to its mandate, as well as coordination with the strategies and activities of the European Commission.

EASO will maintain close cooperation with the European Commission, the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament. In view of the 2019 European Parliament elections and renewal of the Commission, new contacts will be created with all new relevant stakeholders. Regular policy meetings at all levels and regular policy-related videoconferences with different stakeholders, in particular the European Commission (DG Migration and Home Affairs) will take place. The Agency will also maintain close contacts with the members of the EASO Management Board, the host country authorities and other stakeholders.

Cooperation with UNHCR and other international organisations, such as the Council of Europe, the General Directors' Immigration Services Conference (GDISC), the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) will continue and be enhanced in2019. EASO will participate in meetings and conferences and will actively participate in their work.

The cooperation between the EU agencies will carry on in 2019, both through the EU agencies' networks, in particular the JHA agencies network, and through bilateral collaboration. Enhanced cooperation and coordination of activities on the ground will be promoted in the context of the hotspot approach among all participating agencies, in particular Frontex, eu-LISA, Eurojust, Europol and FRA.

EASO is responsible for the preparation, administration and financial management of the Management Board meetings and MB Preparatory Group meetings. The aim is to organise at least three meetings of the Management Board, as well as three MB Preparatory Group meetings every year.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA08
Budget line and allocated amount	3402 Cooperation with Stakeholders: **EUR 178 000**
Allocated human resources	**3 AD, 1 AST, 1 CA**

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Organise and participate in external meetings of relevance to EASO activities.
2	Organise meetings with key stakeholders, also in the margin of events, such as the Commission, Council, European Parliament and other fora, and with EU Member States.
3	Coordinate VIP visits and other visits to EASO.
4	Organise briefings with Expert Public at EASO.
5	Provide timely replies to requests for information.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	2018 (est.)	2019
1	Number of external meetings attended or organised.	190	200	200
2	Number of meetings with key stakeholders, including Member States and MEPs.	145	30	30
3	Number of VIP meetings organised.	55	15	15
3	Number of VIP visits and other visits to EASO.	70	15	15
4	Number of briefings with Expert Public.	10	3	3
5	Number of replies to requests for information.	1,400	1,500	1,600

Note: The higher numbers of meetings in 2017 were due to events that took place during the Maltese Presidency in the first half of the year.

8.4. Information and communications technology

EASO will continue to increase the availability of systems and technical solutions in the field of asylum for the EU+, taking into consideration potential new and expanded activities and responsibilities in the proposed EUAA Regulation (under Title 3 activities). In this regard, the Agency will focus on developing a comprehensive and holistic view of the Asylum related Information Systems based on four pillars: From **deployment** to **collection**, to **monitoring** and to **policy support** under the same umbrella, gathering all technological services in a collection of API data points, available to any authorized stakeholder and serving the overarching purpose of enabling efficient technological processes in the European Asylum field, EASO ICT focuses on 4 pillars to support the agency's mission.

1. **Deployment Systems** include the European Asylum Intervention Pool (ARP) and the Technical Standby Package;
2. **Information Exchange Systems** include ADEPT and Article 29 of EUAA;

3. **Monitoring Systems** include the Member State Asylum IT Benchmarking, the Media Monitoring Tool and the CEAS IT feedback exercise;
4. **Policy Support Systems** include among others the Country of Origin Information System, the Learning Management System and the Information and Documentation System (IDS);

Furthermore, the Agency will also continue to further improve **automation of administration processes** with the objective of increasing efficiency, reliability and resilience in response to the continued growth of the Agency which includes:

- Integrating procurement, planning and finance management tools;
- Deploying and integrating administrative and financial management workflows;
- Providing enterprise grade systems uptime and reliable response time for incidents and service requests;
- Further aligningEASO with cloud-based technology;
- Ensuring staff working conditions across all EASO office locations and remotely.

Link to multiannual objectives	MA01 – MA09
Budget line and allocated amount	No allocated costs on Budget Title 3
Allocated human resources	**13 AD, 6 AST, 15 CA**

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Support the agencies operational deployment system.
Expected results in 2019	- Achieve end-to-end digitization of the ARP Deployment process.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of connected applications to EAIPS.	2017: 0	2	Project reports / quarterly

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Integrate EAIPS with Paperless for financial workflows.	Q2
Integrate EAIPS with PowerBI for reporting.	Q2
Roadmap for integration of EAIPS with other systems (ADEPT, Training Assessment tool).	Q3

Objectives and results	
Objective 2	Support the agencies information exchange and data collection systems.
Expected results in 2019	- Deploy and operate the Asylum Data Exchange and Processing Tool (ADEPT).

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of field indicators captured by the tool.	2017: N.A.	80% of all collected indicators	Database records/ quarterly
Number of EASO field operations where the tool is used.	2017: N.A.	80% of all locations	Database records/quarterly

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Deployment of first version of ADEPT.	Q2
Devise a roadmap for introducing an information system for data exchange according to Art. 29 of the planned EUAA.	Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 3	Support the monitoring of CEAS IT landscape and media, including social media.
Expected results in 2019	- Established baseline overview of Member States' Asylum IT systems 'As Is' status. - Established models for automated media monitoring on asylum related issues.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Number of Member States' IT systems 'As Is' analysed.	2017: N.A.	4 Member States assessed	Document reports/ yearly
Number of media monitoring models used by EASO on Operational basis.	2017: N.A.	3 models	Document reports/yearly
Use of media monitoring models by our external partners (MS, other organisations).	2017: N.A.	2 other partners using our models/data	Document reports/yearly

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Operationally establish the Media Monitoring tool.	Q1
Develop media monitoring models.	Q2-Q3
Reports on Member States' CEAS IT system 'As Is' status.	Q4

Objectives and results	
Objective 4	Provide and improve systems for Policy towards integrated EASO Asylum Information Systems.
Expected results in 2019	- Continued hosting, further development and integration of COI, MedCOI, IDS and other support tools (e-Learning Tool, Query tool, Case law). - Development of mobile toolbox – Transformation of EASO Guides into mobile apps. - Development of a quality assessment tool for interviews. - Development learning capacity assessment tool. - Development of a resettlement case management tool. - Development of an external dimension capacity catalogue.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Tools uptime.	2017: 95%	95%	Database records/ yearly
Increased usage across all tools.	2017: Detailed results available	10% increase in users across all monitored tools	Surveys, database records/yearly
State of integration between tools.	2017: N.A.	COI, queries and IDS with content/feature integration	Project report/ quarterly
Availability of interfaces for external partners to connect to our tools.	2017: N.A.	1 API available for externals to connect	Project report/ quarterly

Adoption rate of Quality tool and Mobile toolbox among MS.	2017: N.A.	30% use it on regular basis	Surveys/ yearly
Number of countries catalogued in the ExtDim GIS tool.	2017: N.A.	1	Database records/ yearly

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Migrate MedCOI tool to EASO infrastructure.	Q2
Deploy improved versions of COI, CaseLaw.	Q2-Q4
Develop and deploy Quality Tool for Interviews.	Q2
Devise new roadmap for the further development and hosting of the LMS.	Q2
Move IDS to more sustainable platform.	Q3
Deploy EASO queries tool.	Q1
Develop and deploy a first prototype of a resettlement case management tool.	Q3
Develop and deploy a first version of a GIS tool for EASO ExtDim Sector.	Q2

Objectives and results	
Objective 5	Further automate Agency administrative processes, increase efficiency, reliability and resilience of processes.
Expected results in 2019	- Establishment of a data warehouse. - Migration of services to the cloud. - Development of a Customer Relationship Management Tool (CRM). - Development of a Planning Tool. - Improvement and further development of e-HR tools. - Support for remote working for all Staff. - Formalisation of IT Service management processes (ITSM).

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Percentage of budget operations done through electronic means.	2017: N.A.	98%	Database records/yearly
Number of identified HR processes digitized.	2017: N.A.	60%	Database records/yearly
Number of EASO stakeholders managed through a central CRM.	2017: N.A.	80%	Database records/yearly
Service level management statistics for IT incidents and request fulfilment.	2017: Detailed data available	85% achievement of all SLAs	Database record/ quarterly
Number of additional organisational workflows managed through Paperless.	2017: N.A.	5 additional workflows	Database record/ quarterly
Number of IT Security and Business continuity plans for applications documented and tested.	2017: 0	Available for all critical applications	Report/quarterly
Number of operational cloud applications.	2017: 1	4	Report/yearly
Single-sign on implementation across EASO systems.	2017: N.A.	80% of all systems supported	Report/yearly
Number of data marts available in the data warehouse.	2017: 0	1	Database records/ yearly

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Deployment of a first version of Customer Relationship Management (CRM).	Q4

Migration of all Email mailboxes to the Cloud.	Q2
Deployment of an agency-wide planning tool for SPD.	Q2
Provisioning of remote access for all staff to all tools.	Q3
Establishment of a monitoring system for EASO contracts in PowerBI.	Q1
Develop a monitoring system for EASO Contracts based on PowerBI.	Q1
Establishment of a data warehouse.	Q3
Formalise all major IT Processes according to ITSM in Governance documents (WINS, ED Decisions, SOPs).	Q1-Q4
Establish and document disaster recovery procedures for applications according to agreed business continuity objectives.	Q1-Q4

8.5. Other horizontal activities

The Agency conducted an impact analysis in 2017 to determine the actions that were required for the **implementation of the new EUAA Regulation**. In 2019, EASO will continue to prepare to implement the foreseen actions that will deliver and put in place the provisions of the new Regulation, according to the agreed priorities. Consultations will be held with stakeholders, such as the Member States, the Commission and the Consultative Forum, to ensure a collaborative approach in delivering those outputs that impact on the stakeholders. The Management Board will be requested to adopt key documents, where required. Updates on progress made will be provided to the Management Board at regular intervals.

EASO is responsible for the preparation, administration and financial management of the Management Board meetings and MB Preparatory Group meetings. The aim is to organise at least three meetings of the Management Board, as well as three MB Preparatory Group meetings every year.

The Commission's **Internal Control Framework**, which was adopted by the EASO Management Board in December 2017, will be further developed in order to fully match the Agency's need for an integrated management system. Regular controls to measure the effectiveness and further improve the standard will be put in place.

The **quality management system**, which is being implemented in compliance with the ISO 9001:2015 standard, will be further enhanced and full integration with the Internal Control Framework further improved.

The year 2019 will be the second in the current three-year **audit cycle** of the Commission Internal Audit Service. The Agency will continue to work on implementing actions to address the previous audit findings and collaborate as best as possible with the Service to ensure that the audits provide added value for the Agency.

The Agency will further improve its programme and project planning, monitoring and reporting capabilities including forecasting and prioritisation exercises.

The Agency will continue its actions in order to ensure compliance with the **Data Protection** Regulation. The new Data Protection Regulation adopted in October 2018 reinforces the existing privacy principles and streamlines them across the Union, while at the same time does away with some bureaucratic elements. Ex-ante data protection notifications to the Data Protection Officer and prior checks with the European Data Protection Supervisor are no longer required. Processes with a higher degree of risk for individuals' privacy have to undergo a specific impact assessment.

Activity No	Core business activities (actions)
1	Further improve the EASO management standard integration with the Commission's Internal Control Standards and EASO quality management system.
2	Monitor and report on the risks identified during the Agency's annual risk identification and assessment exercise, as well as the risks identified by the European Court of Auditors and the Internal Audit Service of the Commission.
3	Assess EASO processes that require a data protection impact assessment.

4	Organise and provide support to Management Board and Preparatory Group meetings, including information and document provision, via the Management Board Secretariat.

Link to activity no	Core business indicators	Actual		Forecast
		2017	**2018 (est.)**	**2019**
1	Status of integration of the EASO management standard with the Commission's Internal Control Framework and EASO quality management system.	N.A.	Baseline and indicators established	Improved integrated indicators
2	Status of monitoring and reporting on the identified risks.	In line with procedure	In line with procedure	In line with procedure
3	Status of assessment of EASO processes requiring Data Protection Impact Assessment.	N.A.	Processes assessed	Processes assessed
4	Number of Management Board and associated meetings organised.	5	8	8

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Continue the transformation towards a fully-fledged Agency that delivers the new mandate foreseen in the EUAA Regulation.
Expected results in 2019	- Agreed actions implemented, as prioritised. - Stakeholders consulted on actions that have an impact on them.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Actions due completed by planned deadline	2017: N.A.	85% of actions due completed	Periodical monitoring of actions.
Stakeholder consultations held as planned	2017: N.A.	90% of planned consultations held	Periodical monitoring of actions.
Progress reports tabled at each Management Board meeting	2017: N.A.	All reports tabled	Management Board agendas/minutes

Main outputs/actions in 2019	
Main outputs/actions	**When**
Implement agreed actions and deliver outputs, in line with priorities	Q1-Q4
Hold consultations with stakeholders, as required, during implementation of actions	Q1-Q4
Report to the Management Board on progress made in implementing the agreed actions	Q1-Q4

8.6. Human resources

EASO's staff complement is determined by the establishment plan and the EU budget that is adopted annually by the Budgetary Authority. The Commission proposal for a Regulation establishing the EUAA foresees the total number of staff reaching 500 by 2020.

During 2019, EASO will maintain the rapid pace of recruitment in order to engage staff, as foreseen in its human resource plan (refer to Annex III).

Objectives and results	
Objective 1	Implement the EASO staff recruitment plan for 2019.
Expected results in 2019	- All new temporary agent and contract agent posts approved in the EASO staff plan for 2019 are published.

Indicators			
Indicator	**Latest known result**	**Target for 2019**	**Means and frequency of verification**
Percentage of published posts on the new posts available in 2019	100% published	100% published	Monthly reports
Implementation of the Establishment Plan	87% (2017)	95%	Monthly reports
Staff turnover	7.39% (2017)	7%	Monthly reports
Main outputs/actions in 2019			
Main outputs/actions			**When**
Publish vacancy notices for new posts available in 2019 on the EASO website			Q1-Q4

LIST OF ANNEXES