

**2019 OPERATIONAL & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE<sup>1</sup> PLAN**  
**AGREED BY EASO AND MALTA**

Valletta  
24June2019

---

<sup>1</sup>Operational & Technical Assistance Plans include Operating Plans and Special Support Plans

Having regard to Articles 8, 10 and 13 to 23 of Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 establishing a European Asylum Support Office (hereinafter 'EASO Regulation'),

EASO

and

The Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security of the Republic of Malta

Hereby agree on the Operating Plan (hereinafter 'the Plan') for the deployment of Asylum Support Teams and the provision of technical and operational assistance to Malta until 31<sup>st</sup> December 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 an assessment of needs to be conducted as soon as possible after receipt of the request for a new Plan.

Any amendments or adaptations of this Plan shall be agreed in accordance with Article 18(2) of the EASO Regulation.

EASO shall share a copy of the Plan with the Members of the EASO Management Board for information. The Plan will also be published on the EASO website and uploaded on the EASO Asylum Intervention Pool System (EAIPS) (<https://eaips.spapps.easo.europa.eu/>).

Valletta

Date:

Date:

Executive Director of the  
European Asylum Support  
Office

Permanent Secretary  
Ministry for Home Affairs and National  
Security (Republic of Malta)

Nina Gregori

Kevin Mahoney

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Legal Framework

The EASO Regulation, in particular Article 2 (1), (3), (4) and (5) thereof, foresees EASO's duty to provide special support to Member States with specific needs, in order to improve their implementation of the instruments of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS).

Article 13 of the EASO Regulation states:

1. A Member State (or Member States) subject to particular pressure may request EASO for deployment of an Asylum Support Team. The requesting Member State or Member States shall provide, in particular, a description of the situation, indicate the objectives of the request for deployment and specify the estimated deployment requirements.
2. In response to such a request, EASO may coordinate the necessary technical and operational assistance to the requesting Member State(s) and the deployment, for a limited time, of an Asylum Support Team in the territory of that Member State(s) on the basis of an Operating Plan.
3. All EASO activities performed in the context of support and technical assistance as identified in the plan herewith fall under the legal framework of the host Member State. This includes, *inter alia*, the safety and security of persons and assets participating in those EASO activities.

### 1.2 Operational Situation and Needs Assessment

EASO has been cooperating with the Maltese authorities, in particular through EASO technical Member State Networks. In 2017, EASO assisted the Maltese Determining Authority, the Office of the Refugee Commissioner, by providing a training programme for newly recruited case officers. In 2018, EASO continued its support to the Office of the Refugee Commissioner by providing training sessions to caseworkers and Dublin officers.

More recently, in the first quarter of 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 5/6/2019, 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 the drafting of Evaluation Reports<sup>2</sup> on individual applications submitted to the Office of the Refugee Commissioner for decision.

According to a recent analysis of the situation in Malta, it is evident that there is increased pressure on the asylum system:

- according to the IOM, while the number of sea arrivals to Malta amounted to 1 445 in 2018, it had already reached 1 054 on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2019, with a latest arrival consisting of 370 migrants<sup>3</sup>; and,

---

<sup>2</sup> 'drafting Evaluation Report' is the term used by the Refugee Commissioner for the drafting of legal opinion concerning individual applications for asylum.

<sup>3</sup>Sea arrivals data based on [IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix \(DTM\)](#), accessed on 11 June 2019.

- over the period January '18 to March '19, on average, 180 applications a month were lodged, ranging between a minimum of 120 in February 2019 and a maximum of 265 in October 2018<sup>4</sup>

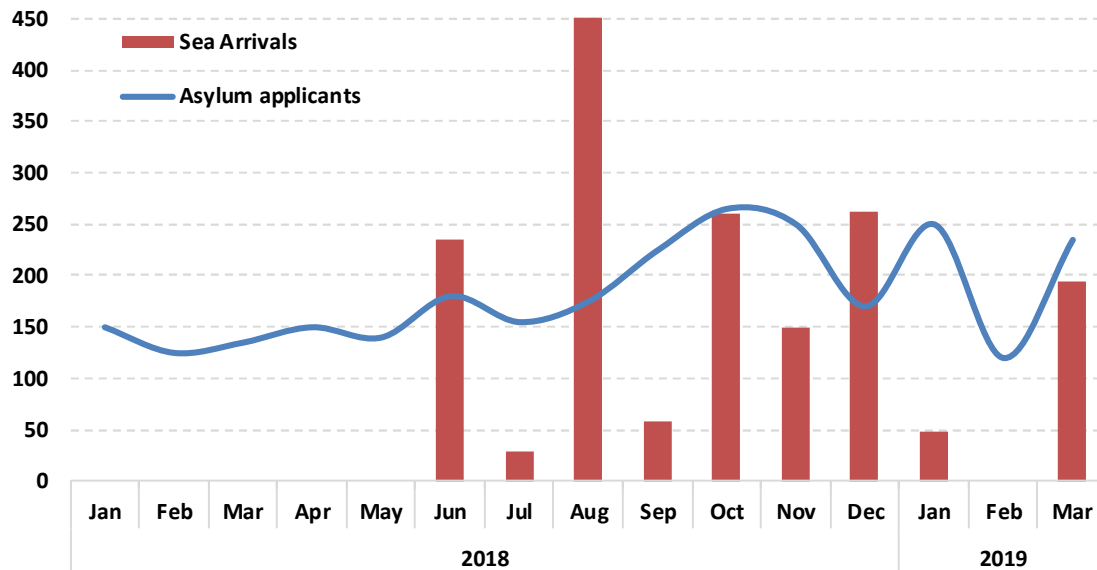
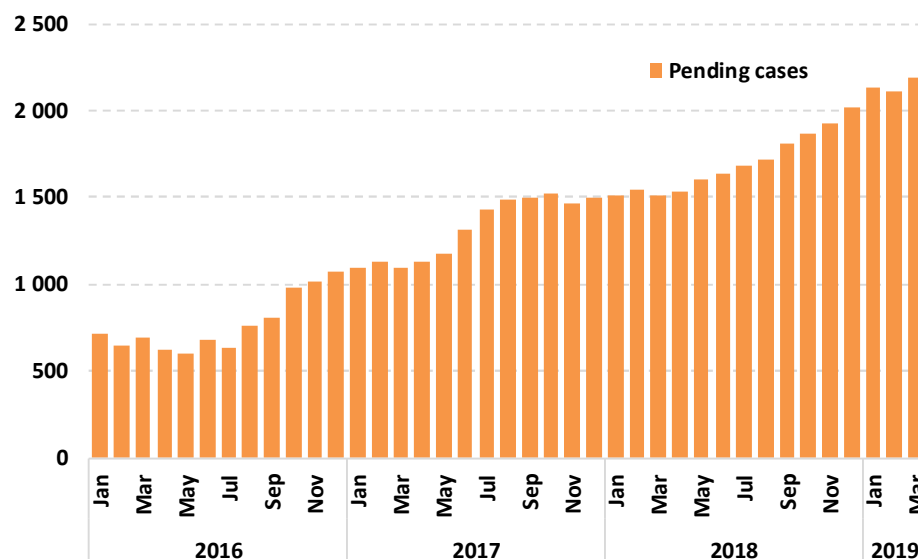


Figure 1: Sea arrivals and asylum applicants, January 2018 to March 2019

Source: Eurostat and IOM

Since the second half of 2016, pressure on the determining authority has been mounting nearly continuously. According to Eurostat data, the volume of cases awaiting a final decision on their case has tripled between January 2016 to March 2019 from 715 to 2 195<sup>5</sup>. It should be noted that out of the 2 195 applications awaiting a final decision by the end of March 2019, 1 620 were first time applications pending a decision at first instance. By the end of March 2019, the Maltese determining authority was also examining a total of 94 subsequent applications that were still pending.

In addition, provisional information shared with EASO under the umbrella of its Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS), indicated that the bulk of this pressure rested primarily on the first instance determination body, which saw the formation of a backlog of cases pending for 6 months or longer.



<sup>4</sup> Asylum applications data based on official statistics collected under Regulation (EC) 862/2007 and available in Eurobase dataset [\[migr\\_asyappctzm\]](#), accessed on 11 June 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Persons subject of asylum applications pending at the end of the month based on official statistics collected under Regulation (EC) 862/2007 and available in Eurobase dataset [\[migr\\_asyphenctzm\]](#), accessed on 11 June 2019.

**Figure 2: Evolution of pending cases, January 2016 to March 2019**

Source: Eurostat

The current plan 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 specifically 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.

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 as soon as possible after receipt of the request for a new Plan.

The Host Member State and EASO will provide Asylum Support Teams, including Member State experts, with information on the general state of play with regard to the procedure for international protection in the Host Member State, and specific information about the state of play of the deliverables as described in the specific measures. Every possible effort will be made by the different parties to provide a suitable working place for the expert(s) participating in the activities to implement the Plan. When not already available, EASO will provide the technical equipment required for the work of the Asylum Support Teams, and will reimburse costs incurred by persons participating in the activities, according to the applicable EASO rules.

### **1.3 Flexibility Clause**

The Plan aims to provide timely, active and flexible support to the identified needs of the Host Member State. The foreseen activities will be implemented in consideration of the changing circumstances of the international protection and reception systems in the Host Member State, as well as any specific circumstances on the ground, and subject to the availability of financial resources and experts.

The schedule of the measures and tasks in the Plan is a forecast and may change. Any change will be subject to a discussion between EASO and the Host Member State, and requires the agreement of the Host Member State. The Executive Director of EASO may, subject to the agreement of the Host Member State, make changes that may be accommodated within the objectives of a measure without requiring an amendment of the Plan, provided that they do not affect the overall budget.

In order to reflect new operational developments in accordance with Article 18(2) of the EASO Regulation, the Plan may be revised, amended, suspended or measures terminated at any time. Any amendments to or adaptations of the operating plan shall require the agreement of both the Executive Director and the requesting Member State.

### **1.4 Lawfulness and Respect for Fundamental Rights**

Support related to the participation in EASO activities under this Plan must be carried out in a way that fully respects human dignity. All personnel involved in operational support activities shall maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct, professionalism, respect and promotion of fundamental rights and international protection. This particularly applies vis-à-vis persons who are in need of international protection. Personnel are expected to meet obligations imposed upon them by the provisions of this Plan, in compliance with the requirements of the relevant European Union legislation.

Whilst taking part in the EASO operational support activities, all personnel shall respect the applicable International law, European Union law and the national law of the Host Member State. They shall maintain the highest standards of integrity and conduct. They are to act responsibly and proportionally to current objectives. Whilst carrying out supporting functions, personnel must not discriminate against individuals on grounds of sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, age or sexual orientation. All personnel are expected to treat every individual with courtesy, respect and due consideration for the nature of any legitimate activity in which they are engaged. To perform their duties properly, they shall serve the public interest and refrain from any activities, which could undermine or compromise their independence and the appropriate performance of their duties.

During the implementation of this Plan, all personnel must apply a zero tolerance attitude with respect to the infringement of fundamental human rights. All persons participating in EASO operational support activities shall comply and act in accordance with the EASO Code of Conduct<sup>6</sup>.

### **1.5 Confidentiality and Data Protection**

Without prejudice to the public right of access to documents, as laid down in Regulation (EC) 1049/2001<sup>7</sup> and the EASO implementing rules on access to documents<sup>8</sup>, all versions of this document shall be made available to the competent authorities in each EU Member State, as well as the associate countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

This Plan shall be made publicly available once it has been signed by EASO and the Host Member State.

Personal data will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) 45/2001 of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. EU data protection legislation applicable to EASO that may enter into force during the implementation period of this Plan shall likewise apply as of the date of entry into force. The current plan also takes into account the General Data Protection Regulation as updated in May 2018<sup>4</sup> with a Corrigendum to the 2016/679 Regulation on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (Data Protection Directive).

Whenever processing personal data during the activities agreed within the current Plan, EASO will act on behalf of the competent authorities of the Host Member State, following the applicable EU and national laws and regulations, as well as the instructions received from the Host Member State as the data controller. EASO will implement the necessary technical and organisational measures to ensure the security and confidentiality of the personal data it processes. This is to prevent any unauthorized disclosure of, or access to, this information.

### **1.6 Good Governance**

During the implementation of this Operating Plan, EASO will apply applicable EC Regulations and Guidelines in respect of good governance, including anti-fraud and anti-corruption regulations. EASO will implement EASO Management Board decisions and apply agreed SOPs in respect of internal control, financial management and procurement.

---

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/public/EASO\\_CODE\\_OF\\_CONDUCT.pdf](https://www.easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/public/EASO_CODE_OF_CONDUCT.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Regulation (EC) 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001, regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents.

<sup>8</sup> Decision No. 6 of the Management Board of EASO of 20 September 2011 laying down practical arrangements regarding public access to the documents of EASO.

## 2. GENERAL CONDITIONS

This chapter of the Plan describes the various Measures to be taken to support the authorities of the Host Member State in the fields of procedure and reception of applicants for international protection.

The Measures in this Operating Plan will be implemented in compliance with relevant EU legislation (CEAS) and will uphold operating standards agreed at EU level. EASO will therefore make use of relevant EASO Tools and Guidance, which have been developed based on the CEAS.

EASO will provide technical support to experts participating in this Plan, with the aim of ensuring that all deliverables make good use of the expertise and information already available to EASO. All intellectual property rights of the work of the experts performed in the context of the Plan are vested in EASO. Selected deliverables developed under this Plan may be published, subject to the agreement of the Host Member State.

### 2.1 Main National Partner Organisations

The Host Member State's main organisations involved in this Plan are the following.

Organisation	Responsibilities
Office of the Refugee Commissioner	Access to procedure
Office of the Refugee Commissioner	First instance determination
Agency for the Welfare of Asylum-Seekers (AWAS)	Reception
The Principal Immigration Officer, Police	Detention Order

### 2.2 Acceptance of Deliverables

This Plan addresses the operational needs of Malta and gives directions on the delivery of EASO's technical and operational assistance, and the deployment of Asylum Support Teams. Complementarity will be sought by EASO with all national programmes including EMAS under AMIF for Malta to avoid any duplication.

EASO shall ensure quality control of agreed deliverables. Where practical and applicable, steps shall be taken to document the Host Member State's formal acceptance of deliverables.

### 2.3 Conditions for Deployment

General rules and conditions for Asylum Support Teams' deployment, as well as special instructions for Asylum Support Team members (including databases that they are authorised to consult and the equipment that they may carry in the Host Member State, as well as practical information concerning the location of deployment and related workflows), are published on the following platforms:

- EASO Asylum Intervention Pool's National Contact Point platform (EASO AIP NCP);
- EASO Asylum Intervention Pool System (EAIPS)
- EASO country-specific online platforms developed as part of the EASO Information and Documentation System (IDS). A specific operational platform may be created for Malta. These platforms are made available to members of ASTs upon their engagement, allowing for preparation for deployment and daily implementation of their tasks;
- Relevant thematic pages of the EASO IDS concerning the asylum and reception system of the Host Member State, including information on relevant practices, legislation, case law and statistical background. The Host Member State shall contribute to information concerning the

asylum and reception system of the Host Member State, including information on relevant practices, legislation, case law and statistical background to be available on IDS for AST Teams.

Specific Asylum Support Teams deployment details are provided under each measure, where applicable.

## **2.4 Organizational Pre-Conditions**

The Host Member State shall grant appropriate access rights for the Asylum Support Team members to all relevant databases, or parts of it, that are required for the completion of the Measures and tasks outlined in the Plan, and commits to provide the Asylum Support Teams with the required information and data in the context of this Plan.

The Host Member State shall designate an overall Plan Coordinator and as necessary, a specific Measure Coordinator for each Measure stipulated in the Plan.

The working files shall be made available by the Host Member State in English.

Minimum working and security conditions (see section 3) are considered as organisational pre-conditions. The Host Member State shall provide appropriate working space to EASO Asylum Support Teams. Availability of office and workstations will determine the scale of the EASO deployment.

## **2.5 Implementation Period**

The implementation period of this Plan is from 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019 until 31<sup>st</sup> December 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 as soon as possible after receipt of the request for a new Plan.

The Plan, including the start date and / or implementation period, may be revised at any time in order to reflect new operational developments, subject to the agreement of both the EASO Executive Director and the Host Member State.

## **2.6 Monitoring, Reporting and Communication**

The Executive Director shall designate the Union Contact Point under Article 20 of the EASO Regulation, who acts as an interface between EASO, the Host Member State, and the Asylum Support Team members. The Union Contact Point provides assistance, on behalf of EASO, on all issues relating to the conditions of deployment of the Asylum Support Teams, monitors the correct implementation of the Plan, and reports to EASO on all aspects of Asylum Support Teams' deployment.

A monitoring and reporting system will be established in order to assess any further needs or changes and to ensure the overall effective monitoring of the implementation of the Plan. Further, at the end of their deployment, Asylum Support Team members will provide a Final Report to EASO using the template available on the IDS and EAIPS platforms.

During the implementation of this Plan, experts as well as other personnel deployed as part of Asylum Support Teams will be briefed regularly on current situational and operational developments to address challenges and identify improvements.

Particular attention shall be paid to the need to continuously develop, improve and make available EASO support tools. Should such a need be identified or changed during the plan implementation, it shall be communicated to EASO for further consideration.

The Host Member State and the Union Contact Point will manage the exchange of information concerning the tasks under the Plan.

EASO will maintain close cooperation and communication with the relevant stakeholders. EASO will also provide information to its partners (i.e. the European Commission, concerned EU Agencies, and international organisations) about the operational activities, as appropriate and in line with EASO



transparency and communication policies. The timing and content of communication with the media shall be agreed upon between EASO and the Host Member State.

Where relevant, the two parties may facilitate media coverage to ensure a wider dissemination and visibility of results.

## **2.7 Incident reporting**

Participants in EASO activities who have reason to believe that a violation of the EASO Code of Conduct<sup>9</sup> has occurred or is about to occur, are obliged to report the matter to the Executive Director of EASO and to the Host Member State Coordinator for the Plan via the appropriate channels.

Any incidents that may occur during the deployment of an expert in the Asylum Support Teams shall be reported through the same channels. Incident reporting templates can be found on the IDS platform.

## **2.8 Evaluation**

Periodical monitoring, mid-term reviews, and a final evaluation will be carried out in order to assess the implementation of the Plan, or in case of a need for significant extension or substantial amendment of the current EASO Plan. EASO will institute a formal monitoring framework for the duration of the plan based on a validated methodology and using agreed indicators.

Feedback from the deployed Asylum Support Team members shall be gathered on the completion of their deployment and prior to reimbursement of expenses.

A final annual evaluation aims to ensure that the EASO support processes are constantly refined by assessing EASO's performance in implementing the Plan, identifying the lessons learned and recording good practice. The final evaluation may be performed externally through the engagement of evaluation specialist(s), or by EASO, preferably prior to completion of the implementation of this Plan, or immediately upon its completion. The Host Member State and other stakeholders shall be involved.

As applicable, periodical and mid-term reviews, and final evaluation results, shall be shared with the Host Member State and communicated to the EASO governance structure (e.g. Management Board members and National Contact Points).

# **3. SECURITY**

EASO should apply the security principles of the Commission's security rules. Commission Decision 443/2013 on the security in the Commission defines, that security shall be based on the principles of legality, transparency, proportionality and accountability.

The safety and security of persons participating in EASO activities under the Plan are under the overall legal framework of the Host Member State and shall be provided for by the respective authorities, legally responsible and accountable for the public order and security on the territory of that Member State.

EASO will endeavor to support the identification of required security measures and the implementation of those that are under its remit, both legally and functionally, in close cooperation with the Host Member State security responsible.

---

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/public/EASO\\_CODE\\_OF\\_CONDUCT.pdf](https://www.easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/public/EASO_CODE_OF_CONDUCT.pdf)

To that end:

- Standard security requirements, identified herewith, should apply as a general rule;
- Specific security requirements for the specific plan, if required, are to be identified jointly by EASO and the Host Member State security responsible. These should be established in an annex to this plan.

### **3.1 Standard security requirements**

The standard security requirements pertain to elements to be present in the implementation of the plan, not to minimum security standards:

- Both the Host Member State on one side and EASO on the other shall appoint a responsible security officer, acting as a single point of contact for security matters for the operation, both at central and local level.
- A pre-deployment briefing program drafted in close cooperation with the respective national authorities, focusing both on general security rules and awareness, as well as on security aspects specific for the deployments, will be drawn up by EASO. With regards to the decentralised nature of deployments; the use of e-learning and other distance based training techniques should be considered.
- Emergency (evacuation) plan - certain operational activities, such as in hotspots, require that staff shall have clear guidance and training on how to evacuate quickly in case of emergencies. In a more general context, there could be a need to evacuate from the operational area as well. A responsible EASO security officer should maintain updated information on the availability of an evacuation plan and routes, if required, in consultation with the Host Member State.
- Communication tools - as a minimum, EASO staff in an operation should be in possession of independent radio communication equipment provided by EASO and, if possible, also to have such equipment interoperable with the local law enforcement in charge of the security of the operation.
- Security of information - sensitive non-classified and classified information should be protected adequately. EASO security responsible should be involved in supporting the proper classification of relevant information.
- Security of IT and communication equipment - EASO IT equipment is adequately prepared to protect the information level it has been foreseen to process.
- Personal security - conduct and behavior should be included in the pre-deployment training, led by operational teams and performed for the experts during the first days of arrival to the operational area. This may refer to the EASO code of conduct as well.
- Reporting security incidents from the operational area to the EASO responsible security officer and EASO HQ is essential with a view of the overall security management.

### **3.2 Specific security requirements**

- Specific security requirements for the implementation of the Operating Plan, in particular security sensitive areas such as hotspots, shall be defined on the basis of a pre-deployment security assessment visit with the aim of identification of specific potential risks, identification of mitigation measures, and communication of those measures to the Host Member State and involved stakeholders, prior to the deployment.

## 4. SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

### 4.1. Cooperation with the European Commission

All activities under this Plan will be closely coordinated with the Host Member State and with the steady support of the European Commission.

### 4.2. Cooperation with UNHCR

In accordance with Article 50 of the EASO Regulation, EASO aims at a coherent and complementary continuation of the fruitful cooperation with UNHCR. The Union Contact Point will liaise with the UNHCR office in the Host Member State for a continuous cooperation and coordination of practical activities agreed with the Host Member State under the current Plan.

## 5. MEASURES

The current plan contributes to the overall objective, or main impact result, of ensuring that persons in need of international protection in Malta have access to the asylum procedure in accordance with the CEAS, more specifically, with the provisions of Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013.

There are two primary impact indicators of the Plan in regard to the asylum procedure:

1. the reduction in the time for the registration and lodging of an application<sup>10</sup> based on the registration and lodging of 100 applications per week by the EASO registration assistants;
2. A reduction of 20% in the first instance backlog by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019<sup>11</sup> based on the drafting of 35 legal opinions per week by the EASO caseworkers (following successful completion of training and induction);

The Plan contributes to three distinct result outcomes (also referred to as special objectives or Measures):

1. Swift access to the asylum procedure in Malta, including the registration and lodging of the application for international protection;
2. Malta has increased capacity to manage and reduce the asylum backlog; and
3. Malta's enhanced capacity for the implementation of the CEAS.

**Measure MT 1.0.: Swift access to asylum procedure in Malta, including information provision, registration and lodging of the application.**

**Measure Performance Indicators**

**Indicator 1:** Evidence of relevant information provision for all arrivals provided

**Baseline:** None

**Target:** Relevant Information is provided to all arrivals prior to registration

**Indicator 2:** Evidence of effective identification system for vulnerable applicants in place

**Baseline:** challenges in referral and limited prioritisation

<sup>10</sup> Baseline to be determined

<sup>11</sup> Baseline will be the existing backlog at the time of signature of the Operating Plan

<p><b>Target:</b> report demonstrating increased harmonisation of referrals and prioritisation of vulnerable applicants</p> <p><b>Indicator 3:</b> number of full asylum application registrations and reduction in time for the making, registering and lodging of an application</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> to be determined</p> <p><b>Target:</b> 5 registrations/day/EASO registration assistant</p>	
<b>Responsible Authorities</b>	Office of the Refugee Commissioner
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Office of the Refugee Commissioner
<b>Description and Assessment of the Situation</b>	<p><i>Needs assessment indicates challenges - in particular, the delay identified during the registration process.</i></p> <p><i>The concerned authorities in a letter dated 5/6/19 requested the following support from EASO:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Support on registration and lodging of the application for international protection</i></li> <li>- <i>Interpretation services</i></li> </ul>
<b>Pre-condition(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MT will appoint a Measure Coordinator</li> <li>• MT will provide appropriate working space to EASO registration staff. Availability of office and workstations will determine the scale of the EASO deployment.</li> <li>• MT will provide access to the relevant database(s), or relevant parts of the database, as required for the completion of this measure, to EASO ASTs</li> <li>• MT will ensure that the medical check proceedings will have been concluded before the third country nationals can start registration procedures with EASO registration assistants</li> <li>• MT will provide regular quarterly updates and data/analysis on registration workflow in order to optimise planning and deployed resources, and to get an updated overview of the asylum procedure in Malta.</li> </ul>
<b>Outputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Registrations, subdivided by applications that have been made and lodged</li> <li>• Number of Information Provision sessions</li> <li>• Improved SOPs and procedures in use on standardisation of registration, including on the identification and prioritisation of vulnerable cases</li> <li>• Support tools: early identification and referral of vulnerable applicants</li> <li>• Training package on registration workflow developed and delivered as required</li> </ul>
<b>Action deliverable(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support on access to procedure, making, registering and lodging of the asylum applications, including through the provision of information (using, where applicable, the templates provided by the Determining Authority)</li> <li>• Updating/development of SOPs and other tools, if needed</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training delivered to EASO registration staff and relevant Maltese officers as required</li> </ul>
<b>Inputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6– 8 English speaking registration assistants / 6 months (deployment in Office of the Refugee Commissioner)</li> <li>• Remote and physically present interpreters / 6 months</li> <li>• Training 2/3 days</li> </ul>

<b>Measure MT 2.0.: Malta has increased capacity to manage and reduce asylum backlog.</b> <b>Measure Performance Indicator</b> <b>Indicator:</b> number of pending cases <b>Baseline:</b> Baseline as at date of signature of Operating Plan <b>Target:</b> stabilisation and reduction in backlog by 20% by 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2019.	
<b>Responsible Authorities</b>	Office of the Refugee Commissioner
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Office of the Refugee Commissioner
<b>Description and Assessment of the Situation</b>	<p><i>At the end of April 2019, the asylum backlog was comprised of 1,659 pending cases, not including an additional 500+ sea arrivals who are likely to apply for international protection.</i></p> <p><i>The final objective is the stabilisation and reduction of the asylum backlog through the joint effort of Determining Authority/EASO caseworkers.</i></p> <p><i>The Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security in a letter dated 05/06/2109 requested the following support from EASO:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interview applicants and draft legal opinions to the Refugee Commissioner</li> <li>- Support with interpretation services</li> </ul> <p><i>In June 2019, the Maltese National Contact Point also requested training support for existing interpreters, an element that has been further included in this Measure.</i></p>
<b>Pre-condition(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MT will appoint a Measure Coordinator</li> <li>• MT will provide appropriate working space to EASO interviewing staff. (Availability of office and workstations will determine the scale of the EASO deployment).</li> <li>• MT will provide access to the relevant database(s), or relevant parts of the database, as required for the completion of this measure, to EASO ASTs</li> <li>• MT will ensure that the medical check proceedings will have been concluded before the third country nationals would be scheduled for interviews with EASO caseworkers</li> <li>• MT will provide regular updates and data/analysis on a quarterly basis on the asylum backlog in order to optimise planning, resources and get an updated overview of the asylum procedure in Malta.</li> </ul>

<b>Outputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Personal Interviews</li> <li>• Number of Legal opinions (using the templates provided by the Determining Authority)</li> <li>• SOPs and other support tools, if needed</li> <li>• Training package developed and delivered for Caseworkers</li> <li>• Training package developed and delivered for interpreters</li> </ul>
<b>Action deliverable(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case work/file handling (using the templates provided by the Determining Authority)</li> <li>• Development of SOPs and other support tools</li> <li>• Training of EASO caseworkers and Determining Authority caseworkers (including newly recruited case officers), as required</li> <li>• Training of Determining Authority contracted interpreters</li> </ul>
<b>Inputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 caseworkers / 6 months</li> <li>• Remote and physical interpreters / 6 months</li> <li>• 1 interim Operations Assistant / 6 months</li> <li>• Training of EASO caseworkers and Determining Authority caseworkers (if needed)/ number of weeks (dependant on the level of experience and needs of officers)</li> <li>• Training of Determining Authority contracted interpreters/ number of weeks (dependant on level of experience and needs of interpreters)</li> </ul>

**Measure MT 3.0.: Malta Dublin Unit capacity is enhanced.**

***Measure Performance Indicators***

**Indicator 1:** evidence of increase in productivity of the Dublin Unit.

**Baseline:** zero –measurement not applied before

**Target:** report(s) demonstrating increase in productivity of Dublin Unit workflows

**Indicator 2:** evidence of increase of efficiency of the Dublin Unit.

**Baseline:** zero –measurement not applied before

**Target:** report(s) demonstrating increase in efficiency of Dublin Unit workflows

<b>Responsible Authorities</b>	Office of the Refugee Commissioner
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Malta Dublin Unit
<b>Description and Assessment of the Situation</b>	<p><i>EASO has recently engaged in support of the Dublin Unit in assisting in ad hoc voluntary relocation exercises through registration in Dublin national database, notification of decisions and related information provision, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Building on this, EASO will provide further capacity building and technical support to the Dublin Unit to deal with the increased demands placed on the Unit:</i></p>

	<p><i>This Measure has been planned in response to the request expressed by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security, in a letter dated 05/06/2019 and in the subsequent consultations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Deployment of Dublin experts</i></li> <li>- <i>Deployment of statistical or other support staff as necessary</i></li> <li>- <i>Material support</i></li> </ul>
<b>Pre-condition(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MT will appoint a Measure Coordinator</li> <li>• MT will provide appropriate working space to EASO registration staff. Availability of office and workstations will determine the scale of the EASO deployment.</li> <li>• MT will provide access to the relevant database(s), or relevant parts of the database, as required for the completion of this measure, to EASO ASTs</li> <li>• MT will provide regular updates and data/analysis on a quarterly basis on the Dublin Unit in order to optimise planning, resources and to get an updated overview of the situation in Malta</li> </ul>
<b>Outputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dublin Unit productivity and efficiency improved and enhanced across Dublin Unit workflows, including inter alia: outgoing requests to other Member States; requests for re-examination in case of an initial rejection; transfers; incoming and outgoing information requests; additional interviews; notification of transfer decisions, etc.</li> <li>• Training / Coaching package developed and delivered</li> </ul>
<b>Action deliverable(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dublin Experts deployed</li> <li>• Statistical and other staff deployed as necessary</li> <li>• Training/ Coaching on productivity and efficiency, as required</li> </ul>
<b>Inputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 MS expert/ 6 months</li> <li>• 1 Dublin caseworker/ 6 months</li> <li>• 1 administrative assistant / 6 months</li> <li>• Training/Coaching on productivity and efficiency, as required</li> </ul>