

**OPERATING PLAN<sup>1</sup> 2022-2024**  
**AGREED BY THE EUROPEAN ASYLUM SUPPORT OFFICE<sup>2</sup> AND THE**  
**REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS**

Valletta Harbour and Nicosia  
December 2021

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<sup>1</sup> Any reference to “Operating Plan” shall be construed as reference to “Operational Plan” upon the entry into force of the EUAA Regulation.

<sup>2</sup> The European Asylum Support Office (hereinafter ‘EASO’) established by Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 shall be replaced by the European Union Agency for Asylum (hereinafter ‘EUAA’ or ‘the Agency’) upon the entry into force of the EUAA Regulation, whereby any reference to “EASO” should be construed as referring to the “European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA)”.

The Executive Director of the European Asylum Support Office (hereinafter 'EASO'),

and

The Minister of the Interior and the Chief Registrar of the Republic of Cyprus (hereinafter 'Member State'),

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 establishing a European Asylum Support Office<sup>3</sup> (hereinafter referred to as 'EASO Founding Regulation'), and in particular Articles 2, Article 8, 10 and 13 to 23 thereof.<sup>4</sup>

Hereby agree on the Operating Plan (hereinafter 'the Plan') for the provision of technical and operational assistance by EASO to the Republic of Cyprus.

The Operating Plan is binding in its entirety and all its parts, including annexes, have the same legal binding character and are equally important.

The implementation period of the Plan shall be from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2024.

The Plan enters into force on the date after it has been signed by all relevant Parties.

EASO shall share a copy of the Plan with the Members of the EASO Management Board for information. The Plan will be made publicly available on the EASO website.

Executive Director of the  
European Asylum Support Office

Minister of Interior for the  
Republic of Cyprus

Chief Registrar

Nina Gregori  
Valletta Harbour,  
December 2021

Nicos Nouris  
Nicosia,  
December 2021

Eirini Chirstodoulou  
Nicosia,  
December 2021

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<sup>3</sup> OJ L 132, 29.5.2010, p. 11-28.

<sup>4</sup> Any reference to the EASO Founding Regulation shall be construed as reference to the EUAA Regulation upon the entry into force of the latter. At the moment of the signature of this Operating Plan the EUAA Regulation has not yet come into application. However, any reference to the draft EUAA Regulation shall be construed as reference to the draft of 03 November 2021 and any reference to the Articles of the draft EUAA Regulation shall be construed as reference to the Articles of the final version of the EUAA Regulation upon its entry into force.

## 1.0. INTRODUCTION

An Operating Plan addresses the specific needs of the requesting Member State(s) with regards to:

- operational and technical needs of the Member State(s) whose asylum and/or reception systems are subject to disproportionate pressure

And, upon the entry into force of the EUAA Regulation:

- operational and technical reinforcement needs of the Member State(s) facing disproportionate migratory challenges
- the implementation of its(their) obligations under the Common European Asylum System (CEAS)

The Plan provides the framework for delivery of technical and operational assistance by the European Asylum Support Office, including the deployment of asylum support teams.

## 2.0. OPERATIONAL SITUATION, NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND OBJECTIVES

The organisational structure and human resourcing of the asylum and reception systems in Cyprus struggle to meet the increasing asylum pressure. This contributes to the limited absorption capacity of the backlog of applications for international protection, both at first instance determination and determination at appeal. With the national strategy on reception under development (due to be completed by the end of 2021), knock-on effects continue to impact the functioning of the registration and reception practices leading to ad-hoc decisions and workflows. The amendments of the Refugees Law<sup>5</sup> and Aliens and Immigration Law (Cap.105)<sup>6</sup> in October 2020, gives the Senior Immigration Officer (Minister of the Interior) the authority to delegate issuance of a decision of return or removal or deportation order in a single administrative act at the same time of issuing a rejection decision on an asylum application. The specific amendment has an impact on the accelerated procedure, the regular procedure, and subsequent applications and it triggers the need for harmonized workflows.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the flow of migrants seeking international protection in Cyprus during the past year has remained high, this has placed significant pressure on both the asylum procedure and the reception capacity. In 2020, impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated mobility restrictions, Cyprus only registered about 7,400 asylum applications, a considerable drop of 46% compared to the previous year. However, by the end of October 2021, Cyprus has already registered 10,003 applications (+74% compared to the same period in 2020), the vast majority of these concerned irregular entries crossing the Green Line. EASO registered 48% of all registrations in Cyprus in the first nine months of 2021 and approximately 66% of the irregular entry registration performed in Cyprus.<sup>7</sup>

According to the EU-Cyprus Action Plan on migration Management, and in line with the Standard Operating Procedures<sup>8</sup> applicable to the Pournara First Reception Centre, jointly agreed in 2020, Cyprus decided to refer all new arrivals to ‘Pournara’, including for the initial stages of the asylum procedure e.g. up to the submission of the asylum application there. An Examination Centre adjacent to ‘Pournara’ was moreover created. The services provided in ‘Pournara’ include identification, registration, and lodging of asylum applications, as well as medical screening and vulnerability assessments. The full

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<sup>5</sup> [Refugee Law 2000 \(6\(I\)/2000\)](#) EL: [Ο περί Προσφύγων Νόμος του 2000 \(6\(I\)/2000\)](#) amended by [Act N.142\(I\)/2020 \(12/10/2020\)](#).

<sup>6</sup> [Aliens and Immigration Law \(Cap.105\)](#) Ο περί Αλλοδαπών και Μεταναστεύσεως Νόμος (ΚΕΦ.105) amended by [N.116\(I\)/2020 \(17/8/2020\)](#) and [N.143\(I\)/2020 \(12/10/2020\)](#):

<sup>7</sup> According to data shared by CAS to CYOPS. The figure it is an approximation, since there are registrations categorised as “unknown”.

<sup>8</sup> Standard Operating Procedures applicable to ‘Pournara’ Ref. ARES(2020)3974972 – 28/07/2020.

assessment of asylum applications is conducted at the new Asylum Examination Centre adjacent to 'Pournara' First Reception Centre. A "Safe Zone" for vulnerable applicants, with an envisaged capacity of 80 places, is also expected to become operational by the end of 2021 or early 2022.

Based on the existing needs highlighted during the needs assessment exercise, the proposed focus of the cooperation between EASO and the national counterparts in registration and access to the asylum procedure will be a) operational and quality-focused support to Pournara First Reception Centre (FRC), implementing clear standardised registration procedure from the making to lodging; b) capacity building for stakeholders present in Pournara First Reception Centre and in general for AIU aiming at roll out consistent registration standards and practices for both regular and irregular entries and at a closer adherence to CEAS standards and Dublin regulation provisions; c) surge capacity for registration support across the national territory.

By the end of 2020, Cyprus had approximately 19,000 pending applications at first instance, ranking 7th among the other Member States. Between January and July 2021, Cyprus issued some 7,600 decisions, nearly five times as many as those issued during the same period last year and received approximately 7,000 new applications. Between February and March 2021, Cyprus issued more decisions than it received applications. At the end of September 2021, 16,990 applications were still awaiting a first instance decision, albeit 9% fewer compared to the same period last year. Having said this, pending cases continue to rise and, in parallel, so does the backlog. The vast majority of the unresolved applications were pending at first instance.

Therefore, the proposed line of cooperation regarding first instance determination will be focused on a) backlog reduction; b) digitalisation, allocation and file management; c) overall support to enhance capacity and quality of the procedure with the aim of supporting the gradual standardisation of the asylum procedure.

Regarding determination in appeal, as of October 2021, 6,221 cases are pending at the International Protection Administrative Court (IPAC), recording an increase of 420% of the backlog since January 2021, when 1,194 cases were pending. The number of appeals registered increased dramatically from January (128) to the peak of April (983) and then decreased to 866 in October. On average, in 2021, 730 appeals were registered monthly at the IPAC. At the end of March, the backlog of appeals was mainly constituted by cases lodged in 2021 (91%) and less than 9% of the backlog referred to cases older than 2020. The top 5 nationalities registering an appeal in October were: Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Cameroon, Nigeria.

Therefore, the proposed line of cooperation regarding second instance determination will be focused on a) backlog reduction, b) supporting the creation of efficient management workflows, c) administrative level, by supporting the administrative tasks of the IPAC and enhancing the procedural rules of the Court d) coordination (with CAS and internal) and quality level, through supporting the development of quality control mechanisms and the overall coordination of deployed EASO personnel.

Regarding reception, EASO operations in 2021 have been focused on supporting CAS with the development of the National Reception Strategy. In line with the objectives of 2021 Operational Plan for Cyprus, EASO shall continue supporting the Cypriot Asylum Service (CAS), in close consultation with the Commission, with the elaboration and implementation of a functional Reception Model for Cyprus including the articulation of a national reception strategy in line with the joint action plan for migration, data collection (ideally split by age, gender, diversity) and monitoring, support with management capacity and development of relevant SOPs and workflows along with the continuation of social work and reception support in reception facilities, including referrals following the exit from the First Reception Centre in Pournara, with an increased focus on quality and capacity building.

Beyond offering day-to-day support to the asylum procedure and in the reception facilities, the needs assessment identified some additional crosscutting needs relating to quality assurance and capacity building. Firstly, the development of an interoperable data management system in asylum and reception was identified as a priority—this will support the capacity of Cypriot stakeholders to manage and monitor the asylum and reception systems through an enhanced and integrated information system, allowing for efficient information sharing and exchange. Secondly, standardisation and

harmonisation of quality procedures were identified as a growing need, lacking clear and established workflows are contributing factors. EASO will assist with the streamlining and standardising of quality special needs/vulnerability identification, assessment and referral mechanisms, across asylum and reception process. Establishment and implementation of quality assurance mechanisms to streamline quality and standardised registration, first instance and second instance procedures have also been identified as an area for further support. EASO assistance with the quality of the asylum procedure could also include capacity building activities to strengthen the knowledge of the procedure and legal framework for Cyprus authorities. Lastly, EASO will support Cyprus authorities in implementing transfers exercises, as and if requested and in the case of pledges being offered to Cyprus from other Member States.

In accordance with the operational situation and needs assessment described herewith, the Parties agree to pursue the achievement of the following operational objectives and results:

- **Expected Outcome CY 1.1.:** By the end of 2024, access to asylum procedure in Cyprus complied with CEAS and followed a unified workflow.
- **Expected Outcome CY 1.2.:** By the end of 2024, the CAS developed efficient management systems to process first instance asylum applications aimed at reducing the backlog.
- **Expected Outcome CY 1.3.:** By the end of 2024, the IPAC had a strengthened capacity to manage second instance appeals.
- **Expected Outcome CY 2.1.:** By the end of 2024, reception conditions in the reception facilities supported by EASO improved according to EASO standards.
- **Expected Outcome CY 2.2.:** By the end of 2024, the CY authorities operationalised the core elements (mission, vision and objectives) of the National Reception Strategy.
- **Expected Outcome CY 3.1.:** By the end of 2024, harmonised procedural guarantees and workflows for applicants with special needs were enhanced and implemented throughout asylum and reception.
- **Expected Outcome CY 3.2.:** By the end of 2024, quality assurance mechanisms throughout the asylum procedure, were developed and implemented, and the capacity building needs of CY stakeholders were identified and addressed.
- **Expected Outcome CY 3.3.:** By the end of 2024, the interoperable data management system for asylum and reception was enhanced.
- **Expected Outcome CY 3.4.:** Functional mechanism for cooperation/ solidarity among EU MS and relocation exercises from Cyprus was implemented following a request.

The agreed outcomes shall be achieved through the implementation of the measures specified in Annex I to the Plan.

The designated Plan Coordinator(s), with the support of the Measure Coordinator(s) where relevant, shall follow up the implementation of the Plan through mechanisms and tools deemed appropriate by the implementing Parties, such as a joint quarterly steering committee or other.

The agreed measures may be subject to annual and/or ad-hoc reviews as necessary to ensure their continued relevance and added value.

### 3.0. MAIN NATIONAL PARTNERS

The host Member State's main partners involved in the implementation of this Plan are the following:

Organisation	Responsibilities
Asylum Service, Ministry of the Interior	The Asylum Service (CAS) is responsible for the first instance determination of asylum applications, including the determination of the Member States responsible under the Dublin III Regulation

Organisation	Responsibilities
	<p>criteria. Pursuant to the latest amendments of the Refugees Law the Asylum Service is authorised to issue with a negative decision a return decision in a single administrative act. CAS also offers the applicant the option of Voluntary Return to their country of origin. If no response received by the rejected applicant about voluntary return or request for assisted voluntary return, then the return decision is referred to Aliens and Immigration Unit (AIU) who remains in charge for execution of return decisions and deportation orders.</p> <p>The decisions are based on the Refugee Law (6(1)/2000) and its subsequent amendments.</p> <p>The Asylum Service is also responsible, by the Refugee Law, for the operation of reception and accommodation centres for asylum seekers, as well as for coordinating all other competent authorities on asylum issues.</p>
<p>Aliens and Immigration Unit to the Police, Ministry of Justice and Public Order</p>	<p>The Aliens and Immigration Unit to the Police (AIU) is primarily responsible for receiving and registering applications for international protection on behalf of the Asylum Service (including fingerprinting for EURODAC and Dublin purposes). AIU is also responsible for implementing detention and deportation orders issued by the Director of the Civil Registry and Migration Department (CRMD). The Cypriot police is also responsible for facilitating and maintaining migration related IT-systems, such as the Eurodac and DubliNet NAP. To both systems, large works are expected to take place in the coming years.</p>
<p>Civil Registry and Migration Department of the Ministry of the Interior</p>	<p>Civil Registry and Migration Department (CRMD) is the result of the consolidation of the Migration, Registration and Election Services, which were part of the Ministry of the Interior. CRMD is competent for civil registry and migration matters, such as issuance of residence permits to third country nationals who are holders of international protection status, handling applications for family reunification and issuing of entry and residence permits.</p>
<p>Social Welfare Services, Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance</p>	<p>The Social Welfare Services (SWS) carry the responsibility for the provision of social welfare services to applicants and beneficiaries of international protection. Where the applicant is an unaccompanied minor, the Director of the SWS acts as the guardian of the minor during the asylum procedure. SWS takes all measures necessary under the Refugee Laws and Regulations under it on the minor's behalf and to their best interest including in respect to the asylum procedure.</p>
<p>Ministry of Health</p>	<p>According to the Refugee Law, applicants for international protection are entitled to medical treatment free of charge at public hospitals and health centres, when the applicant does not have sufficient funds. The Ministry of Health is responsible for coordinating access to health services with public healthcare providers (OKYPY) for asylum seekers.</p> <p>Obligatory medical screening examinations also take place at public hospitals, under the leadership and supervision of OKYPY, upon the submission of the application for international protection.</p>
<p>International Protection Administrative Court</p>	<p>The IPAC began operating as of 18 June 2019 with appeals submitted before the court as of July 2019. The IPAC is competent for</p>

Organisation	Responsibilities
	<p>examining appeals relating to provisions of the Refugee Law. Appeals have a suspensive effect, and both facts and points of law are examined. With a constitutional amendment, in September of 2020 the time limit to appeal before the IPAC was reduced. Following the constitutional amendment allowing for an exception from the general 75-day time limit for an appeal against a negative decision of the Asylum Service before the Administrative Court, the time limits to lodge an appeal against a final decision of the Asylum Service in front of the IPAC were amended by a legislative act into: 30 days for the regular procedure and 15 days for the accelerated procedure and for detention orders. Additionally, the time limits to launch an appeal against a decision of the International Protection Administrative Court was reduced to 14 days from 42 days.</p>
Supreme Court	<p>The Supreme Court of Cyprus is the highest court of the Republic. All appeal decisions taken by the IPAC can be further appealed before the Supreme Court. At this level, they will not have a suspensive effect and only points of law are examined.</p>

#### 4.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

EASO is implementing a structured Monitoring and Evaluation methodology allowing evidence-based measurement of progress, corrective action-taking and reflective reviews.

In terms of monitoring, EASO is making use of a number of tools developed in order to collect input from the implementation of the Plan and to guarantee feedback in real time.

Results from the monitoring activities shall be reported through mechanisms deemed appropriate by the implementing Parties, such as steering meetings or other.

Periodic or mid-term and final (ex-post) evaluations<sup>9</sup> can be carried out in order to take stock of lessons learned and good practices. The evaluation(s) will be conducted in line with EASO's Evaluation Framework, which is based on the European Commission's Better Regulation methodological guidelines for evaluations. They may be performed externally through engagement of evaluation specialist(s), internally by EASO staff, or a hybrid approach.

In order to ensure completeness of evaluations and to take into account the views and feedback from the Parties involved, senior and other key persons from the National Authorities of the host Member State may be invited to interviews with the evaluators or to provide feedback by alternative means. The National Authorities shall commit to supporting the evaluation process and participating in such engagements with evaluators by mutually agreed appointments.

**Upon the entry into force of the EUAA Regulation:** An evaluation report on the results of the operational and technical measures shall be submitted to the Management Board on conclusion of an evaluation. The report on the final (ex post) evaluation will be due within 60 days from the end of the Plan. For transparency and accountability purposes, evaluation report(s) may be shared publicly on the

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<sup>9</sup> Should the EUAA Regulation enter into force during the term of the Plan, a final evaluation will be mandatory and subject to a prescribed deadline in line with the applicable Articles.

Agency's website after internal checks have been made to ensure compliance with applicable provisions in Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725<sup>10</sup> and Regulation (EU) No 1049/2001<sup>11</sup>.

Other monitoring and evaluation deliverables, as applicable, shall be shared with the host Member State and communicated to the EASO governance structure (e.g. Management Board members and National Contact Points) where relevant.

## **5.0 LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

### **5.1 General legal basis for the Plan**

#### **Current legal basis:**

The EASO Founding Regulation, in particular Article 2 (2) and (3), (4) and (5) thereof, foresees that EASO shall provide effective operational support to Member States subject to particular pressure on their asylum systems, drawing upon all useful resources at its disposal, which may include the coordination of resources provided by the Member States, as well as technical assistance in regard to the policy and legislation of the EU in all areas having a direct or indirect impact on asylum.

The definition of particular pressure on the asylum and reception system is laid down in Article 8 of the EASO Founding Regulation.

EASO may support the Member State(s) by coordinating action to help facilitate an initial analysis of asylum applications under examination by the competent national authorities (Article 10(a)), action designed to ensure that appropriate reception facilities can be made available by the Member States, in particular emergency accommodation, transport and medical assistance (Article 10(b), and other technical and operational assistance through the deployment of asylum support teams (Article 10(c)).

The operating arrangements of the deployment of the asylum support teams are governed by Chapter 3 of the EASO Founding Regulation, and in particular Articles 13 to 23.

#### **Legal basis upon the entry into force of the EUAA Regulation:**

Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 shall be replaced for Member States bound by the EUAA Regulation in accordance with Article 72 of the draft EUAA Regulation. Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 shall be repealed with effect from the date of entry into force of the EUAA Regulation and the present operating plan shall be implemented in accordance with the Articles 1, 2, 3, 16 to 20 and 23 to 28 of the draft EUAA Regulation.

### **5.2. Legal framework applicable to the Plan**

EASO activities performed in the context of the operational and technical assistance as identified in this Plan are in principle governed by EU law, complemented, where appropriate, by the national law of the host Member State. This includes, inter-alia, the safety and security of persons and assets participating in those EASO activities.

### **5.3. Lawfulness and Respect for Fundamental Rights**

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<sup>10</sup> Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC, (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).

<sup>11</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents, (OJ L 145, 31.05.2001, p. 43).



This Plan shall be implemented by the Parties in full compliance with the applicable law, and with full respects to human dignity. This includes, inter alia, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, as well as the Convention Relating to the Status of refugees of 1951.

Any person contributing to EASO operational support activities and taking part in the implementation of the Plan 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 ethical conduct, professionalism, respect and promotion of fundamental rights and international protection.

They are to act responsibly and proportionally to the agreed objectives. Whilst carrying out supporting functions, all personnel must not discriminate persons on grounds of sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, age or sexual orientation. All persons are expected to treat every person 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.

This obligation is particularly important when dealing with persons who are in need of international protection. To that end, participants in EASO operational support under this Plan shall comply and act in accordance with the 'EASO Code of Conduct for persons participating in EASO operational support activities'. Participants in operational support activities will be requested to sign a declaration on compliance with the EASO Code of Conduct.

Participants in EASO's operational activities who have reason to believe that a violation of the EASO Code of Conduct 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 channel: [complaints\\_operations@easo.europa.eu](mailto:complaints_operations@easo.europa.eu). Such an incident is to be reported using the **Incident Report Form (Annex II)**.

Also upon the entry into force of the EUAA Regulation, any person who is directly affected by the actions of experts in the asylum support teams, and who considers that his or her fundamental rights have been breached due to those actions, or any party representing such a person, may submit a complaint in writing to the Agency through the complaints mechanism<sup>12</sup>, set up by the Agency.

#### **Upon the entry into force of the EUAA Regulation:**

In this respect, upon the entry into force of the EUAA Regulation (and pursuant to Article 49 of the current draft thereof), a Fundamental Rights Officer shall be appointed by the Management Board from a selection of candidates proposed by the Executive Director and shall be responsible for ensuring the Agency's compliance with fundamental rights in the context of its activities and promoting the respect of fundamental rights by the Agency. The Fundamental Rights Officer shall also be in charge of implementing the complaints mechanism<sup>13</sup>.

#### **5.4. Confidentiality, Public Access to Documents and Data Protection, Intellectual property rights**

Without prejudice to the public right of access to documents, as laid down in Regulation (EC) 1049/2001<sup>14</sup> and the EASO implementing rules on access to documents<sup>15</sup>, all versions of this document

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<sup>12</sup> As soon as it is established in the EUAA, after coming into application of the EUAA Regulation.

<sup>13</sup> As soon as it is established in the EUAA, following the entry into force of the EUAA Regulation.

<sup>14</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>15</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

shall be made available to the competent authorities in each EU Member State, as well as the associate countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

EASO and the host Member State shall consult each other on any requests for public access to documents relating to this Plan and treat such requests in accordance with Regulation (EC) 1049/2001 or the respective national law, whichever is applicable.

Personal data will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data. The current Plan also takes into account the General Data Protection Regulation as updated in May 2018<sup>16</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), which is applicable to stakeholders at national level.

Whenever personal data is processed by EASO within the activities agreed in the current Plan, EASO will act as data processor 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.

In order to perform their tasks in accordance with this Plan, participants to activities under this Plan are only allowed to access the data bases mentioned below, under section 6.

EASO will implement the necessary technical and organisational measures to ensure the security and confidentiality of the personal data it processes taking into account possible additional instructions received from the host Member State. This is to prevent any unauthorised disclosure of or access to this information.

The host Member State agrees that any personal data obtained in the course of the implementation of the Plan and by any EASO personnel working on behalf of the Member State authorities can be processed in the EASO IT systems, including cloud-based systems, exclusively under the instructions of the Member State and until an alternative system exists that can substitute the processing system used by EASO.

The host Member State also agrees to indicate a contact point in view of its role as a data controller for any data processed by EASO on behalf of the national authorities of the host Member State.

All rights in any writings or other work produced by members of asylum support teams shall be the property of EASO and/or the European Union, where such writings or work relate to activities undertaken in the context of the Plan. EASO and/or the Union acquires irrevocably ownership of the results and of all intellectual property rights, such as copyright and any other intellectual or industrial property rights, on the materials produced specifically for EASO under the Plan and incorporated in such works, without prejudice, however, to the specific rules concerning pre-existing rights on pre-existing materials or other detailed rules contained in Framework Contracts concluded by EASO for purposes related to the implementation of this Plan. Selected deliverables developed under this Plan may be published.

## **5.5. Civil and criminal liability of members of the Asylum Support Team**

Articles 21 and 22 of the EASO Founding Regulation will be applicable to all members of the asylum support teams deployed in the host Member State.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Corrigendum, OJ L 127, 23.5.2018, p. 2 ((EU) 2016/679)

<sup>17</sup> Reference to Articles 21 and 22 of the EASO Founding Regulation shall be construed as reference to Articles 26 and 27 of the draft EUAA Regulation.

## **5.6. Non-substantial changes during implementation**

The Plan aims to provide effective and flexible support to the identified needs of the host Member State. Therefore, the foreseen activities will be implemented in consideration of the changing circumstances which may occur in the international protection and reception systems in the Member States or on the ground, as well as in the context of the availability of financial resources and experts.

The implementation of measures and delivery of technical and operational assistance foreseen in the Plan may be subject to non-substantial changes that may be accommodated within the objectives of a measure, so long as they do not affect the overall EASO budget, do not require an amendment to or adaptation of the Plan, and that the host Member State is timely informed in writing.

Changes required to the agreed Input(s) and Output(s) in the framework of the Plan shall as a general rule be considered non-substantial, unless such changes require significant additional resources which cannot be accommodated within the overall EASO budget, as well as when they impact on and/or require an amendment of the agreed Outcome(s).

## **5.7. Amendments to the Plan**

Any changes that prove to require an amendment to or adaptation of the Plan, shall be agreed in writing between the Executive Director of EASO and the host Member State in line with Article 18(2) of the EASO Founding Regulation.<sup>18</sup>

Changes to agreed Outcome(s) shall as a general rule be considered substantial changes and will be subject to an amendment.

## **5.8. Suspension of measures and/or the Plan implementation**

After the entry into force of the EUAA Regulation, 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 if the conditions to carry out the operational and technical measures are no longer fulfilled or if the Plan is not respected by the host Member State or if, after consulting the Fundamental Rights Officer, it considers that there are breaches of fundamental rights or international protection obligations by the host Member State that are of a serious nature or are likely to persist.<sup>19</sup>

## **6.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATION STRUCTURE**

This chapter describes the various conditions for and aspects of support to the authorities of the host Member State in the framework of the Plan.

### **6.1. Organisational Pre-Conditions**

**The host Member State will:**

- designate an overall Plan Coordinator, as well as a specific Measure Coordinator for each measure stipulated in the Plan
- grant appropriate access rights for the members of asylum support teams and EASO representatives to all relevant databases and provide the relevant parties with the required information and data in the context of the implementation of this Plan
- facilitate the provision of appropriate working space

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<sup>18</sup> Reference to Article 18(2) of the EASO Founding Regulation shall be construed as reference to Article 18(5) of the draft EUAA Regulation.

<sup>19</sup> In accordance with Article 18(6)(c) of the draft EUAA Regulation.

Every effort shall be made by the Parties to provide suitable working conditions and, where required, working place for the participants in the activities implemented in the framework of the Plan.

Minimum working and security conditions are considered as organisational pre-conditions.

As far as operationally feasible, and where relevant, the working files shall be made available by the host Member State in English (unless otherwise agreed).

The host Member State shall provide EASO with information on the implementation of the Plan through timely input to the Early warning and Preparedness System and the delivery of tailored information on the execution of measures agreed in the Plan.

**EASO will:**

- designate an overall Plan Coordinator (also referred to as Union Contact Point in accordance to Article 20 of EASO Regulation), as well as a specific Measure Coordinator for each measure stipulated in the Plan.
- 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.
- provide the technical equipment required for the work of the asylum support teams and reimburse costs incurred by persons participating in the support activities deployed by EASO in the framework of this Plan, according to the applicable EASO rules.

## **6.2. Conditions for Deployment**

General rules and conditions for deployment are published on the following platforms, which the experts/asylum support team members are obliged to consult:

- EASO Operational Deployment Management System (ODMS).
- EASO country-specific operations platforms. These platforms are made available to members of asylum support teams upon their deployment, allowing for preparation for deployment and daily implementation of their tasks.
- Other appropriate communication tools may be used as necessary.

The platforms contain relevant information, such as:

- special instructions for the members of asylum support teams, including databases that they are authorised to consult;
- description of specific tasks, workflows and procedures, as relevant;
- location in the host Member State where the asylum support teams will be deployed;
- logistical arrangements including information on working conditions, practical information concerning location of deployment and related workflows, etc.;
- equipment that members of asylum support teams may carry in the host Member State, transport and other logistics;
- other specific instructions and provisions as necessary.

Relevant thematic pages of the EASO Information and Documentation System concerning the asylum and reception system of the host Member State, including information on relevant practices, legislation, case law and statistical background may be consulted.

The host Member State shall contribute to information concerning its asylum and reception systems, including information on relevant practices, legislation, case law and statistical background.

The host Member State and EASO will provide experts with information on the general state of play with regard to the procedures for international protection and reception in the host Member State and specific information about the state of play of the deliverables as necessary for the specific measures on a continuous basis. Specific asylum support team deployment details may be provided under each measure, where relevant.

### 6.3. Composition of asylum support teams

#### Under the EASO Founding Regulation:

The asylum support teams may consist of the following categories of resources, being members of the asylum support teams:

- a) Member States experts, i.e. experts made available through contributions to the Asylum Intervention Pool by EU Member States via national expert pools on the basis of defined profiles, in accordance with Article 15 of the EASO Founding Regulation;
- b) Associate Countries experts, i.e. experts considered to be Member States experts, made available through contributions to the Asylum Intervention Pool by associate countries referred to in Article 49 of the EASO Founding Regulation, with which the European Union has an arrangement in place on the modalities of its participation in EASO's work. Currently such arrangements have been concluded with the Kingdom of Norway, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Swiss Confederation, and the Republic of Iceland;
- c) Individual experts, i.e. experts considered to be Member States experts, made available through contributions to the Asylum Intervention Pool by EU Member States via national expert pools on the basis of defined profiles, in accordance with Article 15 of the EASO Founding Regulation, but whereby the Member State does not have an employment relationship with the individual expert;
- d) EASO staff members, i.e. statutory staff employed by the Agency (temporary and contract staff) subject to the Staff Regulations of Officials and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union<sup>20</sup>;
- e) Seconded National Experts (SNEs), i.e. experts employed by a national, regional or local public administration of an EU Member State or an associate country or by a public inter-governmental organisation and seconded to the Agency<sup>21</sup> for the provision of support to its operational activities;
- f) Experts on contract, i.e. individuals providing services in relation to the Plan upon conclusion of a public contract between the Agency and the legal entity with which these individuals have an employment and/or contractual relationship, including temporary agency workers, or with remunerated external experts in line with Article 93 of EASO Financial Regulation<sup>22</sup>.

The implementation of the Plan shall be based on the common understanding that the provision of resources, other than EASO (statutory) staff, to be deployed for the purposes described above can under no circumstances lead per se to the establishment of an employment relationship between EASO and the members of the asylum support teams, nor, in the case of embedded experts on contract, between these experts and the national authorities to which they may be assigned as per the embedded model described below. Throughout the duration of the deployment of the asylum support teams in the activities undertaken in the context of the present Plan, the employer of the asylum support team members is and remains their employer.

#### Upon the entry into force of the EUAA Regulation:

The asylum support teams may be composed of the following resources:

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<sup>20</sup> As laid down by Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom, ECSC) No 259/68, OJ L 56, 4.3.1968, p.1

<sup>21</sup> Decision No 01 of the Management Board of EASO of 25 November 2010 laying down rules on the secondment of national experts (SNE) to the European Asylum Support Office (ref. number: EASO/MB/2010/03).

<sup>22</sup> Article 93 of Management Board Decision No 54 of 14 August 2019 on the EASO Financial Regulation (as amended by Management Board Decision No 74 of 28 July 2021). The MB Decision nr 54 of 14 August 2019 remains in force despite EASO being replaced by the EUAA. Any references in the EASO Financial Regulation to 'EASO' or the 'EASO Regulation', should therefore be construed as references to the 'EUAA' or equivalent provisions in the 'EUAA Regulation', respectively.

- i. The Agency's staff members, i.e. statutory staff employed by the Agency subject to the Staff Regulations of Officials and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union<sup>23</sup>;
- ii. Member States experts, including Member State experts made available through the Asylum Reserve Pool;
- iii. Associate Countries experts, i.e. experts made available through contributions to the Asylum Intervention Pool by associate countries referred to in Article 34 of the draft EUAA Regulation, with which the European Union has an arrangement in place on the modalities of its participation in EASO's work;
- iv. Seconded National Experts (SNEs), i.e. experts employed by a national, regional or local public administration of an EU Member State or an associate country or by a public inter-governmental organisation and seconded to the Agency<sup>24</sup> for the provision of support to its operational activities;
- v. Other experts not employed by the Agency: Experts on contract, i.e. individuals providing services in relation to the Plan upon conclusion of a public contract between the Agency and the legal entity with which these individuals have an employment and/or contractual relationship, including temporary agency workers, or with remunerated external experts in line with Article 93 of EASO Financial Regulation<sup>25</sup>.

The implementation of the Plan shall be based on the common understanding that the provision of resources, other than EUAA (statutory) staff, to be deployed for the purposes described above can under no circumstances lead *per se* to the establishment of an employment relationship between EUAA and the members of the asylum support teams, nor, in the case of embedded experts on contract, between these experts and the national authorities to which they may be assigned as per the embedded model described below. Throughout the duration of the deployment of the asylum support teams in the activities undertaken in the context of the present Plan, the employer of the asylum support teams members is and remains their employer.

#### **6.4. Implementation modalities - the embedded model**

In accordance with Chapter 3 of EASO Regulation<sup>26</sup>, the Support Office may coordinate the necessary technical and operational assistance to the requesting Member State or Member States and the deployment, for a limited time, of an asylum support team in the territory of that Member State or those Member States.

The notion of the 'embedded model' represents an integrated approach to the implementation of the Plan, applicable exclusively with regard to experts on contract, including remunerated external experts. In accordance with this model, experts on contract deployed as members of asylum support teams, are embedded within the structure of the respective national authorities to ensure utmost efficiency, quality and sustainability of the anticipated results. In practice, those experts on contract are seconded by EASO to national authorities of the host Member State and therefore perform their assignment(s) on the premises of the relevant national authorities (e.g. the National Asylum Service). In such cases, a coordination mechanism shall be agreed by the Parties to oversee both the overall implementation of the Plan at national level and its implementation at local level (i.e. in the respective location of the host Member State) or for the respective measure foreseen in the Plan, including with regard to the allocation and the administration of resources. For this purpose, detailed administrative and reporting workflows and procedures related to the provision and management of 'embedded'

<sup>23</sup> As laid down by Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom, ECSC) No 259/68, OJ L 56, 4.3.1968, p.1.

<sup>24</sup> By virtue of Decision No xx of the Management Board of the EUAA of xx/xx/xx laying down rules on the secondment of national experts (SNE) to the European Union Agency for Asylum (ref. number: EUAA/MB/20XX/XX).

<sup>25</sup> Article 93 of Management Board Decision No 54 of 14 August 2019 on the EASO Financial Regulation (as amended by Management Board Decision No 74 of 28 July 2021). The MB Decision nr 54 of 14 August 2019 remains in force despite EASO being replaced by the EUAA. Any references in the EASO Financial Regulation to 'EASO' or the 'EASO Regulation', should therefore be construed as references to the 'EUAA' or equivalent provisions in the 'EUAA Regulation', respectively.

<sup>26</sup> Any reference to Chapter 3 of the EASO Regulation shall be construed as reference to Chapter 6 of the draft EUAA Regulation.

resources and reflecting respective roles and responsibilities shall be established and agreed upon in writing between EASO and the host Member State. In setting up the aforementioned coordination mechanism, the following rules must be complied with as a minimum:

(a) EASO shall duly advise the employers of the experts on contract or the remunerated external experts themselves of their envisaged secondment to the national authorities of the host Member State before such secondment takes place;

(b) The national authority shall clearly acknowledge that they endorse the obligations and responsibilities pertaining to them as hosting authority vis-à-vis the experts on contract seconded to them;

(c) The national authority is responsible for ensuring proper working conditions for the expert on contract, and is responsible for the health, safety and security during work. EASO may not be held liable for any breach in the Health and Safety rules that might occur in the premises of the national authorities and/or under the supervision of the national authorities.

## **7.0 SECURITY AND SAFETY**

The principles of EASO's Security Governance Framework<sup>27</sup> are based on the security principles contained in the Commission's security rules. That 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 falls under the overall legal framework of the host Member State and shall be provided by the respective authorities legally responsible and accountable for the public order and security and safety on the territory of that Member State.

EASO will endeavour to support the identification of required security and safety measures and the implementation of those that are under its remit, both legally and functionally, in close cooperation with the Member States security responsible (see relevant definition in Section 7.1 below).

To that end:

- Standard security and safety requirements, identified herewith, shall apply as a general rule.
- Specific security and safety requirements for the Plan, to be identified jointly by EASO and the host Member State security responsible, shall be established in an annex to this plan.
- The safety and security measures shall be identified jointly on a basis of field assessment visits.

### **7.1. Standard security requirements**

The standard security and safety requirements are rather pertaining 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 single point of contact responsible for security matters under the Plan both at central and local level (hereafter 'security responsible').
- The host Member State shall ensure that the working conditions for the performance of the activities under the Plan are compliant with the national occupational health and safety norms and regulations.
- A pre-deployment briefing programme, drafted in close cooperation with the respective national authorities, focusing both on general security rules and awareness, as well as on specific security aspects for each deployment will be provided. With regards to the

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<sup>27</sup> Decision of the Executive Director No 61 of 12 April 2021 on the Security Governance Framework.

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 operations in field locations, 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. Emergency plans shall be drafted and maintained up-to-date by the competent authority/person(s), whereas they shall be made available to the concerned parties and exercised regularly. A security responsible shall maintain updated information on the availability of evacuation plans and routes.
- Communication tools. As considered relevant by the EASO Security sector, EASO operational staff shall have access to independent radio communication equipment. If possible, the equipment shall be interoperable with the local law enforcement in charge of the security of the operation.
- Security of information. Sensitive non-classified and classified information shall be protected adequately, in accordance with the applicable legal framework<sup>28</sup>. EASO's security responsible shall 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 behaviour shall 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 HQ is essential to ensure an overview of the overall security management is maintained.

## **7.2. Specific security and safety requirements**

Specific security and safety requirements for the implementation of the Plan 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 Member State and involved stakeholders, prior to the deployment of asylum support teams.

## **7.3. Suspension of operational activities on security and safety grounds**

EASO reserves the right to suspend operational activities on the basis of current risk assessment(s), while keeping informed the host Member State on the findings and identified mitigating measures required for resumption.

The host Member State may also suspend temporarily, in whole or in part, the implementation of operational activities in case of serious imminent safety and security incidents, developments, or as mitigating or preventive measures or direct threats to personnel, activities or physical presence. The EASO Plan Coordinator and the EASO security responsible shall be informed without delay.

The Parties will agree on conditions for resumption as soon as possible.

## **7.4. Security incident reporting**

Any participant in EASO's operational activities who becomes aware of a(n) (impending) incident related to the security and safety of persons, assets or premises is obliged to report the matter to the

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<sup>28</sup> Including, *inter alia*, the security principles contained in Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444.



Executive Director of EASO and to the Host Member State Coordinator for the Plan via the appropriate channel: [security\\_incidents\\_operations@easo.europa.eu](mailto:security_incidents_operations@easo.europa.eu). Such an incident is to be reported using **the Security Incident Report Form (Annex III)**.

## **8.0. COMMUNICATION**

The Executive Director will designate the Union Contact Point referred under Article 20 of the EASO Regulation, who acts as an interface between EASO, the host Member State, and the members of the asylum support teams. 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 the asylum support teams' deployment. Upon entry into force of the EUAA Regulation, the Union Contact Point will assume the functions of Coordinating Officer.

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

During the implementation of this Plan, members of asylum support teams shall be briefed regularly on the 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 need be identified or changed during the Plan implementation, it shall be communicated to EASO for further consideration.

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 will facilitate media coverage to ensure a wider dissemination and visibility of results.

As a publicly funded EU body, the Agency is accountable for and committed to transparency for the public resources it makes use of.

In this regard, the Agency may brand its operational activities to ensure appropriate visibility. This includes the application of fixed branding and use of visibility items, such as on, but not limited to, containers and premises, as well as in offices where the Agency provides operational and technical assistance. It also includes the branding of mobile assets which it may deploy, including vehicles.

Such branding may also include visibility clothing and materials worn by personnel deployed by the Agency in order to identify their association to, or funding by, the Agency.

In specific cases, the Agency and the respective national authority/ies may agree on co-branding of visibility clothing and/or materials, in line with the visual identity rules and guidelines of both/all parties.

## **9.0. COOPERATION WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS**

### **9.1. Cooperation with the European Commission**

All activities under this Plan will be closely coordinated with the host Member State and in close cooperation with the European Commission as well as with the other EU Agencies.

## **9.2. Cooperation with UNHCR**

In accordance with Article 50 of the EASO Regulation<sup>29</sup>, 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.

## **9.3. Cooperation with IOM**

In accordance with Article 52 of the EASO Regulation, in July 2019 EASO signed a working arrangement with IOM to establish a cooperation framework covering the relevant areas of common work and interest setting objectives and principles of such cooperation. Therefore, the Union Contact Point will liaise with the IOM 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 and in accordance with the working arrangement.

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<sup>29</sup> Reference to Article 52 of the EASO Regulation shall be construed as reference to Article 38 of the draft EUAA Regulation.

## ANNEX I – Operational Measures

<b>Measure CY 1: Support to Asylum</b>	
<p><b>Expected Outcome CY 1.1.:</b> By the end of 2024, access to the asylum procedure in Cyprus complied with CEAS and followed a unified workflow.</p> <p><b>Expected Outcome CY 1.2:</b> By the end of 2024, the CAS developed efficient management systems to process first instance asylum applications aimed at reducing the backlog.</p> <p><b>Expected Outcome CY 1.3:</b> By the end of 2024, the IPAC had a strengthened capacity to manage second instance appeals.</p>	
<b>Responsible Authority(ies)/Main National Partner(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of the Interior (MOI)</li> <li>• Ministry of Health (MOH)</li> <li>• Cyprus Asylum Service (CAS)</li> <li>• Aliens and Immigration Unit of the Police (AIU)</li> <li>• Civil Registry and Migration Department (CRMD)</li> <li>• State Health Services Organisation (OKYPY)</li> <li>• Social Welfare Services (SWS)</li> <li>• International Protection Administrative Court (IPAC)</li> <li>• Supreme Court</li> </ul>
<b>Operational Preconditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient human resources available in the national authorities;</li> <li>• Sufficient and adequate workstations for staff including IT facilities;</li> <li>• Systematic data sharing on the outputs of EASO deployed personnel under the performed operational activities and detailed overall national data on the respective statistical indicators are agreed;</li> <li>• Institutionalised data sharing with relevant CY authorities and stakeholders;</li> <li>• Sufficient absorption capacity of the relevant CY Authorities;</li> <li>• Agreement on the implementation of standardised workflows and SOPs;</li> <li>• The number of new arrivals remain steady and manageable.</li> </ul>
<b>Outputs</b>	<p>Output 1: Registration workflows in line with CEAS have been agreed and implemented.</p> <p>Output 2: Enhanced the capacity of the CAS to process first instance applications.</p> <p>Output 3: Roll out and increased use of a digitalised file management system across all stages of the asylum procedure and reception pathway.</p> <p>Output 4: Enhanced capacity of the IPAC to effectively manage and reduce backlog and increase decision making.</p>
<b>Actions</b>	<p><b>Expected Outcome CY 1.1.:</b> By the end of 2024, access to asylum procedure in Cyprus complied with CEAS and followed a unified workflow.</p>

	<p>In line with the Standard Operating Procedures applicable to the <sup>30</sup>'Pournara' First Reception Centre, jointly agreed in 2020, Cyprus decided to refer all new arrivals to 'Pournara', including for the initial stages of the asylum procedure e.g., up to the submission of the asylum application there. An Examination Centre adjacent to 'Pournara' was moreover created. The services provided in 'Pournara' include identification, registration, and lodging of asylum applications, as well as medical screening and vulnerability assessments. The full assessment of asylum applications are currently undertaken at the new Asylum Examination Centre. EASO support in registrations in 2021 was provided mainly (and as of April 2021 exclusively) at the 'Pournara' First Reception Centre.</p> <p>Building on EASO's existing involvement in the FRC 'Pournara', the 2022-2024 implementation period will continue to support the lodging of asylum requests and broaden the support to the whole registration procedure in line with CEAS, in FRC 'Pournara' and elsewhere considered necessary by the CY authorities. This will include the timely implementation of information provision activities, quality face-to-face registration (e.g., identification and referral of persons with special needs, including Dublin cases) and the establishment of clear workflows and guarantees to align the application procedure with CEAS. Additionally, given the continued steady increase in the number of new applicants for international protection EASO assistance will focus on flow management support, including scheduling and prioritisation of cases.</p> <p><b>Expected Outcome CY 1.2: By the end of 2024, the CAS developed efficient management systems to process first instance asylum applications aimed at reducing the backlog.</b></p> <p>By the end of September 2021, the number of pending first instance applications stood at 16,990, albeit 9% fewer compared to the same period of 2020.</p> <p>In the 2022-2024 period, EASO aims to continue supporting the Cypriot authorities in performing interviews and drafting recommendations. These actions will be strengthened by COI support and the development of a quality assurance system jointly agreed with the CAS. Furthermore, EASO will support the CAS in strengthening the Vulnerability Team and its capacity to address special needs groups. EASO will also assist the CAS with the ongoing process of file digitalisation and the implementation of a functional archiving system, in line with data protection policies and standards. These systems will reinforce case and backlog management systems which EASO plans to support.</p> <p><b>Expected Outcome CY 1.3: By the end of 2024, the IPAC had a strengthened capacity to manage appeals.</b></p> <p>EASO's support to the IPAC will mainly focus on improved efficiency to reduce the actual backlog by reinforcing the overall case management, from the registration of the appeal to the issuance of the decision. This will notably include providing support to the processing of the appeal, the preparation of the decision and to COI and case law research. EASO's intervention at the IPAC for the 2022-2024 period will support the</p>
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<sup>30</sup> Standard Operating Procedures applicable to 'Pournara' Ref. ARES(2020)3974972 – 28/07/2020.

	<p>development of an efficient case flow management system, including the recast of its rules of procedure, in close collaboration with the EASO Courts and Tribunals Sector. Assistance will also be provided to strengthen the administrative and clerical capacity of the Court.</p> <p>EASO will also continue to support in strengthening the expertise and skills of the members of the IPAC through tailor-made capacity building professional development activities in the field of international protection law.</p>
<p><b>Inputs<sup>31</sup></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deployment of asylum support teams</li> </ul> <p><b>Inputs CY 1.1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Intermediate Asylum and Reception Programme and Project Management Expert or Senior Asylum and/or Reception Operations Expert to perform the functions of Focal Point for Access and Registration under CY1 Support to Asylum</li> <li>• 1 Intermediate/ Junior Asylum and/or Reception Operations Expert to perform the functions of field support officer</li> <li>• 2 Intermediate Asylum Registration Experts</li> <li>• Up to 15 Junior Asylum Registration Experts – to respond to current and potential future expanded needs (e.g., Disembarkation, pre-registration etc.) upon request of the authorities and provided that the pre-conditions are met</li> <li>• 3 Junior/ Intermediate Asylum Information Provision Experts</li> <li>• 3 Junior/ Intermediate Flow Management Experts</li> <li>• 1 Junior/ Intermediate Reception Procurement expert</li> <li>• 1 Organisational Development/ Change Management Expert</li> <li>• 2 Asylum Flow Management Experts</li> <li>• 2 Asylum Information Provision Experts</li> <li>• 4 Asylum Registration Experts</li> </ul> <p><b>Inputs CY 1.2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Senior/ Intermediate Asylum and/or Reception Operations Expert to perform the functions of Focal Point for First Instance Determination under CY1 Support to Asylum</li> <li>• 45 Senior/ Intermediate Case Experts</li> <li>• 3 Intermediate COI Experts</li> <li>• 2 Junior/ Intermediate Vulnerability Expert</li> <li>• 1 Junior Asylum and/or Reception Statistics Experts</li> <li>• 4 Junior/ Intermediate Asylum and/or Reception Operations Experts</li> <li>• 1 Intermediate Organisational Development Expert/ Intermediate Flow Manager</li> <li>• 2 Junior/Intermediate Legal Experts – Asylum and/or Reception</li> <li>• 1 COI Expert</li> <li>• 6 Case Experts (Senior)</li> <li>• 10 Case Experts</li> <li>• 1 Asylum Flow Management Expert</li> </ul>

<sup>31</sup> The agreed inputs are the resources to be deployed during the first year of the Plan implementation. These will be subject to at least annual revision or more regular revision and may be revised as necessary.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Inputs CY 1.3:</b></li> <li>• 1 Senior Asylum Second Instance Support Expert to perform the functions of Focal Point for Determination in Appeal under CY1 Support to Asylum</li> <li>• Up to 30 Junior/ Intermediate Asylum Second Instance Support Experts, upon request of the authorities and provided that the preconditions are met</li> <li>• 2 Junior Asylum and/or Reception Statistics Experts</li> <li>• Up to 4 Judicial Experts (Courts &amp; Tribunal pool)</li> <li>• 2 Study visits to relevant Member States courts or tribunals</li> <li>• Up to 3 dedicated workshops based on the EASO Professional Development Series for members of Courts and Tribunals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Horizontal for all activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of interpretation and translation services</li> <li>• Provision of security and IT services</li> <li>• Provision of equipment, material and operational support, including inter alia works, services, communication/promotional materials, costs for trainings/meetings/workshops, infrastructure costs, IT equipment, office supplies and others where required for the joint EASO and national authorities' activities.</li> </ul>
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<b>Measure CY 2: Support to Reception</b>	
<b>Expected Outcome CY 2.1.:</b> By the end of 2024, reception conditions in the reception facilities supported by EASO improved according to EASO standards.	
<b>Expected Outcome CY 2.2.:</b> By the end of 2024, the CY authorities operationalised the core elements (mission, vision and objectives) of the National Reception Strategy.	
<b>Responsible Authority(ies)/Main National Partner(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of the Interior (MOI)</li> <li>• Ministry of Health (MOH)</li> <li>• Cyprus Asylum Service (CAS)</li> <li>• Civil Registry and Migration Department (CRMD)</li> <li>• Social Welfare Services (SWS)</li> <li>• State Health Services Organisation (OKYPY)</li> </ul>
<b>Operational Preconditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification on roles and responsibilities on reception between relevant national stakeholders;</li> <li>• Sufficient human resources available in the national authorities;</li> <li>• Sufficient and adequate workstations for staff including IT facilities;</li> <li>• Systematic data sharing on the outputs of EASO deployed personnel under the performed operational activities and detailed overall national data on the respective statistical indicators are agreed;</li> <li>• Institutionalised data sharing with relevant CY authorities and stakeholders;</li> <li>• Sufficient absorption capacity of CY Authorities;</li> <li>• Agreement on the implementation of standardised workflows and SOPs in close consultation with the Commission;</li> <li>• The number of new arrivals remain steady and manageable.</li> </ul>

<b>Outputs</b>	<p>Output 1: Consolidated implementation of social work and reception support activities.</p> <p>Output 2: An implementation plan for nation reception strategy was agreed and operationalised, in close consultation with the Commission.</p>
<b>Actions</b>	<p>Kofinou Reception Centre has been steadily supported by an EASO team of social workers, reception support officers (including Member States Experts), interpreters, a reception coordination officer since early 2019.</p> <p>Cumulatively, this engagement has led to improvements of the quality of conditions and support provided in reception facilities, especially on individual case management, information provision for new arrivals, vulnerability identification and referral.</p> <p>Based on this existing foundation, between 2022-2024 EASO support will focus on harmonizing social work activities across reception facilities. Strengthening of reception activities and enhancing information provision within reception facilities will be prioritised. On a more central level, support in the management of reception facilities, and support for planning and designing facilities will be provided in coordination with all relevant stakeholders. Support towards contingency planning and implementation to enhance reception conditions according to CEAS standards, could also be provided under exceptional migratory flows.</p> <p>In 2021 EASO has supported the CAS with the development of the National Reception Strategy in close consultation with the Commission and engaging all relevant actors. In the 2022-2024 implementation period EASO will support the continued coordination with relevant stakeholders focusing on the operationalisation of the National Reception Strategy. To this end, EASO will support the establishment of the steering committee and thematic working groups to assist with the implementation of the Strategy. Close cooperation with the Commission will be ensured throughout the process.</p> <p>Additionally, and building on the existing systems where relevant and available, further efforts will be devoted to support the development and implementation of a functional integrated allocation system for reception facilities that includes allocation mechanisms, workflows, SOPs, an online reception allocation platform accessible by all relevant stakeholders. From this, EASO support will also prioritise establishing systems for management of inflow and outflow from reception facilities.</p>
<b>Inputs<sup>32</sup></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deployment of asylum support teams</li> </ul> <p><b>Inputs CY2.1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Intermediate Asylum and Reception Programme and Project Management Expert/ Senior Asylum and/or Reception Operations Expert to perform the functions of Focal Point under CY2 Reception</li> <li>• 2 Senior Reception Centre and Site Management Experts or Intermediate Asylum and/or Reception Operations Experts or</li> </ul>

<sup>32</sup> The agreed inputs are the resources to be deployed during the first year of the Plan implementation. These will be subject to at least annual revision or more regular revision and may be revised as necessary.

	<p>Intermediate Reception Experts to perform the functions of assisting in the management of Reception Centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Intermediate Reception Centre and Site Management Experts or Junior Asylum and/or Reception Operations Experts to perform the function of assisting in the management of the Reception Centres with regards to shelter, WASH, Health, Food and NFI (Non-Food Items)</li> <li>• 3 Junior/ Intermediate Asylum Flow Management Experts and/or Junior/ Intermediate Reception Experts to support in allocation and managing the outflow from Pournara First Reception Centre</li> <li>• 3 Junior/ Intermediate Asylum Information Provision Experts or Intermediate Legal Experts Asylum and/or Reception to support with info provision at Reception facilities level</li> <li>• Up to 6 Junior/ Senior Social Workers</li> <li>• 1 Junior/ Intermediate Asylum and/or Reception Statistics Expert to support for allocation and outflow</li> <li>• 2 Reception Experts for Reception facilities</li> <li>• 1 Reception Centre and Site Management/ Reception Operations/ Organisational Development/ Change Management Expert</li> </ul> <p><b>Inputs CY2.2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Expert or Senior Organisational Development Expert to perform the functions of Focal Point for the Reception Strategy operationalisation under CY2 Reception</li> <li>• 1 Intermediate Reception Procurement Expert or Intermediate/ Senior Structural and EU funding Mechanism Expert or Intermediate/ Senior Asylum and Reception Financial Management Expert to support CAS</li> <li>• 1 Senior Reception Centre Design Expert or Senior Reception Centre Construction Expert to support CAS</li> <li>• 1 Reception Expert for Reception Strategy</li> <li>• 1 Reception Centre Design/ Construction Expert</li> <li>• 1 Reception Centre and Site Management/ Reception Operations/ Organisational Development/ Change Management Expert</li> </ul> <p><b>Horizontal for all activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of interpretation and translation services</li> <li>• Provision of security and IT services</li> <li>• Provision of equipment, material and operational support, including inter alia works, services, communication/promotional materials, costs for trainings/meetings/workshops, infrastructure costs, IT equipment, office supplies and others where required for the joint EASO and national authorities' activities.</li> </ul>
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**Measure CY 3: Cross cutting support (applicants with special needs, quality, capacity building, digitalisation and transfer procedures)**

**Expected Outcome CY 3.1.:** By the end of 2024, harmonised procedural guarantees and workflow for applicants with special needs were enhanced and implemented throughout asylum and reception.

**Expected Outcome CY 3.2.:** By the end of 2024, quality assurance mechanisms throughout the asylum procedure were developed and implemented, and the capacity building needs of CY stakeholders were identified and addressed.

**Expected Outcome CY 3.3.:** By the end of 2024, the interoperable data management system for asylum and reception was enhanced.

**Expected Outcome CY 3.4:** Functional mechanism for cooperation/solidarity among EU MS and relocation exercises from Cyprus was implemented following a request.

<p><b>Responsible Authority(ies)/Main National Partner(s)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of the Interior (MOI)</li> <li>• Ministry of Health (MOH)</li> <li>• Cyprus Asylum Service (CAS)</li> <li>• Aliens and Immigration Unit of the Police (AIU)</li> <li>• Civil Registry and Migration Department (CRMD)</li> <li>• Social Welfare Services (SWS)</li> <li>• International Protection Administrative Court (IPAC)</li> <li>• Supreme Court</li> </ul>
<p><b>Operational Preconditions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient human resources available in the national authorities;</li> <li>• Sufficient and adequate workstations for staff, including IT facilities;</li> <li>• Access to necessary data and information;</li> <li>• Sufficient absorption capacity of CY Authorities;</li> <li>• Agreement on the implementation of standardised workflows and SOPs;</li> <li>• Data protection assessment by the national commissioner prior to development and operationalization of IT tool (integrated asylum and reception IT infrastructure);</li> <li>• The number of new arrivals remain steady and manageable.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outputs</b></p>	<p>Output 1: Capacity of CY relevant authorities for the timely and quality identification, assessment and referral of applicants with special needs, including UAM, was enhanced and workflow standardised across the asylum procedure.</p> <p>Output 2: A quality framework and system for vulnerability assessment and referral process was set up and implemented.</p> <p>Output 3: Capacity building needs of Cypriot authorities had been analysed and addressed.</p> <p>Output 4: Quality assurance mechanisms were developed and implemented across the asylum and reception procedure in EASO Cyprus operations.</p> <p>Output 5: Increased and enhanced capacity of the of Cypriot authorities to identify and assess Dublin cases and process requests according to the Dublin III Regulation.</p>

	<p>Output 6: Integrated asylum and reception IT infrastructure accessible and operable by all relevant stakeholders, in full accordance with applicable EU standards.</p> <p>Output 7: Voluntary Relocation exercises, including the identification of cases and matching, were supported.</p>
<p><b>Actions</b></p>	<p><b>Expected Outcome CY 3.1.: By 2024, harmonised procedural guarantees and workflow for applicants with special needs were enhanced and implemented throughout asylum and reception.</b></p> <p>Current operations have identified that there is a lack of clear pathways and structure to streamline vulnerability/special needs identification, assessments and referrals among stakeholders and procedural steps. Also, there is a limited capacity (e.g. HR, tools, workflows) to timely identify and address vulnerabilities and special needs. EASO will support the operationalisation of the Safe Zone in FRC Pournara and will support in drafting and implementing standardised procedures and workflows on vulnerability/special needs identification, assessment and referral, in line with quality standards and legal framework. This will include also support to unaccompanied minor identification, age-assessment and take-charge procedures.</p> <p>The EASO support on special needs for 2022-2024 will also include the establishment of a permanent vulnerability working group among relevant stakeholders and the development of quality framework and quality monitoring tools and workflows. Finally, EASO assistance will support the drafting and implementation of an overall identification and take-charge procedure and workflows for persons with special needs.</p> <p><b>Expected Outcome CY 3.2.: By 2024, quality assurance mechanisms were developed and implemented, and the training needs of CY stakeholders were identified and addressed.</b></p> <p>Mechanisms on quality across EASO's interventions will be prioritised in the 2022-2024 period. Actions will comprise the development and implementation of quality assurance systems for access to procedure, first instance, second instance, vulnerability identification, assessment and referrals, including development of guidance tools, checklist and information leaflets to address gaps and needs identified. Also, EASO will support the implementation of quality self-assessment related activities in reception. Cypriot authorities will be engaged in EASO supported capacity building activities.</p> <p>2022-2024 will include various capacity building activities focused on Dublin procedures and transfers including the use of DubliNet and Eurodac system. In reference to the Dublin procedure, EASO will support quality and standardization, and further enhancing the identification and assessment of Dublin cases. Specifically, EASO will support the Dublin Unit in managing and processing Dublin requests and transfers.</p> <p>Training needs identification will be supported by EASO in 2022-2024. A needs assessment on training needs will be conducted and activities and on-the-job coaching will be organised involving Cypriot authorities. Modules of the EASO Training Curriculum, workshops and ad hoc thematic sessions can be organised to strengthen the capacity of</p>

	<p>relevant stakeholders. EASO activities will also support CAS to strengthen their internal training structure.</p> <p><b>Expected Outcome CY 3.3.: By the end of 2024, the interoperable data management system for asylum and reception was enhanced.</b></p> <p>Supporting stakeholders in Cyprus to develop digitalised accessible systems has been a significant component of EASO assistance thus far. 2022-2024 EASO support would be focused on enhancing the interoperable data management systems for asylum and reception, in line with data protection policies and standards. Assistance will include support conducting comprehensive consultations with relevant stakeholders assessing their needs and current capacities. Building on existing tools and in complementarity with ongoing processes, a business analysis for implementation would be supported by EASO. Technical assistance should be provided where necessary and support for the piloting of the management system will be supplied.</p> <p><b>Expected Outcome CY 3.4: Enhanced cooperation mechanism/solidarity among EU MS and relocation exercises from Cyprus was implemented following a request.</b></p> <p>In order to support Cyprus with outflow solutions, enhancing the principle of solidarity among EU Member States, EASO, in close collaboration with the Commission, will support Cyprus authorities in implementing relocation exercises if requested and in case pledges are offered to Cyprus from other Member States. EASO will also implement tailored made capacity building activities and support the creation of guidance and tools related to relocation for stakeholders. EASO will also facilitate the exchange of information and best practices between Member States: this will enhance their capacity to ensure info provision and implementation of transfers.</p>
<p><b>Inputs<sup>33</sup></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deployment of asylum support teams</li> </ul> <p><b>Inputs CY3.1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Intermediate Vulnerability Expert to perform the functions of Focal Point for Vulnerability in Asylum and in Reception facilities under CY3 Special Needs, Quality, Capacity Building and Digitalisation</li> <li>• Up to 2 Intermediate Vulnerability Experts (CAS/Pournara)</li> <li>• Up to 5 Junior/ Intermediate Vulnerability Experts (CAS and Pournara)</li> <li>• 1 Intermediate Asylum Age Assessment Expert/ Intermediate Reception Child Protection Expert (depending on expressed needs and subsequent to the MSE deployment and identification of needs)</li> <li>• 1 Asylum Quality Assurance Expert</li> <li>• 2 Vulnerability Experts</li> </ul> <p><b>Inputs CY3.2:</b></p>

<sup>33</sup> The agreed inputs are the resources to be deployed during the first year of the Plan implementation. These will be subject to at least annual revision or more regular revision and may be revised as necessary.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Senior/ Intermediate Asylum Quality Assurance Expert to perform the function of Focal Point for Q&amp;A under CY3 Quality, Capacity building and Digitalisation</li> <li>• 1 Intermediate Asylum Quality Assurance Experts as Focal Point for quality assurance activities development and implementation</li> <li>• Up to 2 Intermediate Asylum Training Experts / Intermediate Reception Training Expert</li> <li>• 2 Junior/ Intermediate Dublin Regulation Experts</li> <li>• 1 Junior Monitoring and Evaluation Expert</li> <li>• Up to 3 Junior/ Intermediate Asylum and/or Reception Statistics Expert</li> <li>• 1 Asylum Age Assessment Expert for age assessment process and UAMs identification drafting</li> <li>• 1 Dublin Regulation Expert</li> </ul> <p><b>Inputs CY3.3:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Intermediate Reception Information System (Business Analysis) Expert</li> <li>• 1 Intermediate Organisational Development Expert/ Intermediate Change Management Expert</li> <li>• 2 Intermediate/ Junior Deployment Experts</li> <li>• Up to 6 Junior Asylum and/or Reception Operations Experts</li> <li>• 1 Asylum systems information management Expert</li> <li>• 1 Reception Information System (business Analysis) Expert</li> <li>• Study visits/Exposure visits to relevant Member States</li> </ul> <p><b>Inputs CY3.4:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Intermediate Asylum Operations Expert (to be deployed in the event that a voluntary relocation exercise is implemented in Cyprus)</li> <li>• 1 Dublin Regulation/ Asylum Flow Management Expert</li> </ul> <p><b>Horizontal for all activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of translation and interpretation services</li> <li>• Provision of security and IT services</li> <li>• Provision of equipment, material and operational support, including inter alia works, services, communication/promotional materials, costs for trainings/meetings/workshops, infrastructure costs, IT equipment, office supplies and others where required for the joint EASO and national authorities' activities.</li> </ul>
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## ANNEX II - Incident Report Form

[CONFIDENTIAL] Incident Report

<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Name of EASO staff:</b>	
<b>Name of responsible National Authority Authorised Representative:</b>	

Date of incident:

Information on the incident:

## ANNEX III – Security Incident Report Form

### [CONFIDENTIAL] Security Incident Report

<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Name of EASO staff:</b>	
<b>Name of responsible National Authority Authorised Representative:</b>	

1. Time of the incident:
2. Date and time of the report:
3. Type of incident:
4. Persons involved:
5. Incident description:
6. Consequences:
7. Actions taken:
8. Annexes:
9. Recipients of Security Incident Report