



Press Release

PR 13/2013
28 November 2013

EASO Consultative Forum Plenary Meeting

On 27 /28 November 2013 EASO held the third EASO Consultative Forum plenary meeting in Malta. This year's Consultative Forum Plenary meeting was attended by more than 80 participants from around 45 different organisations. Topics discussed were: EASO's Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS), EASO's work in Greece, EASO's quality processes, EASO's case study about the Western Balkans, EASO's role on the external dimension of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), Common Country of Origin Information (COI) products produced by EASO, and EASO's role in emergency situations.

The annual plenary meeting of the Consultative Forum is an event that brings together all registered members of the EASO Consultative Forum to look at the experience of the past year of working together, identify lessons learned and earmark areas of future cooperation. As a European centre of expertise, consultation for EASO is not just an annual meeting but a continuous two way dialogue that brings together experts on the many aspects of asylum to share knowledge and expertise. This process provides additional insight and information which helps EASO develop more comprehensive and advanced practical cooperation tools aimed at supporting the implementation the Common European Asylum System. Ultimately, the aim is to ensure that Member States are better able to provide international protection to those who are entitled, while dealing fairly and efficiently with those who do not qualify for it.

The Consultative Forum discussed a wide range of topics including EASO's Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS), EASO's work in Greece, EASO's quality processes, EASO's case study about the Western Balkans, EASO's role on the external dimension of the Common European Asylum System, Common Country of Origin Information products produced by EASO, and EASO's role in emergency situations. The meeting ended with a comprehensive and insightful panel discussion on the implementation of the CEAS and perspectives for the post Stockholm programme. Speakers on the panel were *Dr. Robert K. Visser, EASO Executive Director, Mr Laurent Muschel, Director Asylum and Migration, European Commission, Mr. Vincent Cochetel, Director, UNHCR, Europe Bureau, Mr. Michael Diedring, Secretary General, ECRE and Dr. Violeta Moreno-Lax, Lecturer in Law, University of London.* In order to familiarise themselves with EASO's work and its staff, Consultative Forum members also visited the EASO's Headquarters and attended a series of presentations by EASO staff on the different areas of EASO work.

Dr. Robert K. Visser, EASO Executive Director stated that *'In 2013 alone, over 30 organisations have been involved either directly or indirectly in our work. I believe that there is room for more cooperation between EASO and civil society, but as in any good relationship, the process develops and matures over time. The presence of so many relevant organisations here today confirms the willingness to engage and that makes me believe that within the right parameters, we can create EU-wide synergies.'*

Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office by contacting Mr Jean-Pierre Schembri on the following e-mail address: jean-pierre.schembri@easo.europa.eu