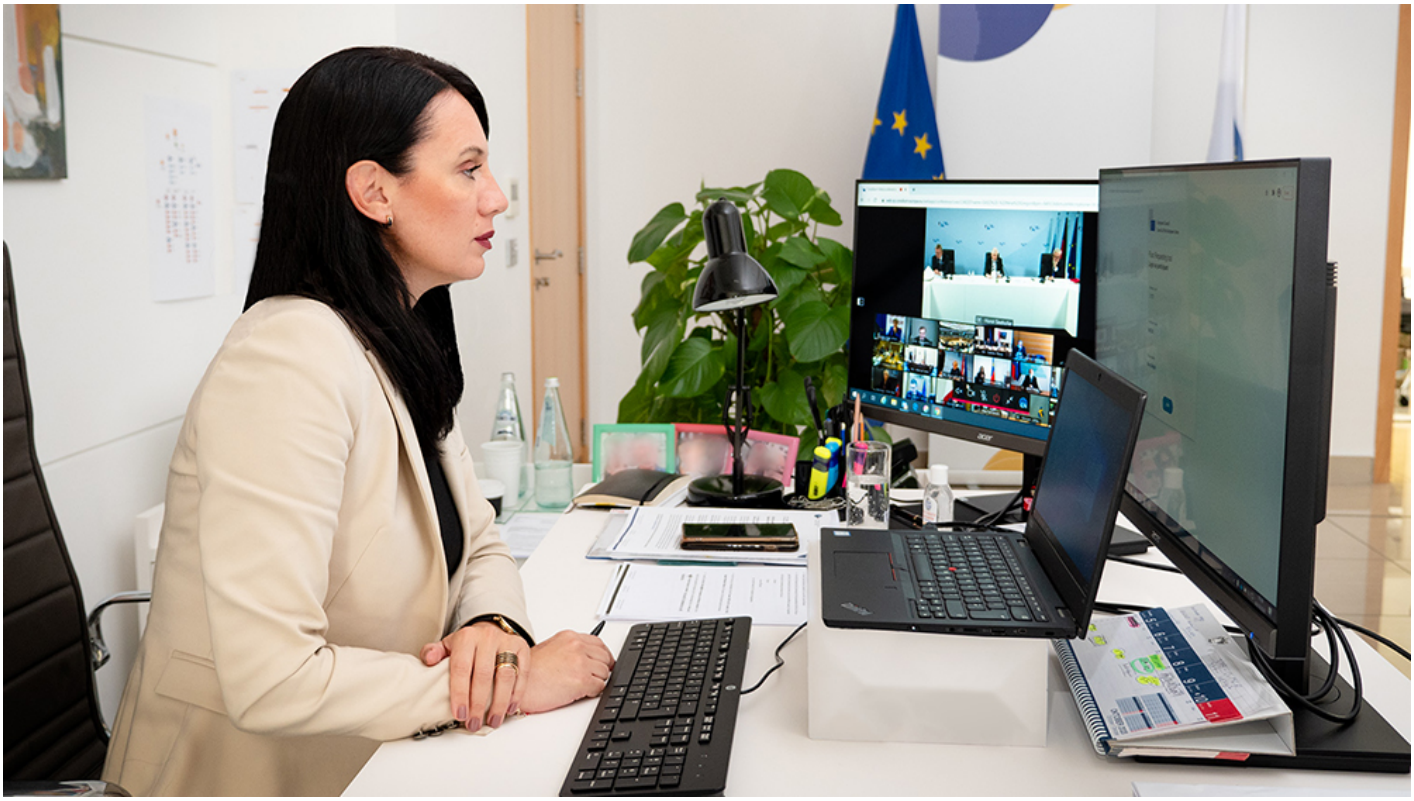
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EASO welcomes German Presidency approach to prioritise EU Agency for Asylum



In 2020, the Agency has registered 40% of all applications in Greece, Italy, Cyprus and Malta, ranking it 5 th if it were an EU Member State.

Speaking at informal video-conference of EU home affairs ministers on 8 October 2020, the Executive Director of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), **Nina Gregori**, expressed support for the European Commission's balanced, yet ambitious, Pact on Migration and Asylum.

While recognising that political divergences remain amongst Member States, Ms. Gregori emphasised that the Pact outlines a real possibility to step forward on all aspects of the proposed asylum processes and to achieve clear, fast and more efficient EU migration management.

The Executive Director also underlined EASO's strong support for the step-by-step approach proposed by the German Presidency of the Council of the EU, which acknowledges that a strong and robust **EU Agency for Asylum (EUAA)** is needed – not as part of a package, but rather as a self-standing file.

Between January and August of this year, EASO has registered over 20 000 (40%) of all applications in the Member States where it has operations: Greece, Italy, Cyprus and Malta. The Agency would be **5th among all the EU countries** in terms of the number of registrations performed.

In Greece alone, more than 10 000 interviews were carried out by EASO personnel in the first eight months of 2020 – more than double the number in 2019. This comes as **EASO continues to double its operational**

deployment in all four Member States, despite the unique challenges of this year.

The Executive Director highlighted that the Agency is now operating at the very limit of its current mandate and its capacity. She stated that a new mandate and the transformation of EASO into the EUAA would relieve such pressures on the capacity of the Agency and allow for it to continue increasing the very tangible support it is providing for all Member States' asylum service, not just those of frontline countries.

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

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