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EASO holds virtual Management Board meeting



On 18 June 2020, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) held its first Management Board meeting of 2020 via video conference. The 35th meeting of the Agency's governing body, which was initially scheduled for March, was rescheduled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Board was informed about the latest developments of asylum in the EU and the Agency's operations in Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Malta. Most notably, the meeting – the first to be held online – discussed how the Agency and the EU have adapted asylum practices as a result of the COVID-19 emergency.

Over the past few months, EASO has collaborated with the European Commission to provide guidance to Member States on how they can continue asylum procedures within the context of the restrictive measures put in place to contain the virus. Within this context, EASO has also issued practical recommendations on how Member States carry out remote interviews for asylum applicants.

Similarly, in early June EASO published a report which outlined how national asylum authorities had reacted to the pandemic. The report found that while they were initially limited by the emergency measures, authorities largely made strong efforts to resume services wherever possible, often within weeks. At the same time, the report cautioned that Member States should be prepared for a possible 'second wave', while lessons learnt during the pandemic may end up contributing to more effective asylum procedures in the longer term.

During the meeting, the Management Board adopted EASO's Final Accounts for 2019 and the Agency's Asylum Report 2020, which will be launched on 25 June 2020.

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