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COVID-19: Recommendation for remote interviews for asylum applicants



The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) has issued new recommendations providing practical guidance on the conduct of remote interviews for international protection. The recommendations follow guidance issued by the European Commission to EU Member States, including with input from EASO, on implementing the EU's rules on asylum within the context of the current COVID-19 pandemic. These include the flexibility for interviews to be "conducted with specific arrangements, such as remotely".

The new EASO *Practical recommendations on conducting the personal interview remotely* aims to support EU+ Member States in the context of the current health emergency. As a result of the pandemic, preventive measures and social distancing have had consequences for the conduct of personal interviews with applicants for international protection. EASO's recommendations provide means to remedy this through practical advice on conducting the personal interview remotely. This guidance is primarily intended for national asylum authorities, policy-makers and case officers.

EASO's recommendations are based on good national practices from across Europe, and existing EASO practical tools. Furthermore, the guidance elaborates procedural safeguards that asylum authorities may want to consider when preparing and conducting a remote personal interview. The guidance covers various aspects relevant for conducting remote interviews such as practical and technical arrangements, security and confidentiality. The guidance also covers legal, quality-related, and vulnerability-related considerations. The overall goal is to ensure that remote personal interviews are conducted to high quality standards in the best interest of applicants.

The guidance contributes to EASO's overall aim of supporting Member States in achieving common standards and high-quality processes within the Common European Asylum System. In this regard, EASO is fostering communication amongst EU+ States, the exchange of good practices as well as the identification of

coping mechanisms applicable to different national contexts.

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