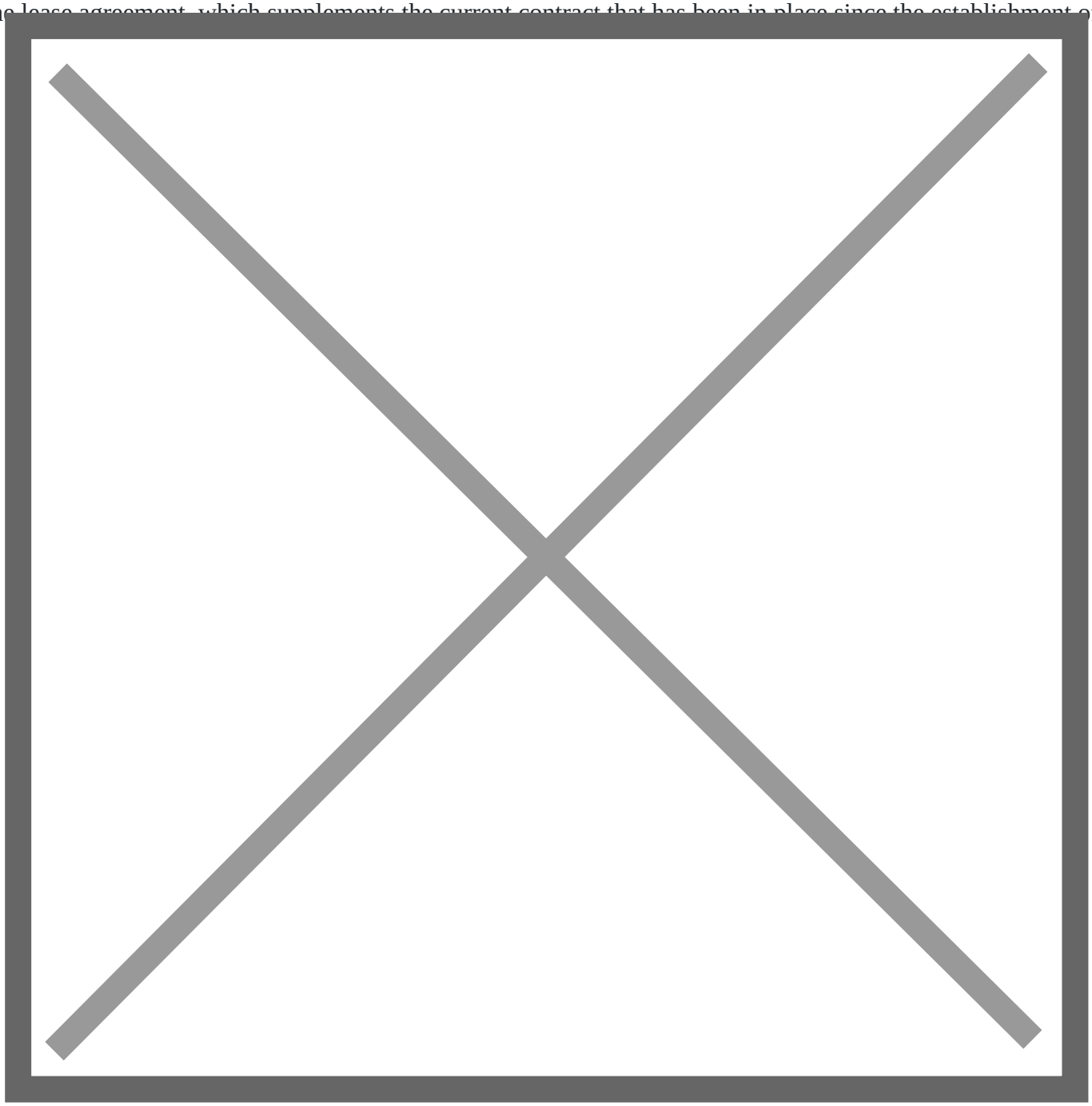
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European Asylum Support Office expands its office space at its Malta Headquarters



On 9 October 2018, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) signed a lease agreement with the Maltese authorities which will see the office space at the Agency's premises in Valletta more than triple in size. Once completed, the new office space, which was formerly occupied by Transport Malta, will allow EASO to better-accommodate the current and planned increase in activities supporting the Common European Asylum System.

The lease agreement, which supplements the current contract that has been in place since the establishment of



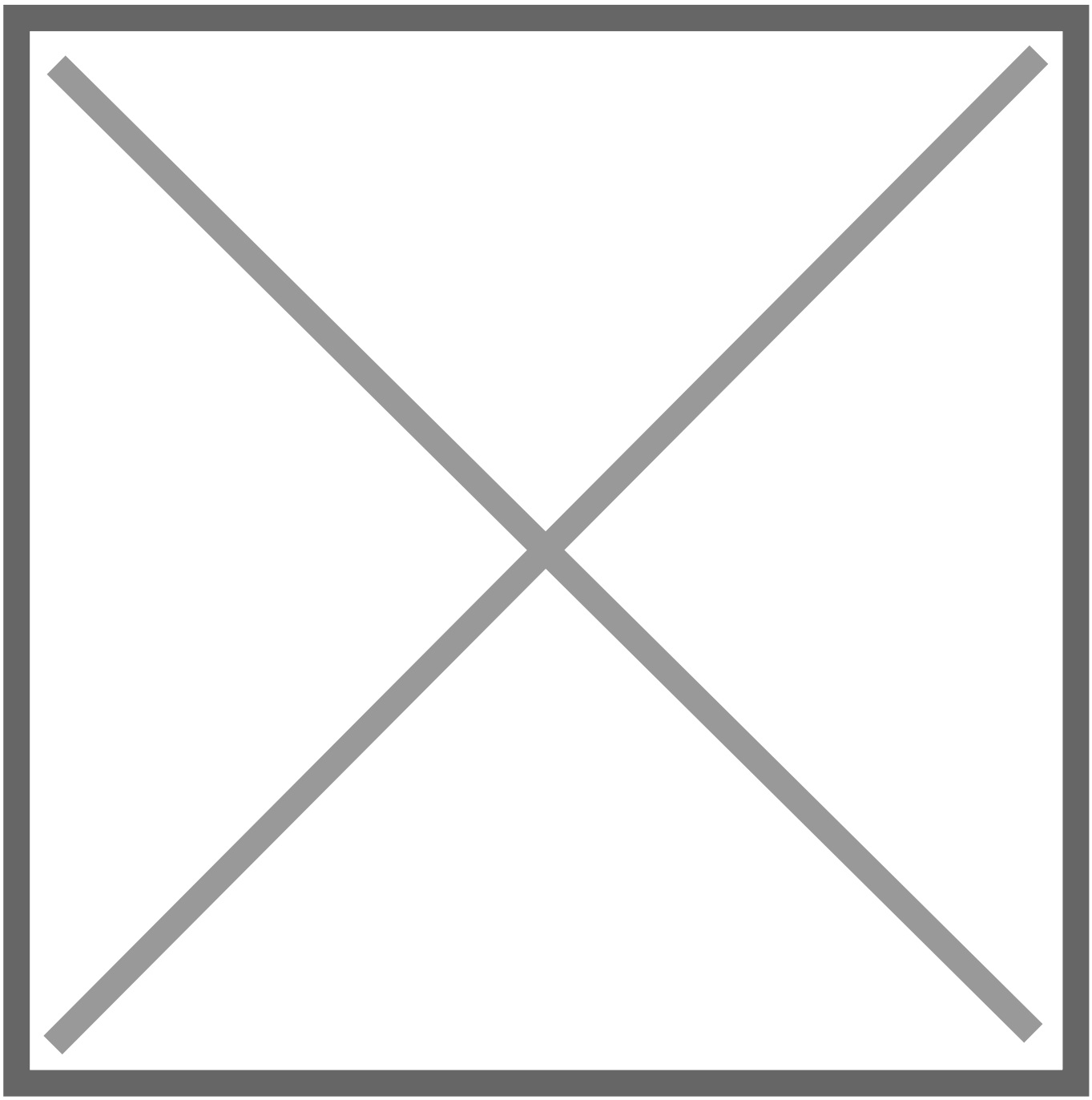
EASO, was signed by **Mr. Jamil Addou**, Executive Director of EASO, **Mr. Joseph Bugeja**, Chairman and CEO of Transport Malta, and M**r. Kevin Mahoney**, Permanent Secretary within the Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security of Malta.

The new lease agreement is valid for nine years and extendable thereafter, and will see the floor space of EASO's Headquarters increase significantly from the original 3,730 square metres to 12,300 square metres. The Agency will now occupy all three blocks of the compound in Valletta's Grand Harbour.

EASO is now in the process of adapting the new premises to its requirements, including by re-arranging offices, installing workstations, as well as updating various systems. Once the renovations are completed, the Agency's Headquarters will include up to 440 workstations and up to 20 meeting rooms.

The expansion comes as EASO is in the middle of a recruitment process that is expected to continue in the next two years. The increase in human resources will see staffing rise from approximately 220 current employees to around 500 by the end of 2020. While some of EASO's staff are currently based in Belgium,

Cyprus, Greece and Italy, the majority are based in the Agency's Malta Headquarters.



The increased requirements, including for office space and meeting rooms, is a result of the expansion of EASO's support activities for the asylum systems of EU Member States. The Agency is also expected to have its mandate significantly enhanced once a European Commission proposal to transform it into the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) is approved by the Council of the EU and the European Parliament. This will include a greater operational capacity, amongst other new functions.

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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