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Highlights: Launch of EASO Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU 2016

On 5 July 2017, EASO organised the **Launch of the EASO Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU+ 2016,** which was held in **Brussels**.

The 2016 EASO Annual Report on the Situation of the Asylum in the EU+ aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the situation of asylum in the EU+ (EU Member States plus Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Liechtenstein) by examining requests for international protection to the EU, analysing application and decision data, asylum trends, including key challenges and responses during the year, major institutional and legal developments and providing an overview of the practical functioning of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). According to the main findings and figures presented during the launching event:

- There was significant increase in asylum applications over the past two years led to a growth in decisions issued at first instance: in 2016, EU+ countries issued close to 1.15 million first-instance decisions, an increase of 84 % compared to 2015.
- The highest numbers of asylum applicants recorded were citizens of Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Nigeria.
- The main receiving countries were Germany, Italy, France, Greece and Austria. There were 7 % more applicants awaiting a final decision on their application compared to 2015 which continued to put pressure on the asylum and reception systems of the EU+ countries.
- The crisis in Syria continued to be a key factor in the number of applications for international protection in the EU+. Syria was the top citizenship of applicants reported with its citizens accounting for 26 % of all applications in the EU+ while more than 65 000 unaccompanied minors (UAMs) applied for international protection in the EU+, 37 % less than the previous year. Afghan nationals lodged 37 % of all UAM applications in the EU+.

Read main findings in your language	**[BG] [CS] [DA] [DE] [EL] [EN] [ES] [ET] [FI] [FR] [GA] [HR] [HU] [I [PT] [RO] [SK] [SL] [SV]**
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Commenting on the main findings, **Jose Carreira, Executive Director of EASO**, highlighted: *The launch of the Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU represents an excellent opportunity to identify the key changes, developments and trends in the field of international protection in 2016, so that we can better assess where we stand now and what should continue to be the focus of our efforts. The current situation of asylum in the EU and the fast pace in which the Agency is scaling up its operational capacity, makes this the*

right time to think about the future evolution of EASO."

Click on photo to watch video

A panel discussion on **EASO activities and operational work in the context of the hotspots,** also held during the launching event with the participation of European Commission, representatives of EASO and national authorities. Among main topics discussed was the state of play on EU Relocation Programme and the implementation of the EU-TR Statement. According to statistics, more than 23 03 applicants relocated as of 3 July 2017, stated during the disuccsion.

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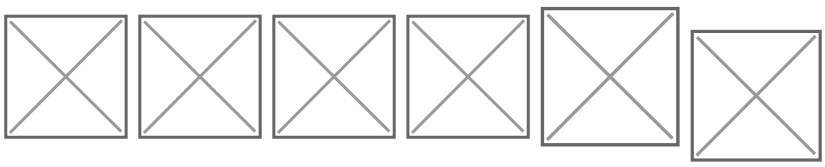
Contributions to the Annual Report were also specifically sought from civil society with an open call for input from the EASO Executive Director to the members of the EASO Consultative Forum and other civil society stakeholders, inviting them to provide information on their work relevant for the functioning of the CEAS.

This year's launching of EASO's Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU was also marked by a **Relocation Café concept event** which was organised by EASO with the participation of Belgian Asylum Authorities. The meeting aimed at providing factual information referring to the support provided by EASO to Greece and Italy in the context of the EU Relocation Programme. The Relocation Café offered the participants the opportunity to discuss important aspects of the EU Relocation Programme, as well as latest developments, with EASO's asylum experts, in the active presence of successfully relocated persons from Greece and Italy to Belgium.

*Click here to see more **photos** and **videos** of the event*
Click on photo to watch testimonial from Relocation Cafe
Click here to watch videos of Relocation Success Stories

EASO will continue its work within its mandate, as it may be strengthened to respond to current needs, while delivering on its core tasks in all areas, including: operational support, capacity building and training, facilitating practical cooperation among EU+ countries, collecting and analysing qualitative and quantitative information and information on countries of origin, and external dimension.

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