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EASO to further enhance its operational support to Italy in 2017



EASO's support for Italy will continue and shall be enhanced in the course of 2017. EASO and Italy have today signed a single Operating Plan, encompassing all technical and operational assistance to Italy. Support activities foreseen include: support on relocation, supporting and enhancing identification and assistance to vulnerable applicants, especially with regards to unaccompanied minors and support with handling outgoing Dublin take charge requests.

The new plan will be implemented over a period of 12 months, from January 2017 until December 2017. For the first time, the new agreement combines all the support measures and operational activities of EASO to Italy into one single Operating Plan, thus heightening the cooperation between the Agency and Italian authorities.

With the Operating Plan, EASO will further develop its operation support to Italy by responding to particular pressure on its asylum and reception systems and sustain the full implementation of the EU Asylum Acquis. EASO's support outlined in the agreement includes mainly: support with information and registrations of potential applicants; support with handling outgoing Dublin take charge requests; strengthening reception capacity especially with regards to unaccompanied minors; support in the professional development of the staff of Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration, within the Italian Ministry of Interior, as well as in activities in the field of COI. Within this context, EASO will deploy experts and interpreters to Italy and provide the necessary operational logistic and administrative support.

Within the rapidly evolving situation in Italy and upon agreement with the Italian authorities, EASO will adjust its intervention providing appropriate support to address emerging needs.

Background

EASO support to Italy dates back to June 2013. Anticipating the implementation of the new European Asylum Package, while facing large fluctuations in the number of arrivals of immigrants, together with the need of keeping high standards in its asylum and reception processes, have motivated Italy to ask EASO for assistance in enhancing its Asylum and Reception Systems. In this context, following a request made by Italy, in June 2013, the EASO Executive Director decided to render Special Support to Italy using the joint expertise of EASO and Member States. The first EASO Support Plan for Italy ran until December 2014, and focused on a number of prioritised areas, such as: data collection and analysis, Country of Origin Information (COI), Dublin system, reception system and emergency capacity, and training of independent judiciary.

As a result of the support provided by EASO under the first Support Plan during 2013-2014, Italy managed to reinforce parts of its international protection and reception system. Italian staff has been trained and Italy developed its COI capacity. Moreover, significant progress was achieved in terms of increasing Italy's capacity for reception and registration of applicants for international protection, as well as their preparedness and reaction capabilities.

Italy, as an EU Member State at the external border, on the southern Mediterranean migration route, continues to be under serious migratory and refugee pressure. The request for continued support by EASO was inspired by Italy's will to ensure sustainability of the good results achieved by EASO through the measure contained in the Operating Plan for Italy so that the current and future challenges can be adequately addressed. On 11 March 2015, a Special Support Plan (SSP) for the provision of technical and operational assistance to Italy was signed and extended until 31st of December 2016.

In addition, EASO signed on the 12 December 2015 the EASO Hotspot-Relocation Operating Plan (HROP) to Italy for the provision of information, support in registration, identification, fingerprinting, further referral to the international protection procedure, as appropriate, and case preparation of the asylum files, especially in the context of Dublin procedures. Through HROP, EASO has provided support through all stages of relocation procedure, from disembarkation until decision drafting, and was responsible for more than 90% of all registrations of applications for international protection in view of relocation in Italy. This Plan was extended over time until 31st of December 2016.

In 2017, EASO will continue to implement its role as mandate by the EU Institutions and the respective adopted framework, including the European Agenda on Migration, the Hotspot approach, the Council Decisions on Relocation.

Links

EASO Operating Plan to Italy (2017) EN
EASO's Special Support Plan to Italy (2015): EN
EASO Operating Plan to Italy (2013-2014), its first EN and second amendment EN

Any further information on EASO may be obtained by contacting Mr. Jean-Pierre Schembri on the following e-mail address: jean-pierre.schembri@easo.europa.eu (follow us live on Facebook and twitter @EASO).

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