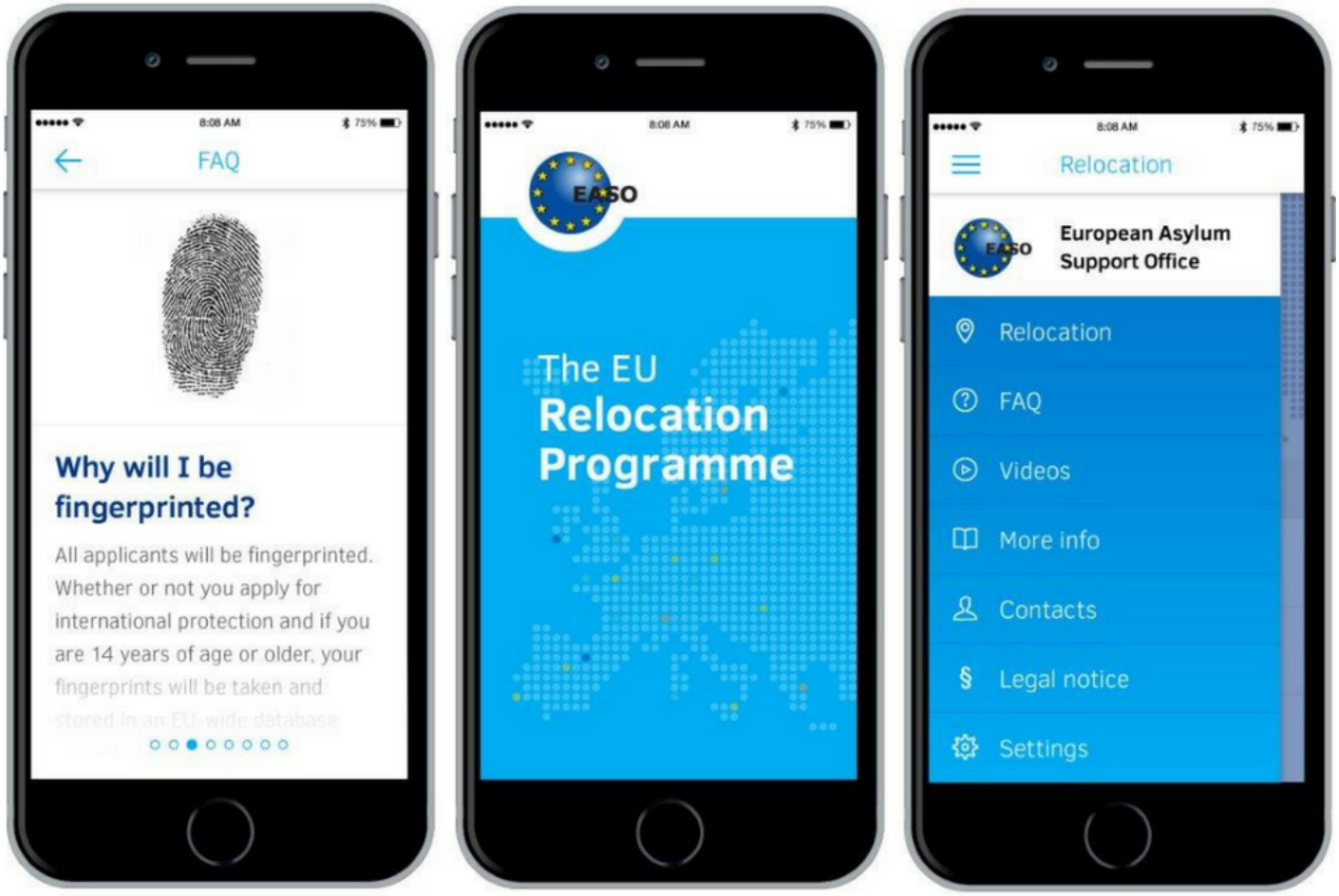
News Published: 4 August 2016

EASO launches ‘EU Relocation Programme’ mobile app



Today, the European Asylum Support Office launched its first mobile app for smartphones and tablets, allowing asylum seekers to quickly find information in English and various non-EU languages (English, Arabic, Sorani, Kumjani and Tigrinya) about the EU Relocation Programme, their rights and obligations when applying, contact points and more. The app is the latest initiative in the implementation of EASO’s integrated information and communication campaign on relocation. With the app, EASO aims to promote relocation as the only safe and legal way from Greece and Italy to other EU Member States. The EU Relocation Programme app can be downloaded from the AppStore and Google Play.

Available to download free of charge by IoS and Android smartphone users, the app provides clear, concise and up-to-date information about the relocation scheme, the procedure, and the role of EASO in the relocation process. It boasts a simple and user-friendly interface and incorporates a section with FAQ for asylum seekers to find out, among others, whether they are eligible for relocation, which countries they can get relocated to, why they are getting fingerprinted, and much other practical information related to relocation. Other features include

an interactive map with GPS localisation, thanks to which asylum seekers with a smartphone can now easily find the nearest-by hotspots in Greece and Italy where they can get registered for international protection or get in touch with EASO experts who can assist them further. In addition, the app will allow users to watch videos in which people who have been successfully relocated share their stories.

Jose Carreira, EASO's Executive Director, said: *"We're very excited and proud about the launch of this app. We noticed that many are equipped with Smartphones in the hotspots. Smartphones have revolutionised the way everyone works and EASO here shows that it has adopted modern communication tools which are most suited for our specific audience. The launch of our app marks a milestone in the outreach activities of EASO, as we are now fully equipped to provide updated information to people in need of international protection regardless of where they have arrived in Italy or Greece. The app reinforces our identity as a progressive, innovative agency, ready for the transformation into a fully-fledged European Agency for Asylum in the near future."*

Whether it is information in English, Arabic, Sorani, Kumjani or Tigrinya, the four language versions of the app cater for asylum seekers from a wide geographical area. With the app, it becomes easier than ever for refugees on route to search for contacts, hotlines and emergency numbers of EASO. The key objective of the new mobile app, apart from providing information, is to build trust in the relocation programme and to discourage asylum seekers from travelling in illegal ways from Greece or Italy to other EU Member States. With this app, EASO also hopes to ease information sharing in order to pre-empt confusion, unrealistic expectations, and frustration amongst refugees about unavailability of information.

Background

The EU Relocation Programme was established in two Council Decisions in September 2015, in which Member States committed to relocate 160,000 people from Italy and Greece (and if relevant from other Member States) by September 2017. EASO is contributing to the Relocation process from Italy and Greece with experts deployed in both countries to support the national asylum services.

In February 2016, upon request of the EASO Management Board, which comprises representatives of EU Member States, Associate Countries, the European Commission and UNHCR, EASO came up with a comprehensive communication plan to promote and support the relocation mechanism. After an information leaflet on relocation, pop-up stands, posters, info packs and child-friendly material on relocation, the app is just the latest of information tools produced by EASO as a direct response to the information needs of asylum seekers who are located in Greece and Italy and who want to be relocated to another EU Member State. Given that a majority of refugees use smartphones, the mobile app is a most appropriate channel to provide information and refer to more comprehensive information on the EASO website and social media.

More information

Download the Relocation app

AppStore Google Play

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 twitter @EASO).

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