

Highlights: EASO Info Day 2018

On 19 June 2018, EASO organised its Info Day, which marks the Agency's anniversary since its official inauguration on 2011, in Malta. The annual EASO Info Day provides a chance to reach out and highlight various aspects of the services EASO offers to national asylum authorities. EASO also takes the opportunity of this annual event to concentrate on a specific discipline and highlight its work.

The core theme of EASO Info Day 2018 was **the Role of Information and Analysis in the CEAS**. Having accurate and detailed data and information is critical to any project. It is all the more important to synergise a multi-national effort to sustainably manage asylum in Europe.

EASO has a key role as an independent centre of expertise on asylum. In this regard, EASO:

This is why EASO, through its Information and Analysis Unit, places such great importance on collating, analysing and then distributing data and information to you – our stakeholders.

Click here to see more information about the role of [EASO's information and documentation in the CEAS](#).

Several activities including informative seminars, workshops, lunch and learn sessions, pop quizzes as well as press events and events for schoolchildren and students have been organised with the cooperation of EASO's network of national and communication contact points and hosted in countries across Europe. EASO Info days activities will be completed in early July including an event at the European Parliament.

During Info Day 2018, EASO staff and national experts had the opportunity to discuss about EASO's work, challenges and perspectives as well as to share knowledge, exchange of good practices and build on future objectives and activities.

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Opening remarks by Climate Action and

Energy Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete at the Second Ministerial on Climate Action (MoCA) by the EU, China and Canada

Excellencies, colleagues, let me start by welcoming you all to Brussels and thanking Minister McKenna and Special Representative Xie for co-organising this meeting today. And sincere thanks to all of you, ministers and high-level representatives, for having accepted our invitation.

The EU, Canada and China have joined forces to encourage global leadership and ambition in the fight against climate change by building momentum for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Following the successful first MOCA in Montreal last year, we have convened this opportunity for ministerial guidance on the successful conclusion of the Paris Agreement Work Programme and on the other key political events at COP 24.

At a time where multilateralism is being challenged, this meeting is a living proof of our commitment to implementing the Paris Agreement and determination to find solutions and compromises, all of us, multilaterally. We will need Ministerial leadership to achieve comprehensive, balanced, effective results that are consistent with the spirit of Paris. The EU, China and Canada are determined to continue work with all Parties to this end.

The MOCA brings together Ministers and high-level representatives from the world's largest economies and other countries from the different regional groups. In this more intimate and informal setting we hope to support – but not to replace or prejudge– the formal negotiations. As we have just heard in Berlin, achieving results at COP 24 will require us all to pick up the pace of negotiations, and to be well-prepared to send strong messages of political leadership. The agenda we have prepared reflects a subset of the key challenges that still need to be resolved.

The Petersberg Climate Dialogue hosted by Germany and Poland earlier this week provided for excellent high level exchanges. We see the next two days as an opportunity for deeper and more detailed peer-to-peer conversations on the political differences that we will need to resolve if we are to ensure a successful conclusion to COP 24.

We will kick off the meeting with general reflections on the outcome for COP 24 and its main deliverables, and tomorrow we will address key matters of the Paris Agreement Work Programme as it relates to action and as it relates to support. With six months between now and the closing plenary in Katowice, we must seize the opportunity of this MOCA to discuss – openly and sincerely – our individual asks and limitations.

At COP24 we must agree on guidance for the implementation of the Paris

Agreement that unites Parties and does not divide them. This means a “rulebook” that is comprehensive, balanced, and carefully tailored to address each aspect of the Paris Agreement: cutting emissions, adapting to impacts and supporting implementation. The guidance agreed at COP 24 should be robust enough to deliver confidence that we are on track to implementing Paris, flexible enough to reflect relevant differences in Parties’ capacities, and dynamic enough to ensure that all Parties are improving their performance over time.

In addition, through the Talanoa Dialogue, the High Level Ministerial Dialogue on Climate Finance, and the stocktake on pre-2020 action, Parties should be prepared to share our achievements and the lessons we have learned so far, and on how we can advance action and raise ambition from now into the future.

These processes will set the scene for the next round of NDCs and Long term strategies.

I look forward, in the plenary discussion to come, to sharing with you the details of how the EU is preparing for Katowice. This will include an update on the agreement of EU climate policies necessary for us to achieve our NDC, preparations for a new long term strategy to put us on track towards the Paris goals, and an EU Talanoa Dialogue, launched last week with the involvement of 600 stakeholders from across the EU and around the world.

Last Thursday, EU negotiators agreed to increase the 2030 renewable energy target to 32% up from the original 27% target on the basis of which our at least 40% emissions reduction target in our NDC was modelled. And yesterday evening, EU negotiators agreed on a new 32,5% energy efficiency target by 2030 up from the 30% original target. EU negotiators also agreed the governance rules to meet our climate and energy targets. Both new targets would de facto mean that the European Union would be in a position to raise the level of ambition of the NDC and increase its emissions reduction target from the current 40% to slightly over 45% by 2030.

Each of these recent developments in the EU shows that in addition to raising headline targets, ambition can emerge from the bottom-up: if we strengthen our policies, renewables and energy efficiency in this case, we should be able to achieve deeper cuts in our overall emissions.

One thing is clear: our collective Paris goal to pursue efforts to limit global average temperature rise to 2C and to limit this rise to well below 1.5C, requires each of us to look for deeper cuts than are reflected in our current Paris targets.

You can count on the EU to defend and implement the Paris Goals. But we clearly cannot do it alone: the EU accounts for less than 10% of global emissions today. To succeed, we need all countries, regions and actors around the world on board.

The MOCA is one way to contribute to getting everyone on board, so we look forward to our discussions.

I now turn to my good friends and colleagues Minister McKenna and Special Representative Xie to share their expectations for this MOCA.

EU Syria Trust Fund adopts largest ever aid package of €165 million for Lebanon to support refugees and local communities

The new projects include the public schooling of refugee children in Lebanon and social assistance for vulnerable refugees and local communities affected by the Syrian crisis in Lebanon and Jordan. The new aid package brings the overall value of projects under the Trust Fund to over €1.4 billion.

EU Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes **Hahn** commented: *"The EU is continuing to deliver on its pledge to help Lebanon and Jordan, which host the largest per capita refugee population in the world. The new projects will substantially boost social protection and access to education for both Syrian and Palestine refugees from Syria, as well as for local communities."*

The new **€167 million** aid package includes the following actions:

- **€100 million** to guarantee access to education for Syrian refugee children in Lebanon
- **€52 million** to provide social protection and assistance to vulnerable refugees and host communities affected by the Syrian crisis in Lebanon
- **€13 million** to strengthen the resilience of Palestine Refugees from Syria, in Lebanon
- **€2 million** to strengthen the resilience of Palestine Refugees from Syria, in Jordan

Background

The assistance package was adopted today by the EU Trust Fund's Board, which brings together the European Commission, members of the European Parliament, EU Member States and representatives of Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and the World Bank. Additional aid packages are planned for Jordan and Iraq in the second half of 2018.

Ahead of the Board's meeting, on 19 June, the EU hosted [an event in Brussels](#) to address successes and challenges in the delivery of help to people affected by the crisis and to explore ways to better include them when designing and implementing aid programmes.

Since its establishment in December 2014, an increasing share of the EU's support to help Syrian refugees and support Syria's neighbouring countries to cope with the refugee crisis is being provided through the [EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis](#). The Trust Fund reinforces an integrated EU aid response to the crisis and primarily addresses longer-term resilience and early recovery needs of Syrian refugees, host communities and their administrations in neighbouring countries such as Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.

The Trust Fund is a key instrument to deliver on the EU's pledges to help the refugee hosting countries made at the London conference on Syria in 2016 and the Brussels conferences on supporting the future of Syria and the region in [April 2017](#) and [April 2018](#). The Fund also underpins the EU Compacts agreed with [Jordan](#) and [Lebanon](#) to better assist them in the protracted refugee crisis. With the new package adopted today, the Fund has delivered a total of €522 million for Lebanon and €214 million for Jordan 3 years of operations, much more than initially foreseen.

Overall, €1.4 billion has been mobilised and pledged from the EU budget and contributions of 22 EU Member States and Turkey. This entire amount has now been adopted by the Board and turned into concrete projects on the ground helping refugees and host countries alike.

The Trust Fund's programmes support basic education and child protection for refugees, training and higher education, better access to healthcare, improved water and waste-water infrastructure, as well as support for resilience, empowering women, fighting gender-based violence, and developing economic opportunities and social stability. The scope of the Fund also includes support for internally displaced persons in Iraq and the recovery of areas liberated from Da'esh, while also providing support in the Western Balkans to non-EU countries affected by the refugee crisis.

For More Information

[Digital single gateway: easier access to online information and procedures](#)

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Coreper today endorsed an agreement between the Bulgarian presidency and European Parliament representatives to set up a **single digital gateway** which will provide access to online information and procedures, assistance and problem solving services to citizens and companies.

The digital single gateway will be a user-friendly single entry point to assist citizens and businesses to find the information they need on the EU internal market. It will provide full access to a wide range of online procedures to help them when they want to move, work, retire, study or when they want to establish or carry out businesses in another country. This is a major achievement within the digital single market.

Emil Karanikolov, Minister for the economy of Bulgaria

The single digital gateway will use the already established name **“Your Europe”** and will include a common user interface integrated into the existing Your Europe portal.

The interface will be user-friendly and available in all official EU languages.

The new gateway will integrate several networks and services that have been established at national and EU level to assist citizens and businesses in their cross-border activities. These include: European Consumer Centres, Your Europe Advice, SOLVIT, Intellectual Property Rights Helpdesk, Europe Direct and Enterprise Europe Network.

The interface will ensure centralised access by EU citizens and businesses to information they need to exercise their rights to mobility in the EU, as well as to full access to online procedures in a non-discriminatory way.

A basic principle of the gateway is that if a procedure is available for a citizen of one member state it should also be equally accessible to users from other member states.

Key administrative procedures will be available online to both national and cross-border users.

These procedures cover situations which are relevant for doing business, working or studying or moving from one location to another, for example: requesting a proof of residence, applying for study loans and grants, recognition of academic titles, getting a European Health Card, registering a motor vehicle, claiming pension benefits and registering employees for pension and insurance schemes.

The new internet gateway will help reduce administrative burdens on citizens and businesses. As a general rule, the single digital gateway will apply the “once-only” principle, which means that individuals and businesses will have to supply the same information only once to public administrations.

The functioning of the gateway will be supported by technical tools developed by the Commission in cooperation with national administrations.

Next steps

The European Parliament and the Council will have to confirm the agreement formally after the summer break. The new regulation will then be published in the Official Journal of the EU.

In order to give all national, regional and local administrations more time to adapt, the target date for placing all relevant procedures online will be five years after the entry into force. However, many procedures are already available online now or will be available before that date.

Background

On 2 May 2017, the Commission presented its proposal to develop the single digital gateway.

This initiative responds to calls by citizens and businesses for easier access to information, procedures and assistance and problem solving services.

The digital single market strategy acknowledged that the needs of citizens and businesses in their own country and across borders could be better met by extending and integrating existing European portals, networks, services and systems and by linking them to a single digital gateway.

The regulation is part of the “Compliance Package”, comprising also a proposal on the Single Market Information Tool and measures to improve SOLVIT, the free of charge assistance website for the internal market.

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Indicative media programme – European Council, 28 and 29 June 2018

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