



WORKING ARRANGEMENT

BETWEEN

THE EUROPEAN ASYLUM SUPPORT OFFICE (EASO)

AND

THE EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS (FRA)

The European Asylum Support Office, hereinafter referred to as 'EASO';

and

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, hereinafter referred to as 'FRA';

Henceforth jointly referred to as 'the Parties',

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010, establishing EASO, in particular Article 52 thereof,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 168/2007 of 15 February 2007, establishing FRA, in particular Article 7 thereof,

WHEREAS

(1) The European Union recognises the rights, freedoms and principles set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which includes the right to asylum;

(2) The Union shall constitute an area of freedom, security and justice with respect for fundamental rights;

(3) The Union shall develop a Common European Asylum System which shall offer appropriate status to any third-country national requiring international protection and ensure compliance with the principle of *non-refoulement*;

(4) The Stockholm Programme highlights that the area of freedom, security and justice must above all be a single area in which fundamental rights are protected and calls for a Europe of responsibility, solidarity and partnership in migration and asylum matters;

(5) In line with the Common Approach on EU decentralised Agencies and the related roadmap an enhanced cooperation between EASO and FRA creates synergies and fosters coherence among their actions in fulfilling their respective mandates;

HAVE AGREED on the following working arrangement:

CHAPTER I: PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

Article 1

Purpose

The purpose of the working arrangement is to establish a cooperation framework covering the relevant areas of common work and interest and to set objectives and principles of such cooperation.

In the implementation of this working arrangement, the Parties seek to promote international and European regional standards as well as EU legislation on fundamental rights and international protection.

Article 2

Principles

The following principles govern among others the cooperation between the Parties:

- Respect for the EU legal and institutional framework;
- Mutual trust and mutual assistance;
- Respect and mutual understanding of each other's mandate, structure, institutional capacity and policies;
- Flexibility in determining concrete cooperation activities and on cooperation modalities;
- Effectiveness and efficiency;
- Complementarity and creating synergies.

CHAPTER II: PERMANENT SUPPORT

Article 3

Training

The Parties commit to exchange training strategies and plans on a regular basis as well as to share relevant training materials of common interest. The Parties will also cooperate in the field of didactics, e-learning methodologies, training material development as well as editing and training management.

The parties will explore the possibilities of mutual participation in training programmes and activities.

Article 4

Quality support and indicators

The Parties will exchange best practices and expertise on quality initiatives and projects as well as on tools and indicators for the application of high standards across the EU in the field of fundamental rights and international protection.

Article 5

Vulnerable groups

The Parties agree to share best practices, information and expertise relating to the protection of vulnerable groups, including minors, unaccompanied minors, victims of trafficking in human beings, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, persons with disability and persons with mental health problems, older people, as well as persons who have been subjected to serious forms of violence.

The Parties will explore possibilities of targeted activities in this regard.

Article 6

Cooperation with international organisations and third countries

The Parties will exchange relevant information and best practices on their cooperation with international organisations and third countries and, where relevant, the Parties will explore possibilities for further cooperation in this regard.

CHAPTER III: OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

Article 7

Operations

The Parties will inform each other on operational activities where relevant to their respective mandates and explore participation in this field on a case by case basis.

CHAPTER IV: INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS SUPPORT

Article 8

Research

The Parties will share information on upcoming research activities on issues of common interest and make full use of cooperation opportunities in this regard.

Article 9

Data and information gathering and analysis

The Parties agree to share their experiences as well as best practices on methodologies and tools for data and information gathering and analysis.

The Parties will consult each other in the preparation of their annual reports and other products on the situation of fundamental rights and international protection.

The Parties will exchange relevant information and data, including materials relating to legislation and case-law.

The Parties will also explore possibilities of preparing joint analytical reports.

CHAPTER V: HORIZONTAL COOPERATION

Article 10

Work programmes

The Parties agree to share their draft work programmes and will consult each other on matters of common interest to be reflected therein.

Article 11

Reciprocal representation

The Parties will facilitate representation at meetings, networks and working parties organised by them in matters of common interest.

Article 12

Consultative Forum and Fundamental Rights Platform

The Parties agree to exchange best practices on their consultation activities with civil society representatives.

They will facilitate each other's participation in EASO's Consultative Forum and in FRA's Fundamental Rights Platform.

Article 13

Cooperation with other partners

The Parties will exchange information on their relations with partners, in particular other EU institutions and agencies, Member States and international organisations in connection with activities relevant to each other's mandate.

Article 14

General affairs and administration

The Parties will exchange relevant information and best practices in the areas of administration, human resources and general affairs.

Article 15

Confidentiality

The Parties undertake to keep confidential any information, document or other material communicated to it as confidential by the other Party, not to disclose it to third parties without a prior written consent of the originating Party, and not to use any such information for any purpose other than the implementation of this working arrangement, even after the termination of the arrangement.

Personal data will be processed in accordance with Regulation 45/2001.

The Parties commit themselves to respect all security rules on the protection of classified information and non-classified sensitive information.

Access to documents will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) 1049/2001 and its implementing rules.

CHAPTER VI: FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 16

Contact Points

For the implementation of this working arrangement, the Parties will define a contact point through an exchange of letters.

Article 17

Evaluation of the cooperation

The Parties will meet at least once a year to evaluate the implementation of this working arrangement and to define concrete cooperation activities.

Article 18

Settlement of disputes

All disputes which may emerge in connection with the interpretation or application of this working arrangement will be settled by means of consultations and negotiations between the Parties.

Article 19

Expenses

Each Party will bear its own expenses arising in the course of implementation of the working arrangement, unless otherwise agreed on a case-by-case basis.

Article 20

Amendments and supplements

This working arrangement may be amended and supplemented in writing at any time by mutual consent between the Parties.

The Parties will enter into consultations with respect to the amendments and supplements of this working arrangement at the request of either of them.

The Management Boards of EASO and FRA will be informed of these amendments and supplements before they are adopted.

Article 21

Termination

The working arrangement may be terminated in writing by either of the Parties with a six-month notice.

Article 22

Entry into force

The working arrangement shall enter into force on the day of its signature.

At Strasbourg, on 11 June 2013

For EASO

For FRA

Signed

Signed

Dr Robert K Visser
Executive Director

Mr Morten Kjærum
Director