



A shared European Policy Strategy for the European Asylum Support Office

Concerning the EU-Commissions proposal stated in COM(2016) 271¹

June 2016

Europe and the European Union are facing an unprecedented challenge represented by the growing migratory flow. The refugee crisis is clearly a systemic issue, which puts Europe to a great test.

Only up to now there have been around 2.500 people dying in the sea trying to find safety in Europe compared to the 1.800 people who have died in the same period in 2015 the number has shockingly increased.

Based on the humanitarian values and the principle of solidarity of the European Union this cannot be an ongoing situation.

Every EU Member state should share the responsibility to assure a functioning Asylum System taking in consideration host societies and EU citizens as well as third country nationals and countries of origin and transit.

I. Current Situation in Italy

With an average arrival of 588 asylum seekers per day the Italian authorities are mastering big challenges. It is impossible to take care of the thousands of people applying for Asylum in Italy in a just and humanity respecting way.

Furthermore, a great number of refugees is aiming to pass Italy as a transit country moving further to more northern European Member states.

Already since 2013² the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) is playing an important role in Italy submitting support to the local authorities. Since December 2015 the Relocation Operation Plan³ is relocating many refugees in 19 EU Member states. This cannot be a long-term solution. We need a sustainable EU mechanism at all times.

¹ Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the European Union Agency for Asylum and repealing Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 Brussels, 4.5.2016 COM(2016) 271 final 2016/0131 (COD)

² EASO, PR 02/2013, 4 June 2013

³ EASO/COS/2015/945

The Dublin Regulation was based on the beliefs of a correlation of the obligation of protection of the external border and a responsibility in the field of asylum. Facing the unpredictable numbers of asylum seeking refugees there cannot be spoken of a solely responsibility of just a few EU Member states.

The Schengen agreement is one of the main achievements of the European integration and must be preserved and strengthened. A long-term refugee policy is required as the phenomenon is expected to last. Sharing the responsibility for the management of external borders between the EU and the relevant Member states and lifting the Asylum System to a European level would represent a powerful response. The Italian government is appalled to see some Member states starting own strategies such as closing or wanting to close inner EU borders. As this situation is affecting all of the EU we should maintain a common organised European solution.

II. In matters pertaining to a stronger mandate for EASO

Regarding the Dublin Regulation, the Italian government advocates the second option, creating a new system for allocating asylum applications in the EU based on a distribution key.⁴ It is highly important for all EU Member states to emit gradually their sovereignty in aspects of asylum matters, so as to improve the current situation.

The new European Union Agency for Asylum as the name is proposed should receive especially wide authorities in order to lift the whole Asylum System to a European level in the future. Another very important part of the new mandate is the closer connection to Frontex and the Eurodac System. As well as it is of interest to establish more intense relationships to countries of origin and transit, especially in Africa. Thus, a joint immigration policy could be implemented.

III. Conclusion

To preserve the Europe and the European Union with open inner boundaries, the Italian government urges towards a joint European Asylum System with a new and stronger mandate of the EASO converting into the European Union Agency for Asylum. We should keep in mind the many human lives – refugees and EU citizens – who are suffering because of the current deficits in the system. We need to take this step and rise the Asylum questions to a European level where the EU Member states in a solidary way participate to improve the circumstances of the asylum processes.

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⁴ Communication from the Commission the the European Parliament and the Council Towards a reform of the Common European Asylum System and enhancing legal avenues to Europe COM(2016) 197 final 06.04.2016