



Press Release

PR 20 /2015
30 November 2015

EASO held its 5th Consultative Forum Plenary Meeting marking five years of cooperation with Civil Society

On 30 November EASO held its annual [Consultative Forum plenary meeting](#), bringing together organizations, academics and experts to discuss the Common European Asylum system and EASO work and activities, in particular those activities related to EASO's work in the hotspots in Italy and Greece.

EASO attaches great importance to consulting and exchanging views with civil society. In this perspective, this year's Forum represented a great opportunity for EASO to carry out a fruitful dialogue with key organizations and other interested stakeholders, united in the common effort of improving the way we deal with the reality on the ground. As a European centre of expertise, consultation for EASO is not just an annual meeting but a very effective way to share knowledge and expertise on the many aspects of asylum. Over the past five years, this consultative process provided EASO with additional insight and information which have proven vital to develop more advanced cooperation tools aimed at supporting the implementation the Common European Asylum System.

This year's edition was marked by opening remarks from the recently appointed EASO's Executive Director ad interim, Mr. José Carreira. Three thematic roundtables, focusing on the main EASO's activities linked to the implementation of the newly adopted [EU Migration agenda](#), followed. Main discussions included: *EASO's Activities in the Hotspots in Italy and Greece: Achievements So Far and Next Steps*; *EASO and the Western Balkans Migration Route and Western Balkans as Safe Countries of Origin*; *EASO's Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU and the EASO Work Programme 2016*.

EASO Executive Director a.i., Mr. José Carreira, said *'This year's forum comes at a very important time. With over 1 million asylum applicant since the beginning of this year and with the implementation of the Migration agenda, we need to be prepared to answer to the additional demands from Member States and help relieve the pressure on their asylum systems. I aim to make EASO more operational and better equipped to quickly respond to the changing reality on the ground. In this context, consultation with civil society is not an option but a necessity'*.

Further information:

[EASO website](#)

Twitter: [@EASOpress](#)

[#EASOCF](#)

To apply for membership to the Consultative Forum follow this [link](#) to download the registration form that can be sent to consultative-forum@easo.europa.eu

Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office by contacting Mr Jean-Pierre Schembri on the following e-mail address: jean-pierre.schembri@easo.europa.eu