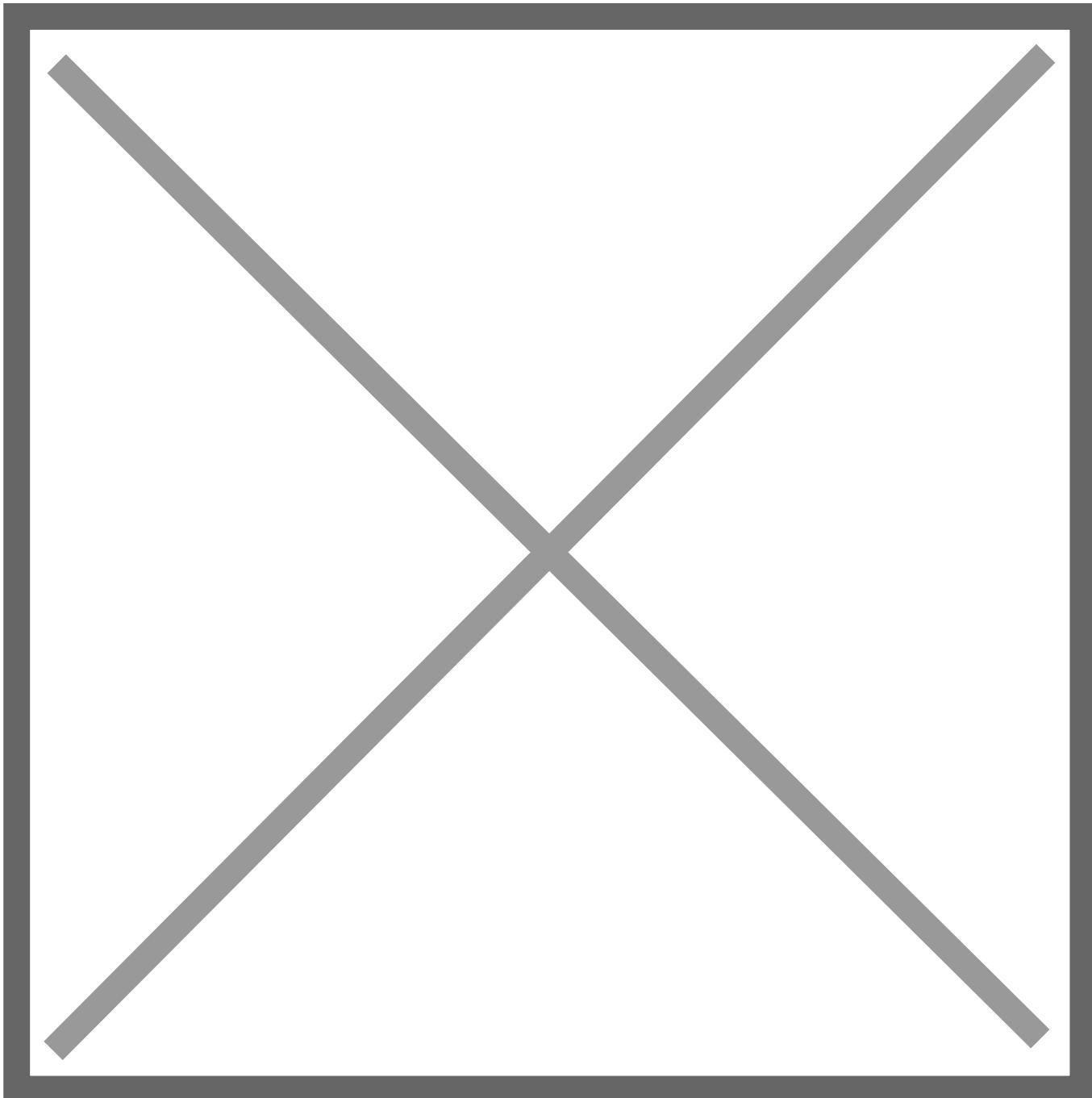


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EASO welcomes agreement establishing EU Agency for Asylum

The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) welcomes today's political agreement reached by the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU and the European Parliament, together with the European Commission, on a new enhanced mandate that will re-establish the Agency as the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA).

The agreement sends a strong signal that the EU is committed to working in the spirit of compromise in order to improve asylum management. It is the first of the European Commission's proposals for the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) to be agreed to by co-legislators and EASO hopes that the development will serve to drive progress on the other files.



Commenting on the agreement, EASO's Executive Director, Nina Gregori, stated: "*I am delighted that through engagement with all stakeholders, Europe will soon have an asylum agency that will continue building on EASO's successes of the past years. It is a significant step in creating the world's only multinational asylum system. The implications of this development cannot be understated. The EUAA will be in a position to provide stronger operational and technical assistance to any Member State in managing challenges associated with asylum and reception, in line with the EU standards. Importantly, this will also lead to improved conditions for people in need of international protection.*"

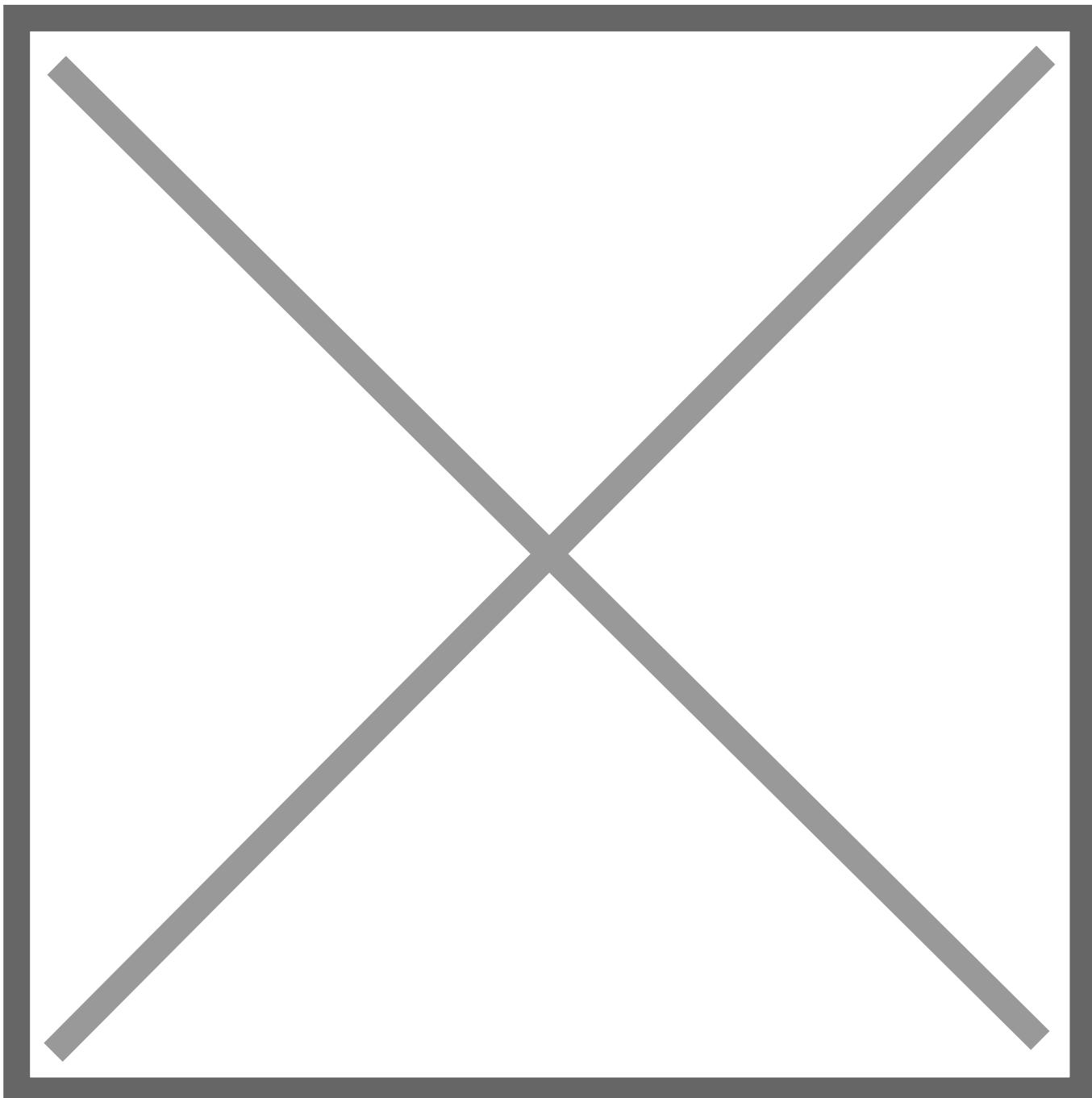
The new EUAA mandate will result in numerous benefits to the proper implementation of the CEAS, including by:

- Enabling the Agency to **deploy personnel to operations quicker**;

- Establishing a mandatory **reserve pool of 500 Member State experts** to be available in the case of disproportionate pressures;
- Providing for **EUAA Training** to include new topics, including the clearer inclusion of reception;
- Allowing the Agency to produce **stronger and more practical** technical tools, coordinate common analysis and publish Country Guidance;
- Establishing the independent position of a **Fundamental Rights Officer** to ensure respect for fundamental rights in all activities of the Agency;
- Enhancing the role, and independence, of the Consultative Forum of **Civil Society Organisations**;
- Establishing **EUAA liaison officers** in Member States, as well as in third countries;
- Providing the EUAA with a stronger ability to support **third countries** in their capacity building;
- Establishing a **Complaints Mechanism**; and
- Establishing a **Monitoring Mechanism, in the future**, which will allow the EUAA to monitor the operational and technical application of the CEAS.

EASO looks forward to the formal approval of the final text by the Council of the EU and the European Parliament, and its subsequent publication in the Official Journal of the European Union, in anticipation of the mandate entering into effect later this year.

The Agency's transition programme is already well under way with a view to be ready to begin implementing the main elements of its new mandate from day one.



Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office on the following email address: press@easo.europa.eu