



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 25 February 2010  
6869/10 (Presse 43)

## **Council adopts position at first reading on the European Asylum Support Office**

The Council today adopted a position at first reading on a draft regulation establishing a European Asylum Support Office (EASO) ([16626/09](#) and [16626/2/09 ADD1 REV 2](#)) and the related changes to the decision amending the European Refugee Fund (ERF) ([16627/09](#) and [16627/09 ADD 1 REV 1 COR 1](#)).

As the Council's positions on the EASO regulation and the ERF decision reflect the compromise achieved in negotiations between the Council and the European Parliament, both texts are expected to be adopted without any amendments in a forthcoming plenary session of Parliament. The establishment of the EASO will be of key importance in further enhancing practical cooperation in the field of asylum.

At the same time, ministers decided that the seat of the EASO will be Valletta, Malta.

The support office is aimed at improving the implementation of the Common European Asylum System, strengthening practical cooperation among member states on asylum and providing and coordinating operational support to member states facing specific and disproportionate pressures on their national asylum systems. The ERF needs to be amended as the office will take over responsibility for certain operations that have until now been financed by the refugee fund.

# **P R E S S**

Compared to the Commission's proposal of February 2009 ([6700/09](#)), the Council's position clarifies a number of key issues:

- it specifies the tasks and the deployment of the asylum support teams which can be set up for assisting member states that are subject to particular pressure;
- with a view to the development of intra community solidarity, it clarifies the role of the EASO concerning relocation of beneficiaries of international protection between member states;
- as regards external solidarity, the EASO will be tasked with coordinating exchanges of information and other actions taken by member states on resettlement of beneficiaries of international protection from third countries;
- it also introduces a number of improvements concerning the administrative and management structure of the office;
- it retains the Commission proposal to set up a Consultative Forum with a view to maintaining a close dialogue between the EASO and civil society.

The European Parliament delivered its first reading opinion on the Commission proposal on 7 May 2009 and is expected to adopt the text as it stands now without amendments in the coming months.

