

Rethinking Europe's Asylum System: Towards Better Protection and Equal Standards



Tuesday 15th September 2015

Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre,
Brussels



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Overview

According to the latest figures provided by Eurostat, more than 625,000 persons have applied for asylum in the EU in 2014, representing a 44% increase on the previous year and the highest number of applicants within the EU since the peak in 1992. During the same period, EU Member States have granted protection to more than 185,000 asylum applicants, up by almost 50% compared with 2013. In addition to these figures, other issues provide cause for concern, such as the continuously growing number of unaccompanied minors seeking for protection (23,100 applications in the EU-28), another category that requires precise measures in order to be protected.

With the establishment of the Common European Asylum System, EU Member States have committed to align their asylum legislation and increase cooperation with non-EU countries. However, the rise of new armed conflicts - particularly in the Middle-East area - has led to an increase in the number of asylum applicants, therefore compelling the European Union to develop and implement new legislative measures such as the revised Qualification (2011), Procedure and Conditions Directives (2013), as well as the new Dublin III Regulation. This new framework has contributed to the implementation of common minimum standards for asylum and has encouraged cooperation and coordination to ensure that asylum seekers are treated equally in an open and fair system wherever they apply. Yet, it has also raised criticism due to its procedural delays, lack of harmonisation and other persisting flaws.

On the other hand, the ongoing crisis situation in the Mediterranean has reinforced the idea that additional measures must be taken immediately to better manage migration in all its forms. In May 2015, the European Commission launched the European Agenda on Migration, a strategy that aims to reduce incentives for illegal immigrants and human trafficking networks, improve the management of the external borders, strengthen the common asylum policy, and develop innovative policies on legal immigration.

The current legislative framework gives the EU and its Member States the opportunity to further implement an efficient asylum system aimed at providing protection and dignity to those fleeing persecution. However, although several improvements have been made so far, the European Union has yet to find the right strategy to tackle all issues deriving from migration.

This timely international symposium will examine the current state of affairs around the recast directives and regulations for asylum at EU level, as well as assess the implementation challenges that Member States face when integrating them into their national legislation. It will offer a vital platform to discuss the current framework for granting or withdrawing international protection and explore how all stakeholders must contribute coordinate and cooperate in order to provide better protection for asylum seekers, which includes finding the right compromise between guaranteeing human rights and ensuring that immigration controls are effective and efficient.

The Symposium will support the exchange of ideas and encourage delegates to engage in thought-provoking topical debate with local and regional practitioners and policymakers at EU level.

“ Last year, over 620,000 persons have asked for protection in Europe. The numbers for 2015 show that even that peak may be mild in comparison to the one we will record this year. 70,000 asylum applications are already lodged every month in the EU since the beginning of 2015. It is time we start being responsible about it. It is time we recognise that we need to act together in Europe.”

**- Dimitris Avramopoulos, EU Commissioner, Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship
June 2015**

Venue and Accommodation

**Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre
Avenue du Boulevard 17
1210 Brussels
Belgium**



Why Attend?

- ✓ **Discuss the implementation challenges for the Common European Asylum System**
- ✓ **Analyse the new European Agenda on Migration**
- ✓ **Explore possibilities for increasing cooperation between Member States and major stakeholders in improving reallocation and resettlement policies in Europe and deal with the growing number of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum**
- ✓ **Exchange best practice from innovative projects implemented in Europe**

Who Should Attend?

- National Governmental Organisations
- Immigration Advisers
- Legal Advisers
- Local and Regional Government Departments and Bodies
- Regulatory Bodies
- Citizens Advice and Third Sector Practitioners
- Anti-Trafficking Practitioners
- Vulnerable Persons Coordinators
- Missing Persons Units
- Border Control Officials
- Port and Airport Authorities
- Asylum and Refugee Groups
- Health Treatment and Advisory Services
- Social Workers and Social Services Officers
- Social Inclusion Officers
- Public Health Authorities
- Asylum Team Managers
- Refugee and Asylum Support Officers
- Sheltered Housing Scheme Managers
- Local, Regional and National Health Services
- Social Care Professionals
- Private Sectors Employers
- Public Sector Employers
- Homelessness Assessment and Prevention Officers
- Housing Associations
- Employee Relations Advisers
- Legal Advisers Community Cohesion Officers
- Community Engagement Officers
- Community Relations Advisers
- Overseas Student Recruitment Officers
- Asylum and Immigration Tribunals
- Funding Councils
- Research Councils
- Campaigning Organisations
- International Organisations
- Academics

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Programme

- 09:15** Registration and Morning Refreshments
-
- 10:00** Chair's Welcome and Opening Remarks
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- 10:10** **The Common European Asylum System: Implementing New Rules, Building an Area of Protection**
- Assessing the Implementation and Impact of the Recast EU Asylum Directives
 - Focus on the Dublin III Regulation: Evaluating Achievements and Persisting Challenges
 - Analysing Current Trends Across Europe
 - Recommendations for Future Policy Actions
-
- 10:40** **First Round of Discussions**
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- 11:10** Morning Coffee Break
-
- 11:30** **Evaluating Asylum Seekers' Current Status in Europe**
- Examining the Relocation and Resettlement Schemes for Asylum Seekers
 - Discussing the Condition of Unaccompanied Minors
 - Detention of Asylum Seekers: Assessing Current Situation
 - Conclusions and Recommendations
-
- 12:00** **Second Round of Discussions**
-
- 12:30** **Networking Lunch**
-
- 13:30** **Enhancing Border Control, Protecting Migrant's Lives**
- Exploring the New European Agenda on Migration: Short and Long Term Priorities
 - Frontex Operations and Their Impact on Migrants: Operation Triton
 - EU Action Plan Against Migrant Smuggling and Guidelines on Fingerprinting
 - Conclusions and Recommendations
-
- 14:00** **Third Round of Discussions**
-
- 14:30** Afternoon Coffee Break
-
- 14:50** **Promoting Better Integration, Providing Better Opportunities**
- The Asylum-Seekers' Perspective: Providing Fair Access to Information
 - Third-Country Support for Better Migration Flow Management
 - The Future of the EU Blue Card Scheme
 - Sharing Knowledge and Best Practice
-
- 15:20** **Fourth Round of Discussions**
-
- 15:50** Chair's Summary and Closing Comments
-
- 16:00** Networking Reception
-
- 16:30** Close

** Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice*

Event Details

- Date:** Tuesday 15th September 2015
Time: 10:00am – 4:30pm
Venue: Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre, Brussels



Speakers Include:

- ✓ **Maria Segurado**, Advocacy Working Group on Migration and Asylum, Caritas Europe

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