

Comments of the Cyprus Asylum Service on the Green Paper on the Future Common European Asylum System

Cyprus supports the further promotion of the practical cooperation in the field of asylum, which is one of the priorities set by The Hague Programme, towards a better, and more efficient application of a Common European Asylum System.

We agree that an important step towards the full implementation of a Common European Asylum System is a constructive discussion on the instruments set by the second phase of the Hague Programme. The four building blocks of the first stage of the Common European Asylum System are now in place. We believe that this is a huge step towards the realization of the CEAS.

We expect the four main areas of the second phase (Legislative instruments; Implementation-Accompanying measures; Solidarity and burden-sharing and the External dimension of asylum), to be a matter of debate between the member states. For Cyprus, solidarity and burden sharing between the Member States, is a crucial point of discussion, since, being a “first-stop” country, Cyprus has systematically experienced pressures emanating from massive arrivals of asylum seekers, something which stresses even more the need for the application of solidarity and burden-sharing.

With regards to the harmonization of legislation, we strongly agree that, a harmonized legislation will lead to a harmonized practice. A harmonized legislation should focus primarily on the protection of those in need and furthermore, the combating of the abuse of the procedure, which, from our point of view, jeopardizes the efficiency and effectiveness of the whole asylum system.

Finally, Cyprus has been applying the single procedure since 2003 and is ready at any time to exchange views and cooperate with other MS on finding ways for its more efficient application.

Case workers and other officials dealing with the implementation of the single procedure, should continue the exchange of best practices as well as the participation in common trainings.