

Establishing a European Asylum Support Office

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The Council held a first exchange of views on a new proposal for establishing a European asylum support office, in the context of the development of a common European asylum system. The debate focused on key aspects of the proposal and provided guidance in order to continue examination under the Council-Parliament codecision procedure.

The main tasks of the European asylum support office would be the following:

- to facilitate, coordinate and improve cooperation on asylum matters between EU countries, thereby improving international protection for asylum seekers;
- to assist EU governments in comparing good practices and organising training at EU level in order to develop a more consistent and transparent asylum policy in the EU;
- to coordinate teams of national experts who can be deployed at the request of any EU country facing a heavy influx of refugees;
- to provide scientific and technical assistance in cooperation with national authorities and the UN High Commission for Refugees;
- to increase practical cooperation on asylum matters between EU and third countries.

In October 2008 when adopting the European Pact on immigration and asylum (see Council Doc [13440/08](#)), the European Council requested to "establish in 2009 a European asylum support office with the task of facilitating the exchange of information, analysis and experience between Member States and developing practical cooperation between the administrations in charge of examining asylum applications". The proposal responds to this request.