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## **Common European Asylum System: Council adopts the Eurodac regulation**

Today the Council adopted<sup>1</sup> the last piece of legislation needed to complete the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), namely the amended Eurodac regulation ([PE-CONS 17/13](#)).

Eurodac is primarily a biometric database for comparing fingerprints, which helps EU member states to verify whether an asylum applicant has previously claimed asylum in another EU State or whether an asylum applicant has been previously apprehended when entering EU territory unlawfully. It aims to make it easier for EU States to determine responsibility for examining an asylum application and facilitates the application of the "Dublin" regulation.

The Eurodac regulation will enable law enforcement authorities to consult the Eurodac database for the purpose of prevention, detection or investigation of terrorist offences and of other serious criminal offences. The comparison of fingerprints in the possession of member states' designated law enforcement authorities and Europol with those stored in the Eurodac database will only be possible where such a comparison is necessary in specific cases, under well-defined circumstances and conditions, and following prior checks of other databases.

The new regulation will be directly applicable and will start applying two years after its entry into force. The United Kingdom is participating in the adoption of the regulation. Denmark and Ireland are not taking part.

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<sup>1</sup> The decision was taken without discussion at a meeting of the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council.

# **P R E S S**

## **Background**

The European Council committed itself to establishing by 2012 a Common European Asylum System based on further harmonisation of national asylum systems and higher levels of protection.

The Council and the European Parliament have already adopted the qualification directive<sup>1</sup> which entered into force in January 2012, the Dublin regulation (recast) ([10526/13](#)), the amended asylum procedures directive ([10527/13](#)) and the reception conditions directive ([10529/13](#)). The Eurodac regulation is the last piece of legislation needed to complete the Common European Asylum System.

Furthermore, three other important asylum-related dossiers have been adopted over the past two years:

- extension of the scope of the long-term residence directive to beneficiaries of international protection, adopted in April 2011
- the creation of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) which started operating in spring 2011
- the decision taken in March 2012 to establish common EU resettlement priorities for 2013 as well as new rules on EU funding for resettlement activities conducted by member states.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted ([OJ L 337, 20.12.2011, p. 9](#))