| **Institution:** London South Bank University |
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| **Unit of Assessment:** 17 – Business and Management Studies |
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| **Title of case study:** Improving multi-stakeholder cooperation, information-sharing and decision-making on European asylum and migration among the 30 EU+ countries |
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| **Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:** 2015 - 2020 |
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| **Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:** | | |
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| **Name(s):**<br>Professor Karin S. Moser, PhD | **Role(s) (e.g. job title):**<br>Professor of Organisational Behaviour; Director of the London Centre for Business and Entrepreneurship Research; Lead Digital Economy Research Group | **Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:**<br>September 2015 - present |

| **Period when the claimed impact occurred:** 2017-2020 |
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| **Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?** No |
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**1. Summary of the impact** (indicative maximum 100 words)

Europe faces immense challenges in the areas of migration and asylum that can only be addressed if the 30 EU+ countries (27 EU countries, Norway, Switzerland, UK) collaborate closely and share information regarding security, migration and asylum-seekers across the continent. Professor Moser's research expertise in multi-stakeholder cooperation, decision-making and information-sharing has directly helped the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) Strategic Network to improve communication and collaboration among its 30 member countries. The research identified common ground and established new ways of communicating that has reduced conflicts, supported more equal and effective decision-making, and increased information-sharing. This has enabled EASO to lay the necessary foundations to move forward with new initiatives to improve harmonisation of migration and asylum policies across Europe.

**2. Underpinning research** (indicative maximum 500 words)

The 30 EU+ countries coordinate, facilitate and strengthen practical cooperation on many aspects of asylum and migration through the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) Strategic Network. The body of research on cooperation, decision-making and use of digital technologies that underpins Professor Moser's work with the EASO Strategic Network straddles psychology and computer science and spans the boundaries of organisational behaviour, social psychology, behavioural economics, Human-Computer-Interaction and cognitive science.

Moser's research aims to understand how (digital) technology **[R2, R3]**, managerial practices, such as feedback and status rewards **[R6]**, as well as social norms **[R6, R3]** and social value orientations **[R6]** impact on people's willingness and ability to cooperate, both face-to-face and online. She uses experimental studies **[R3, R5, R6]** as well as field research **[R1, R4]**, applying multimethod approaches such as surveys, interviews, and document analysis. Professor Moser was one of the first researchers to extend social dilemma research on natural resources and in economics to the intangible assets of knowledge and information-sharing dilemmas **[R6, R5, R4]** that are central in both, the knowledge economy and when working remotely.

Professor Moser's research on knowledge-sharing and cooperation dilemmas has shown the importance of motivation and social status for stakeholders to be willing to cooperate at both individual and organisational levels, and how the perceived costs and benefits of cooperation interact with structural and cultural constraints. For example, her research on expertise transfer revealed that for experts, the recognition of their expert status within their organisation was crucial to be willing to share their knowledge with less experienced team members **[R6]**, showing the importance of supervisor feedback and recognition. The research also showed that

this was even more effective with highly competitive team members with a pro-self value orientation. Further experimental studies showed how situational constraints such as project-based cooperation for a short time led to a task focus of team members whereas long-term collaboration promoted a relationship focus **[R5]**, thus fundamentally changing the costs and benefits of cooperation depending on the time frame. Knowing about these temporal effects helps to maximise prosocial motivation of collaborators, making them more effective and focussed on the core performance outcomes. Her field research with 118 representative NHS healthcare teams **[R4]** confirmed the importance of a collaborative climate at work and showed how teams scoring high in helping and information-sharing behaviours also showed higher team innovation, even in cross-functional teams with high occupational diversity and large team sizes.

Further experimental studies showed how group memberships and the social identities associated with professional status groups **[R3]** impact on the willingness to comply with collaboration requests. The research also shows how these effects of in-group favouritism and out-group biases can be exacerbated in an online environment, for instance when using emails, with people experiencing strong negative emotions and making negative personal attributions that can lead to increased conflict and a breakdown of cooperation at work. The enormous impact of group identities on digital media use was also corroborated in her field research of London street gangs and their strategic use of social media to create and promote a gang identity **[R1]**. The different opportunities that digital technologies create are strongly influenced by how the technology behind the world wide web evolved, from a mere online repository of information in Web 1.0 to an immersive digital environment in Web 4.0 that responds interactively to user behaviours and preferences **[R2]**.

**3. References to the research** (indicative maximum of six references)
*All references are rigorously peer-reviewed journal articles and available open access. R1, R4, R5 and R6 are submitted as outputs for REF2021 in UoA 17.*

**[R1]** Whittaker, A., Densley, J.A. & **Moser, K. S.** (2020). No two gangs are alike: The digital divide in street gangs' differential adaptations to social media. Computers in Human Behavior. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106403

**[R2]** Martinez-Ruiz, M. P. & **Moser, K. S.** (2019). Studying consumer behaviour in an online context: The impact of the evolution of the World Wide Web for new avenues in research. Frontiers in Psychology, Organisational Psychology. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02731

**[R3]** Axtell, C., **Moser, K. S.** & McGoldrick, J. (2019). Professional Status and Norm Violation in Email Collaboration. Team Performance Management. https://doi.org/10.1108/TPM-07-2019-0083

**[R4] Moser, K.S.**, Dawson, J.F. & West, M.A. (2019). Antecedents of team innovation in health care teams. Creativity and Innovation Management, https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12285

**[R5] Moser, K.S.**, & Kaemmer, J. (2018). Collaboration Time Influences Information-Sharing at Work. Team Performance Management, 24(1/2), 2-16. https://doi.org/10.1108/TPM-10-2016-0043

**[R6] Moser, K. S.** (2017). The Influence of Feedback and Expert Status in Knowledge Sharing Dilemmas. Applied Psychology: An International Review. https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12105

**4. Details of the impact** (indicative maximum 750 words)
For several years, the 30 member countries of the EASO Strategic Network had been dissatisfied with the cooperation between themselves and with EASO as the coordinating European Commission agency. Cooperation on asylum and migration was inconsistent and unequal and they wanted help to improve their information-sharing and joint decision-making. Aware of her reputation in this field, the EASO Strategic Network (StratNet) appointed Professor Moser as European Commission Senior Expert Advisor (October 2017 to December 2020) based on her research expertise in knowledge management, cooperation and decision-making

in the workplace, and her proven track record of successful applications of her research in both the private and public sectors.

Between October 2017 and December 2020 Professor Moser worked closely with the EASO StratNet, which includes representatives from all 30 EU+ countries and from EASO. Her research expertise has helped the members of the EASO StratNet to identify and acknowledge the main causes of conflict, the areas of common ground on which they agree, to establish new ways of communicating both inside and outside of meetings, to agree on definitions of expertise, (which had been in dispute for many years) and to put in place a mentoring scheme to develop that expertise. These changes have improved collaboration between member countries continuously since the start of Professor Moser's mandate in October 2017 and provided the EASO StratNet with the basis to move forward in further harmonising joint guidance and decision-making on asylum and migration in Europe.

As part of her mandate, Professor Moser was given confidential access to all EASO network communications and documents, and to the EASO digital repository. She spoke to all national country Heads (highest civil servants responsible for Country of Origin (COI) security information and guidance in each of the 30 countries), to the EASO representatives, and numerous national COI experts. She was also an observer at two 'hotspot' country expert network meetings in 2019 and presented her findings at four EASO StratNet meetings in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

**Identifying common ground and creating a framework for collaboration**
The representatives of the 30 EASO Strategic Network member countries felt at an impasse, with ongoing disagreements about core issues, such as the purpose of the EASO networks, the contributions of each country in terms of personnel resources, joint guidance, COI gathering, security updates, rewards for national contributions, and the definition of COI expertise and securing long-term COI knowledge: '*Even though we implemented the networks with a lot of enthusiasm, competition among Member States and EASO as well as unequal resources and different ideas shaped the discussion in the networks from the beginning. For this reason, we asked EASO for an external evaluation, as we realised that we were getting stuck in the same discussions about more and less the same topics.*' **[S1]**.

Based on her research, Professor Moser identified 3 types of common good among the 30 StratNet countries: Type 1 (EASO as service provider); Type 2 (EASO as joint policy and guidance agency); and Type 3 (StratNet as community of experts). There were, however, differing levels of commitment from each member country to these three areas as a direct result of differences in national resources, policies and legal constraints and even reporting structures across the 30 countries. Everyone valued the community of experts, the majority valued EASO as a service provider, but joint policy and guidance was most disputed with only a third of countries supporting this. From April 2018 onwards, these findings provided a new framework to identify the main conflicts among the 30 EU+ countries that had held up and blocked collaboration before '…*by providing a pragmatic analysis of common ground that the member states can use as basis for future development*' **[S2]**. It allowed members to name the differences in a factual way, to de-escalate the conflicts and move forward. Type 1, 2 and 3 common good has now become part of StratNet's vocabulary, enabling members to identify the common ground that provides the basis for cooperation and preventing them from getting fixated on the areas of dissent that prevented constructive solutions in the past **[S1-6]**. One member explains the effect this has had: '*Your presentation [in April 2018] had a long-lasting and almost immediate beneficial impact on the functioning of the Strategic Network. The relationship between EASO and national COI units switched from confrontational to bargaining.*' **[S5]**.

**Reducing conflicts and improving cooperation between all 30 EU+ countries:**
Due to Moser's research, barriers that previously prevented the 30 EU+ countries from moving forward have become unstuck. The countries report a much improved collaborative climate in the meetings, with an increased willingness to compromise among all stakeholders **[S1, S3, S4, S5]**. As one stakeholder observed: '*We understand now much better what purpose each*

*measure in our cooperation serves (common good) and are better able to accommodate the different needs by making compromise.*' **[S5]**.

The analysis established that the main causes for conflict and different levels of cooperation were due to differences in national resources among the member countries as well as national differences in policies, dividing European states into resource-rich and resource-poor countries and countries separating security information completely from policy guidance and decision making and those who combined them. Making this clear, and establishing that it was a rational consequence of national differences, enabled the member countries to move away from the blame game and unproductive discussions and to instead focus on the substantial common ground and agreement that did exist **[S1, S5, S6]:** '*Among other things, I have learned from your analysis that we should make our conflicts of interest more transparent by naming and acknowledging them.*' **[S1]**.

Moser also found that for resource-rich countries, recognition of their contribution towards harmonisation of asylum procedures and joint security information and assessment was an important motivator for their continued support, but was not routine practice by EASO. Visibility of member state contributions was increased based on Professor Moser's recommendations, with countries named and explicit recognition of the exact type of contributions acknowledged, including naming the individual national experts that contributed: '*EASO [now] acknowledges contributions of national units better*' **[S5]**. For members, this change also helps to justify the effort put into European collaboration, as it provides important evidence when reporting to their ministers and within their national political contexts.

**Introducing new ways of communicating and achieving more equal share of voice**
Moser's recommendations have improved communication, created more equal member country participation in the EASO Strategic Network and in country specific meetings and helped to better support members, as evidenced here**:** '*Communication in and between meetings between the Strategic Network members and 30 EU+ countries has clearly improved, in particular by advising on how to structure meetings and to ensure that more discussions take place and decisions are made in meetings*' **[S3],** and: '*Some of the measures you suggested … have already been implemented: since then, meetings reserve more time for strategic and tactical discussions which led to a higher degree of satisfaction of representatives*' **[S1].** Another source states: '*Meetings have also become more equal in terms of member contributions, and with more active participation overall*' **[S4]**. In particular, smaller countries with less resources in the areas of migration and asylum feel heard and much better able to state their interests**:** '*I think your work gave us [small countries] a louder voice...I believe the most important impact for me personally was the little push you gave EASO to modernize its way of communication and interaction. Having large meetings like StratNet made it difficult for everybody to be heard. Discussions often veered into the same directions and always involved the same participants*' **[S6]**.

Moser's analysis and feedback has motivated EASO to move away from emails and to introduce interactive digital platforms, e.g. Microsoft Teams, that have empowered the network members to be more active and involved. This has increased country participation in preparing meetings and during them, for example by introducing anonymous digital feedback tools such as Slido, break out groups, and a better, more communicative setup in the meeting rooms **[S1-S6]**. The benefit for members of introducing digital formats to complement physical meetings is that it '*…gave everybody an equal voice and an easy way of communicating by PC or Smartphone. Being able to communicate anonymously also helps colleagues with less confidence or people not wanting to get into an argument with more "important" member states to give their opinions*' **[S6]**. This change in operation, which predated the COVID-19 pandemic, has been particularly beneficial during 2020: '*The stakeholder analysis of costs and benefits has provided clear indications of common ground and needs among the member states for virtual collaboration and has already led to changes in the network collaborations and the introduction of new digital tools and formats, also at physical meetings before the Covid19 pandemic*' **[S3]**.

On Professor Moser's recommendations, EASO also increased its support of their own EASO network leads who coordinate and moderate all meetings and network communications between the 30 StratNet member countries: '*EASO, in turn, committed to support their network facilitators with communication, leadership and persuasion training to improve management of the networks and communication at COI meetings*' **[S1]**.

**Increasing knowledge sharing and policy harmonisation**
One of the most crucial changes brought about by Moser's work with the EASO StratNet was support for a joint understanding of the definition of 'COI expertise'. This was highly disputed by members for years but now has been agreed on between all 30 countries. The analysis has '…*given the EU+ member states a handle on how to understand what is the common ground of expertise and knowledge that is needed to further develop the EASO networks and the Country of Origin Information (COI)*' **[S2]**. This was an important obstacle to overcome as unless there was agreement on who was recognised across member states as having the COI expertise on which security and policy decisions are based, there was little hope of further harmonising joint guidance and decision-making regarding asylum in Europe. Developing and securing COI expert knowledge is also central to equalising resources among member states. For most hotspot countries of origin (e.g. Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Somalia) there is only a small number of COI experts across Europe who have the in-depth knowledge to inform security decisions on asylum and migration. '*Since your first input in 2018, EASO has been continuously improving the format and the content of country specific network meetings and harvested better the inputs from national experts. We understand our responsibility for supporting EASO in organizing meaningful sessions and for achieving our common goals*' **[S5]**.

Many small or resource-poor countries don't have the expertise at all, and have to rely on European cooperation, which was not always forthcoming. However, during the yearly appraisals in December 2020, more country experts than ever volunteered to engage in future EASO network activities: '*They obviously are willing to follow [Moser's] call for more active participation and focus on questions related only to their specialization. They seem to trust the process*' **[S5]**. Moreover, Moser's recommendation of a new mentoring scheme between member states to support the development of new COI experts has been agreed by Heads of National Units: '*This includes concrete developments of a mentoring system between member states to support the continued development of knowledge and new COI experts in these highly relevant areas*' **[S2]** and '… *there was agreement among the Heads of Units to try out the proposed Bilateral Mentoring Scheme*…' **[S1]**.

The 30 EU+ countries are now joining forces to further harmonise their country information and guidance with joint reports, fact-finding missions and mutual support regarding hotspot countries and sensitive topics (e.g. LGBT+ and women's rights, ethnic persecution, access to education and healthcare) to determine the right to asylum and the basis for visa decisions in Europe. New ways of communicating have been established and mutual support systems agreed, making EASO more effective as a coordinating agency and enabling the EASO StratNet to move forward with new initiatives: '*Professor Moser's expert support has already had a visible impact in supporting the development of a joint understanding of asylum and migration relevant information, policy and security analysis and increased the collaboration between EU+ member states. I expect this to further benefit the integration of asylum processes across Europe*' **[S3]**.

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of 10 references)
**[S1]** Senior Expert Asylum and Migration, German Ministry for Migration and Refugees
**[S2]** Deputy Head of the COI Unit, Danish Ministry of Immigration and Integration
**[S3]** Head, Office for Country Information and Language Analysis, Dutch Ministry of Justice and Safety
**[S4]** Head of Country Information, Finnish Immigration Service
**[S5]** Head of Analysis, State Secretariat for Migration, Swiss Federal Department of Justice and Police
**[S6]** Country of Origin Information Expert, Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs