



## Input by civil society to the EASO Annual Report 2017

EASO has started the production of the 2017 Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the European Union, in line with Article 12 (1) of the EASO Regulation. The report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of important asylum-related developments at EU+ and national level, and the functioning of all key aspects of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). While the final product comes out of an analytical and synthetic process that takes place in-house, a critical part of information is elicited through valuable contributions by a multiplicity of stakeholders from EU+ countries, civil society organizations, UNHCR, and other actors possessing in-depth knowledge on main developments in asylum policies and practices in EU+ countries. Previous reports are [available for review at EASO's website](#).

We would like to kindly invite you to take part in this process, by sharing your observations **on developments in asylum law, policy or practice in 2017 (and early 2018) in the areas listed on page 2**. The topics listed there reflect the structure of Chapter 4 of the EASO report, which focuses on the 'Functioning of the CEAS'. To this end, your observations may concern national practices of specific EU+ countries or the EU as a whole. Overall, the EASO Annual Report is not meant to describe the national asylum systems in detail, but present key developments in 2017, including **improvements and new/remaining concerns**. In terms of format, your contributions would be preferably offered in the form of bullet points, which would facilitate further processing of your input.

Please, bear in mind that the EASO Annual Report is a public document. Accordingly, it would be desirable that your contributions, whenever possible, be supported by references to relevant sources. Providing links to materials such as analytical studies, articles, reports, websites, press releases, position papers/statements, and press releases, would allow for maintaining transparency. For your reference, you may review the [contributions offered by civil society actors for the 2016 Annual Report](#). If you do not consent on EASO making your submission available, please inform us accordingly.

In our effort to provide an inclusive overview of all relevant developments, we strive to incorporate as many contributions as possible. At the same time, the final content of the EASO Annual Report is subject to its set terms of reference and volume limitations. To this end, your submissions, which are gratefully received and acknowledged, may be edited for length and clarity so that the final product concisely serves the objectives of the Annual Report: to improve the quality, consistency, and effectiveness of CEAS. From our side, we can assure you that the valuable insights you offer feed into EASO's work in multiple ways and inform reports and analyses beyond the production of the Annual Report.

Please, kindly provide your input by filling in this document (with attachments, if needed) and returning it to [ids@easo.europa.eu](mailto:ids@easo.europa.eu) **AND** [consultative-forum@easo.europa.eu](mailto:consultative-forum@easo.europa.eu) **by 16 February 2018**.

Within each area, please highlight the following **type of information**:

- NEW positive developments; improvements and NEW or remaining matters of concern;
- Changes in policies or practices; transposition of legislation; institutional changes; relevant national jurisprudence.

*You are kindly requested to make sure that your input falls within each section's scope. Please, refrain from including information that goes beyond the thematic focus of each section or is not related to recent developments. Feel free to use Section 16 to share information on developments you consider important that may have not been covered in previous sections.*

Name of the contributing stakeholder: Stichting Unity in Diversity (UID)

Contact details: [www.uidnl.org](http://www.uidnl.org)

**1) Access to territory and access to asylum procedure**

**2) Access to information and legal assistance**

**3) Providing interpretation services**

**4) Dublin procedure**

**5) Specific procedures (border, accelerated, admissibility)**

**6) Reception of applicants for international protection**

**7) Detention of applicants for international protection**

**8) Procedures at First instance**

**9) Procedures at Second Instance**

**10) Availability and use of Country of Origin Information**

Perhaps with regards to this, receiving/hosting societies may benefit from certain aspects of country of origin information, especially refugee demographics, socio-cultural orientations and the likes. Officials of receiving/hosting societies can then use them to educate their people.

**11) Vulnerable applicants**

**12) Content of protection – situation of beneficiaries of protection**

**13) Return of former applicants for international protection**

**14) Resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes**

The following view on resettlement programs was obtained through our research and from the work we continue to do in the field.

In The Netherlands, refugees reception and resettlement is relatively good in comparison to many other countries. In some cases, refugees who came through the resettlement program receive better services compared to those who come into the country through irregular migration. While this process has involved providing the refugees with information about The Netherlands before their arrival (Pre-departure orientation) not as much is done in some of the hosting communities. Its is important to involve hosting communities in resettlement processes, down to the very question of what their opinions and takes are on

the number of refugees to be resettled among them. Providing information on diversity, socio-cultural differences and the like. Socio-cultural differences have played both positive and negative roles in the resettlement process, whether it be resettling refugees from outside The Netherlands or simple relocation from one part of the municipality to the other. They can affect the admission of refugees, especially if it turns out that the hosting communities, who would have participated in resettlement processes overwhelmingly vote against such. The communities take will be reflected in the resettlement and admission policies. A more receptive community will yield better resettlement and admission policies; hence states will become slightly more willing to accept a *good* number of refugees.

## 15) Relocation

## 16) Other relevant developments

### Social Contact and Participation Policies

Following our Foundation's model, we try to improve refugees' contact with others living in the Dutch society. Many times, perhaps due to policies and structures of participation programs, much attention is put on refugees themselves, creating programs that target their group only with the intention of helping them to meet Dutch people and learn Dutch culture. This approach may work sometimes, but giving what we have seen with refugees, it will work even better when such policies and projects are wholistic in such a way that they target the refugees mainly, but also involving Dutch, expats, and other categories that make up the Dutch society. This helps refugees to increase their social contact, network and overall participation.

Why is this important? It is important because it ensures that they are not always surrounded by people from the same background, facing the same problems and speaking the same language. When the group is mixed for example during social, cultural or other types of participation activities and excursions, it keeps it interesting, it fosters desire to learn more about the local Dutch culture and other cultures represented in the group, people ask questions, enthusiasm is raised, and lessons learnt. Ultimately the motivation of refugees will be higher to participate and take their integration seriously.

### Housing Policies

Housing refugees and the locations in which they are housed are a crucial part of resettlement and admission programs; this also play important roles in their integration process. When integration of refugees is seen as slower than anticipated by the government, or even become problematic for them, the usual response after a while will be to back out of resettlement or when they are considerate, they rather reduce the number of refugees to be accepted through resettlement.

Many refugees are housed within the same housing units as other refugees, not very much different from when they were in camps. While in some cases this is good, it slows down their integration process and may lead to a divided Dutch society in many years to come.

Housing plans should be made in such a way that refugees are located within the rest of the city's residence who are not necessarily refugees. This does not mean that in some occasions there will not be more than one or two families with refugee backgrounds living within the same areas, this may very well be the case. This also does not go without consideration of the fact that some people may prefer to live among their own people. Both scenarios may well apply, it doesn't however preclude the need to explore a better housing option for the larger refugee communities. In conclusion, some issues that may be left to later parts of integration, are better off taken into account during pre-resettlement and resettlement periods, to ensure continuous and smoother resettlement and admission programs.