



Draft Annual Work Plan 2024

EUAA Consultative Forum

1. Introduction and Background

The Consultative Forum is the Agency's civil society platform. [Management Board Decision No 111](#) establishes the CF under the EUAA and sets out the CF's composition and conditions for transmitting information thereto. The Consultative Forum currently includes 118 CF members, whilst the call for expression of interest to join the CF remains open indefinitely.

In accordance with the EUAA Regulation, the Consultative Forum has established its own [working methods](#).

In line with Article 50 of the EUAA Regulation, MB Decision No 111 as well as the Consultative Forum's working methods, the **objectives** of the Consultative Forum are to:

- Enable the EUAA to maintain a close dialogue with relevant civil society organisations and competent bodies operating in the field of asylum policy at local, regional, national, Union, or international level, and vice versa;
- Constitute a mechanism for the exchange of information and the sharing of knowledge;
- Provide civil society expertise and input into the Agency's work, activities and outputs
- Advise the Executive Director and the Management Board on asylum-related matters in accordance with the Agency's specific needs in areas identified as a priority for its work.

In line with the working methods, the main activities of the Consultative Forum include meetings, electronic consultations on key Agency documents including the development of the European asylum curriculum as well as the provision of advice to the Executive Director and the Management Board.

When it comes to the planning of the CF's work, Article 11 of the working methods foresees that:

*“The Chair, with the support of the Consultative Forum Secretariat, shall draft **an annual work plan** setting out the planned activities for the Consultative Forum in a given calendar year. The work plan shall be drafted on a cooperative basis, considering the input and feedback from the Consultative Forum members as well as relevant Agency staff. It shall also take due account of the budget that has been made available to the Consultative Forum for a given year.*

The annual work plan may be presented to the Management Board and can be made public thereafter.

The annual work plan remains a living document and may be adjusted according to emerging/changing priorities and needs”.





This document sets out the annual work plan for the Consultative Forum in 2024. It reflects priorities and activities that have jointly been identified by the CF members and the Agency and it will remain flexible for adjustments¹. In addition to the outlined priorities and activities, the Consultative Forum can also provide advice at its own initiative.

The rest of this paper includes the following:

- »»» **Section 2** provides an overview of the priority areas of work for the CF in 2024
- »»» **Section 3** provides a description of the CF activities that are foreseen per priority area of work;
- »»» **Section 4** presents a calendar overview of all CF activities planned for 2024 along a quarterly chronological timeline;
- »»» **Section 5** specifies the format of the planned meetings in 2024.

2. Priority Areas of Work for the Consultative Forum in 2024

The Consultative Forum would like to prioritise a number of different areas of work in 2024.

The priority areas of work follow from obligations in the EUAA Regulation, the MB Decision No 111, the CF working methods, and also take into account CF members' interests as well as the Agency's needs and priorities. They include the following:

- Access to the asylum procedure
- The Agency's fundamental rights framework and cooperation with the FRO
- Planning of the Agency's activities
- Training
- Information and analysis activities
- Country of Origin Information
- Vulnerability
- The impact of the Pact on the Agency's activities

The table below lists the different areas of work and specifies the planned activities/consultations including an approximate timeline.

¹ The annual work plan has been developed taking into account the feedback of and discussions between CF members at the second EUAA Plenary Meeting which took place on 30 November 2023.



Table 1: Overview of planned activities for the CF in 2024

Area of work	Activity/Document	Format of consultation	Time-line
Access to the asylum procedure	Exchange of information on access to the asylum procedure	Meeting	Q2/Q3
Fundamental rights framework and cooperation with the FRO	Regular exchanges with the Fundamental Rights Officer	Regular meetings	Throughout 2024
	Fundamental Rights Strategy	Written consultation	January 2024
	Complaints mechanism	Meeting and written consultation	January 2024
	Update/revision of the Code of Conduct for ASTs	Written consultation	Q1-Q2 2024
Planning of the Agency's activities	SPD 2025-2027	Written consultation	February 2024
Training	Relevant training modules of the European Asylum Curriculum	CF Chair in person participation in the annual meeting of the Training Reference Group & written consultations	TRG meeting: Q1 Written consultations: throughout 2024
Information and Analysis activities	Asylum Report: feedback to MB	Meeting & written consultation	Q2/Q3 2024
	Public Information and Documentation System	Meeting & Written consultation	Q3/4 2024
Country of Origin Information	Meetings and activities of the CF thematic group on COI	Two meetings	Q2 and Q4 2024
Vulnerability	Meetings and activities of the CF Thematic group on Persons in a Vulnerable Situation	Two meetings	Q2 and Q4 2024
Impact of the Pact on the Agency's activities	Meeting to exchange information on the impact of the Pact on the Agency's activities	Information webinar	Q3-Q4 2024
Other	CF Plenary Meeting	Plenary Meeting	Q3-Q4 2024



3. Brief description of the planned CF activities

The sections below provide further details on the envisaged CF activities for 2024, divided per area of work.

3.1 Access to the Asylum Procedure

Every applicant seeking international protection should have effective access to asylum procedures, as laid down in the CEAS (Asylum Procedures Directive). At the same time, however, geopolitical developments leading to increased arrivals and applications may impact this right.

In 2024, the Consultative Forum would like to initiate an exchange with the Agency on access to the asylum procedure.

To this end, a thematic meeting is foreseen to be organized in Q2-Q3. As per Article 12 of the CF working methods, the meeting agenda will be decided upon at a later stage by the Consultative Forum members in consultation with the Agency.

3.2 Fundamental Rights Framework and cooperation with the FRO

The EUAA Regulation has introduced various new provisions related to fundamental rights. The Regulation foresees a role for the Consultative Forum in the establishment and implementation of this framework by stipulating that the CF is to:

- Closely cooperate with the Fundamental Rights Officer (FRO);
- Be consulted on the preparation, adoption and implementation of the fundamental rights strategy;
- Be consulted on the preparation, adoption and implementation of the Code of Conduct for Asylum Support Teams;
- Be consulted on the setting up of the complaints mechanism.

The **Fundamental Rights Officer** was created as a new position within the Agency to ensure that the Agency's activities comply with fundamental rights. The FRO (Mr. Francois Deleu) took office in May 2023. As per the EUAA Regulation and the CF working methods, the FRO and the Consultative Forum will closely cooperate. Throughout 2024, the CF will therefore **regularly exchange information with the FRO**. As foreseen in the working methods, the FRO may be invited to participate in CF meetings and, where needed, this can also be complemented with dedicated exchanges to be organized on a needs basis.

The FRO is in charge of developing a proposal for the Agency's **Fundamental Rights Strategy**. A meeting between the CF and the FRO had already taken place in July 2023 to discuss the Fundamental Rights Strategy. The draft Strategy and Action Plan has been shared with the Consultative Forum on 21 December 2023. By the deadline of 24 January 2024, a total of 8 contributions from CF members were received. The FRO is currently reaching out to those organisations who contributed to inform them on the follow-up to the consultation. Following



the adoption of the Fundamental Rights Strategy, the CF will remain closely involved also thereafter, including when it comes to being consulted on the implementation of the Fundamental Rights Strategy.

According to the EUAA Regulation, the Agency should establish a **complaints mechanism** to be implemented under the responsibility of the FRO. A survey to collect feedback from the CF members on the draft rules of the mechanism was launched on 22 December 2023 with deadline to reply by 26 January 2024. An information webinar was also organized with the CF on 10 January during which the Agency explained the purpose and scope of the mechanism. By the deadline of the survey, input was collected from a total of 13 Consultative Forum members. The CF would appreciate receiving information on the final version of the complaints mechanism including feedback on the consultation with the CF.

In accordance with Article 50 of the EUAA Regulation, the Consultative Forum is to be consulted on the (revision/update) of the **code of conduct** which is applicable to all experts participating in **asylum support teams**. According to Article 58 of the EUAA Regulation, the code of conduct shall “lay down procedures intended to guarantee the principles of the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights with a particular focus on children, unaccompanied minors and other persons in a vulnerable situation”. The Agency is currently updating the code of conduct to bring it in line with the requirements of the EUAA Regulation. A consultation process is foreseen, including with the Consultative Forum, via written procedure and is tentatively scheduled for **Q1-Q2 of 2024**.

Finally, the Consultative Forum would appreciate being informed about other documents/activities relevant to the Agency’s fundamental rights framework (including notably the **escalation mechanism**). Whilst a meeting and a survey on the **monitoring mechanism** were already conducted last year, the CF would be pleased to be kept informed about the final methodology of the monitoring mechanism.

3.3 Feedback on the planning of the Agency’s activities

Article 50 of the EUAA Regulation stipulates that the Consultative Forum shall “make suggestions to the Management Board on the annual and multi-annual programming of the Agency”.

Each year, the Agency prepares a **Single Programming Document (SPD)** which provides multi-annual programming and annual planning of activities and resources.

The draft SPD 2025-2027 has been shared with the Consultative Forum on 20 December 2023 and the CF members have been invited to provide feedback in writing by the deadline of 29th February.



3.4 Training

As per the EUAA Regulation, the CF shall be consulted on the development of the European Asylum Curriculum (EAC).

Similar to last year, the CF Chair was invited to participate in the annual meeting of the Training Reference Group (TRG) which took place in Malta on 5th March. The main aim of the TRG meeting was for the Agency to present an update on its training activities and explain the planning for training development for the year, including how the Agency intends to involve the CF members.

A **call for consultation on the training modules** planned for 2024 will be launched after the TRG meeting and this will provide the possibility to CF members to be consulted and actively contribute to the development of the training modules relevant to their expertise.

Below is an overview of the planning of training developments which will be shared with the Consultative Forum via calls for expressions of interest, including an approximate time-line².

Training module	Time-line for the launch of expressions of interest
Pre-departure phase in the context of resettlement and humanitarian admission	Q1
Introduction to COI	Q1
Health, safety and security in reception	March 2024
Conflict management and mediation in reception level B	March 2024
Safe and healthy reception environments	April 2024
Withdrawal of international protection	April 2024
Managing victims of GBV	June 2024
Age Assessment	August/September 2024
COI advanced	August/September 2024
Managing applicants with diverse SOGIESC	September 2024
Advanced Asylum Interviewing	October/November 2024

3.5 Information & Analysis

Asylum Report

Every year, the Agency produces an **Asylum Report** which provides a comprehensive overview of developments in the field of asylum at the European and national levels. The report includes information and perspectives from various stakeholders, including from civil society organisations who are an important source and contributor to the report.

A call for input from Consultative Forum members was already launched in October 2023 with a deadline to provide input by the end of November 2023.

² The indicated time refers to when the calls for expressions will be launched.



Following publication of the report (foreseen for June 2024), a meeting will be organized to present the main findings of the Asylum Report to the CF members. During that meeting, CF members will be invited to discuss if and how they would like to provide feedback on the report to the Management Board given the reference in the EUAA Regulation Article 50 (5) (b) which stipulates that the Consultative Forum shall “provide feedback to the Management Board and suggest measures as follow-up to the annual report on the situation of asylum”.

Information and Documentation System (Public)

One of the main information sources managed by the EUAA is the Information and Documentation System (IDS). The database provides up-to-date information on each stage of the asylum process in EU+ countries.

IDS is currently a database restricted to authorized users from national administrations. However, the new mandate of the EUAA requires the IDS platform to have “publicly accessible parts”. The Agency launched a project to put this requirement into practice referred to as “Public IDS”. A consultation process is ongoing with various stakeholders to discuss the scope and content which would be included in Public IDS. A consultation process is also foreseen with the Consultative Forum (possibly consisting of a meeting and written feedback) and is tentatively scheduled for Q3-4 2024.

3.6 CF thematic consultation group on Country-of-Origin Information

The Consultative Forum will remain closely involved in the Agency’s work and activities on **Country of Origin Information** through the work of the CF thematic consultation group on COI which currently includes 12 members.

In line with the working methods for the **CF group on Country of Origin Information**, the group will meet on a bi-annual basis and aims to maintain an open and transparent dialogue on matters related to COI. Group members may share their input and expertise on COI and can provide feedback on relevant COI activities and products of the Agency. The group may also provide recommendations on COI to the Executive Director and the Management Board in accordance with the CF’s working methods.

At its meeting on 1st December 2023, the group members discussed the group’s activities for 2024. As main take-away, the group would like to organize more in-depth exchanges with the Agency focusing either on a particular third country or a particular COI research aspect.

Following a call for expression of interest, the members of the COI group have recently appointed Fatima Ali from Asylos as thematic rapporteur of the CF group on COI. The thematic rapporteur will now discuss with the Chair and the Agency the specific activities planned for 2024.

3.7 CF thematic consultation group on Persons in a vulnerable situation

In line with the working methods for the CF group on **Persons in a Vulnerable Situation**, the group will meet at least once per year and aims at maintaining a close dialogue on issues, challenges and good practices in dealing with persons in a vulnerable situation. At the request



of the Agency, group members may be invited to provide input to relevant tools/guides. The group may also, on its own initiative or at the request of the Agency, provide advice to the ED and MB on matters related to vulnerability.

At its meeting on 1st December 2023, the group discussed potential thematic priorities to focus on in 2024. Another meeting took place at the end of February 2024 to further discuss the thematic priorities. At this meeting, a decision was taken to launch a survey with all group members, inviting them to vote for their top two thematic priorities. This survey will soon be launched.

4. Time-line for CF activities in 2024

The table below provides a calendar overview on a quarterly basis of all CF activities planned for 2024. Activities highlighted in blue are written consultations, whereas activities highlighted in orange/pink constitute meetings.

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Written Consultation SPD 2025-2027	Written consultation Code of Conduct for ASTs	Cont.: Feedback Asylum Report	CF Plenary Meeting
Written Consultation Fundamental Rights Strategy and Action Plan		Meeting Public IDS	Meeting of the CF group on COI
Meeting Complaints Mechanism	Meeting Asylum Report	Written consultation Public IDS	
Written consultation complaints mechanism	Feedback Asylum Report	Meeting on access to the asylum procedure	
Annual Training reference Group meeting	Meeting of the CF group on COI	Information Webinar on the impact of the Pact on EUAA's activities	
	Meeting of the CF group on Persons in a vulnerable situation		
Consultations on training modules			
Exchanges with the FRO			

5. Format of CF meetings

In line with the CF working methods, the CF Plenary Meeting shall be organised as an in-person meeting. The other meetings are planned to take place online, unless the Chair, in agreement with the Agency, decides otherwise provided that there is sufficient budget available.