

OPERATIONAL PLAN 01 JULY 2022 – 30 JUNE 2023
AGREED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR ASYLUM
AND
THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA
AND
THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL SECURITY AND LABOUR OF THE REPUBLIC
OF LITHUANIA

Valletta Harbour and Vilnius

The Executive Director of the European Union Agency for Asylum (hereinafter 'EUAA' or the 'Agency')
and

The Minister of Interior of the Republic of Lithuania and the Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter 'Member State'),

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 2021/2303 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2021 on the European Union Agency for Asylum and repealing Regulation (EU) No 439/2010¹ (hereinafter referred to as 'EUAA Regulation'), and in particular Article 1, Article 2, Article 3, Articles 16 to 20 and Articles 23 to 28 thereof,

Hereby agree on the Operational Plan (hereinafter 'the Plan') for the provision of technical and operational assistance by EUAA to the Republic of Lithuania.

The Operational Plan is binding in its entirety, including annexes.

The implementation period of the Plan shall be from 1 July 2022 until 30 June 2023.

The Plan enters into force on the date after it has been signed by both Parties.

EUAA shall share a copy of the Plan with the Members of the EUAA Management Board for information. The Plan will be made publicly available on the EUAA website.

Valletta Harbour and Vilnius

Executive Director of the
European Union Agency for
Asylum

Minister of Interior of the
Republic of Lithuania

Minister of Social Security and
Labour of the Republic of
Lithuania

Nina Gregori

Agnė Bilotaitė

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¹ Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 establishing a European Asylum Support Office.

1.0. INTRODUCTION

An Operational Plan addresses the specific needs of the requesting Member State(s) with regard to:

- operational and technical needs of the Member State(s) whose asylum and/or reception systems are subject to disproportionate pressure;
- operational and technical reinforcement needs of the Member State(s) facing disproportionate migratory challenges;
- the implementation of its (their) obligations under the Common European Asylum System (CEAS).

The Plan provides the framework for delivery of technical and operational assistance by the European Union Agency for Asylum, including the deployment of asylum support teams.

2.0. OPERATIONAL SITUATION, NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND OBJECTIVES

Starting in the second quarter of 2021, the pressure on Lithuania's asylum system significantly heightened as a result of the sharp increase in the inflow of irregular migrants through the Belarus border. By the end of the year 4 287 applications were lodged, representing 50 times increase in the number of asylum applications if compared to the preceding year. The composition of the migration flow also recorded a change. In 2020, most irregular entries concerned the Russian Federation nationals, Belarussian nationals and, to a lesser extent, persons originating from Iraq. In 2021, Iraq represented the main citizenship of applicants with 2 327 applications or 54 % of all national applications. Afghanistan, Belarus, Congo (DR) and Russia followed at a distance. Altogether, these five main countries of origin accounted for 74 % of all applications in the country.

The several amendments to the national legal framework, coupled with the prevention of irregular entries, resulted in a consistent decrease of the number of new arrivals through the border with Belarus during the second half of 2021, with a total of 270 entries from August to December 2021 and 123 arrivals registered from January to June 2022. In parallel, the beginning of 2022 has witnessed close to 57000 registrations for temporary protection from Ukrainian nationals. The majority of people arriving from Ukraine fell under the Temporary Protection Directive and were channelled to a different national procedure, making their impact on the asylum and reception procedures less significant.

As a response to the influx of irregular arrivals during 2021, the reception capacity of the country has been expanded with the establishment of 3 additional reception sites. As of end of 2021, the Lithuanian reception system consisted of three Foreigners' Registration Centres (FRC) falling under the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior (in Pabrade, Medininkai and Kybartai) and two Refugees' Reception Centers (RRC) falling under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (in Vilnius and Rukla). The total reception capacity is 3538 places.

According to the data shared by the Ministry of the Interior, in June 2022 a total of 1424 irregular migrants were still hosted in the Foreigners' Registration Centres of Pabrade, Medininkai and Kybartai. Most of the applications for asylum submitted by residents have already been processed. However, according to the data shared by the Migration Department, about 1000 residents of all centres (Mol and MoSSL) are still in the asylum procedure, of which about 700 are in the appeal procedure. The Ministry of the Interior has indicated the continued need for EUAA support in the reception procedures in the centres under the State Border Guard Service, namely support with the information provision, interpretation, and facilitation of vulnerability screening procedures. In addition to the above, the Ministry of the Interior flagged the need of support in the training of the newly recruited staff of the State Border Guards Service working in Foreigners' Reception Centres. During 2021, two new FRCs were

established to cope with the influx of irregular migrants, and this resulted in recruitments of new staff with limited or no experience in the reception of asylum seekers. EUAA delivered trainings to SBGS officials in the framework of the 2021 – 2022 Operating Plan. However, the Ministry expressed the need for further training for its reception personnel working in FRCs as more staff is to join to strengthen the reception capacity of the Centers.

According to the data of 18th May from MoSSL, there were 648 residents in Rukla and 459 residents in Naujininkai (Vilnius). Almost 90 percent of them have received a negative decision on their asylum application, and a major part of them appealed the first instance decision. The Ministry of Social Security and Labour is predicting that most of these people will be accommodated in the Refugees' Reception Centers at least until the end of 2022, as a consequence of the lengthiness of the Lithuanian appeal procedure, the low number of voluntary returns implemented so far and the heavy shortage of private accommodation available for rent due to the high and consistent number of arrivals from Ukraine. In light of the above, MoSSL has indicated a continued need for EUAA support in enhancing the capacity of Refugees Reception Centre to manage dedicated reception facilities for vulnerable asylum seekers, including in relation to information provision, vulnerability assessments and interpretation.

Furthermore, Lithuania has evaluated the capacity of reception and accommodation system and has developed alternatives to ensure a more sustainable and cost-effective system is put in place. A working group formed by representatives from the MoI and the MoSSL identified as the most cost-efficient alternative the centralization of all accommodation sites under one umbrella. This would allow to ensure the same standard of living and to select the most sustainable and cost-effective ways to provide services to residents of the reception sites. Therefore, the intra-ministerial agreement was reached that a new reception agency would be established and tasked with implementing the reception conditions in Lithuania. Moreover, it was concluded that to be more flexible vis-a-vis the changing pressure on the border it is necessary to have at least 3000-4000 sustainable dignified accommodation places and a capacity to rapidly expand and retract by using modular housing units (container-type accommodation). The preliminary decision of the MoSSL on the way forward is to expand the Refugees' Reception Centre and build the new reception agency including the already existing structures of the Centre. In these circumstances, MoSSL has indicated a need for EUAA support with conceptualizing and designing the new Reception Agency of Lithuania as well as a need for continued and advanced training for the reception personnel of the Refugees' Reception Centre which will need to undertake the leading role in kick-starting the operationalization of the new Reception Agency of Lithuania.

A rapid needs assessment has been conducted by EUAA, in close collaboration with the Lithuanian authorities (meetings with MoI/ MoSSL on the 26th April, 31st May, 6th June 2022, field visits 1st – 8th June 2022 in Pabrade, Medininkai, Kybartai FRCs, and in Rukla and Vilnius RRCs). As a result, priority areas for the provision of immediate support by EUAA have been identified. The main findings emerging from the rapid need assessment suggest proceeding with the deployment of EUAA Asylum Support Teams to further enhance the capacities of the national reception sites through continued support with information provision, interpretation and vulnerability procedures as well as by providing relevant reception-related trainings to build the capacity of reception personnel. Further to this, a second area of support has been identified during the rapid needs assessment, namely, the provision of technical support to conceptualize the design of the new Reception Agency in Lithuania under which the government intends to centralize the management of reception facilities.

In accordance with the operational situation and needs assessment described herewith, the Parties agree to pursue the achievement of the following operational objectives and results:

- **Expected Outcome 1:** Enhance the capacity of the Lithuanian authorities in managing reception centres
- **Expected Outcome 2:** Effectiveness and efficiency of the Lithuanian Reception System is improved

The agreed outcomes shall be achieved through the implementation of the measures specified in Annex I to the Plan.

The designated Coordinating Officer(s), with the support of the Measure Coordinator(s) where relevant, shall follow up the implementation of the Plan through mechanisms and tools deemed appropriate by the implementing Parties, such as a joint quarterly steering committee or other.

The agreed measures may be subject to annual and/or *ad-hoc* reviews as necessary to ensure their continued relevance and added value.

3.0. MAIN NATIONAL PARTNERS

The host Member State's main partners involved in the implementation of this Plan are the following:

Organisation	Responsibilities
Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania	The Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania (Mol) is the main institution responsible to coordinate the implementation of the Lithuanian policies and regulations on migration. In particular, the following tasks fall under the coordination of Mol: migration, asylum and citizenship procedures; issuance and record-keeping of documents proving personal identity and citizenship; travel documents; residence permits; free movement of persons.
Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania	The Ministry for Social Security and Labour (MoSSL) of the Republic of Lithuania is responsible to coordinate and foster integration of beneficiaries of international protection and third country nationals legally present in Lithuania. Furthermore the MoSSL of Lithuania is responsible for the management of the Refugees' Reception Centers in Rukla and in Vilnius which accommodate unaccompanied minors as well as vulnerable asylum seekers.
State Border Guard Service	The State Border Guard Service (SBGS) is established under the Mol of the Republic of Lithuania. SBGS is responsible for the enforcement of public safety in the fields of State border guarding and, within the scope of the assigned competence, to manage irregular migration. Among the main tasks of SBGS is to ensure the inviolability of the State border and implement the policy of State border guarding; to implement international agreements, laws and other legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania establishing the legal regulations of the State border; to prevent, detect and investigate criminal activities and other violations of law. SBGS is also managing three Foreigners' Registration Centers in Pabradė, Medininkai and Kybartai which operate as first line reception facilities and where asylum seekers, irregular arrivals and third country nationals without legal grounds for stay in the country are accommodated. In addition to the above, SBGS manages closed reception facilities at 20 border crossing points where asylum applicants are accommodated on a temporary basis.
Foreigners' Registration Centers (FRCs) of the State Border Guard Service	The Foreigners' Registration Centers (FRC) provide first line reception facilities for asylum seekers, irregular migrants and third country nationals during the processing of their asylum applications or other procedures. FRCs are managed by the State Border Guard Service (SBGS) and consist of three permanent reception facilities in Pabradė, Medininkai and Kybartai.
Refugees' Reception Centre	The Refugees' Reception Centre is a budgetary institution falling under the competence and management of the MoSSL. The Refugees' Reception Centre acts as a coordinator of the national integration programme for beneficiaries of international protection and as a guardian for unaccompanied minors. The Refugees' Reception Centre is also a designated institution to provide first line

Organisation	Responsibilities
	reception services to vulnerable asylum seekers and has two reception facilities in Rukla and in Vilnius (Naujininkai).

4.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

EUAA is implementing a structured Monitoring and Evaluation methodology allowing evidence-based measurement of progress, corrective action-taking and reflective reviews.

In terms of monitoring, EUAA is making use of a number of tools developed in order to collect input from the implementation of the Plan and to guarantee feedback in real time.

Results from the monitoring activities shall be reported through mechanisms deemed appropriate by the implementing Parties, such as steering meetings or other.

Periodic or mid-term and final (ex-post) evaluations² can be carried out in order to take stock of lessons learned and good practices. The evaluation(s) will be conducted in line with EUAA's Evaluation Framework, which is based on the European Commission's Better Regulation methodological guidelines for evaluations. They may be performed externally through engagement of evaluation specialist(s), internally by Agency staff, or a hybrid approach.

In order to ensure completeness of evaluations and to take into account the views and feedback from the Parties involved, senior and other key persons from the national authorities of the host Member State may be invited to interviews with the evaluators or to provide feedback by alternative means. The national authorities shall commit to supporting the evaluation process and participating in such engagements with evaluators by mutually agreed appointments.

An evaluation report on the results of the operational and technical measures shall be submitted to the Management Board on conclusion of an evaluation. The report on the final (ex post) evaluation will be due within 60 days from the end of the provision of operational and technical measures. For transparency and accountability purposes, evaluation report(s) may be made publicly available on the Agency's website after internal checks have been made to ensure compliance with the applicable provisions in Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725³ and Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001⁴.

Other monitoring and evaluation deliverables, as applicable, shall be shared with the host Member State and communicated to the EUAA governance structure (e.g. Management Board members and National Contact Points) where relevant.

5.0 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

5.1 General legal basis for the Plan

In accordance with Article 1 of the EUAA Regulation, the Agency shall contribute to ensuring the efficient and uniform application of Union law on asylum in the Member States in a manner that fully respects fundamental rights. The Agency shall facilitate and support the activities of the Member States in the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), including by enabling convergence in the assessment of applications for international protection across the Union and by coordinating and

² Article 16(4) and Article 18(2)(k) of EUAA Regulation.

³ Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC, (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).

⁴ Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents, (OJ L 145, 31.05.2001, p. 43).

strengthening practical cooperation and information exchange. The Agency shall improve the functioning of the CEAS, including through the monitoring mechanism and by providing operational and technical assistance to Member States, in particular where their asylum and reception systems are under disproportionate pressure.

Article 2 of the EUAA Regulation specifies the tasks the Agency is entrusted to perform, while in accordance with Article 3 thereof, each Member State shall appoint at least one national contact point for communication with the Agency on matters relating to the tasks referred to in Article 2.

The Agency shall provide operational and technical assistance to a Member State in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 6 of the EUAA Regulation.

5.2. Legal framework applicable to the Plan

EUAA activities performed in the context of the operational and technical assistance as identified in this Plan are in principle governed by EU law, complemented, where appropriate, by the national law of the host Member State. This includes, inter alia, the safety and security of persons and assets participating in those EUAA activities.

5.3. Lawfulness and Respect for Fundamental Rights

This Plan shall be implemented by the Parties in full compliance with the applicable law, and with full respects to human dignity. This includes, inter alia, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, as well as the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951.

Any person contributing to EUAA operational support activities and taking part in the implementation of the Plan shall respect the applicable international law, European Union law and the national law of the host Member State. They shall maintain the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct, professionalism, respect and promotion of fundamental rights and international protection.

They are to act responsibly and proportionally to the agreed objectives. Whilst carrying out supporting functions, all personnel must not discriminate persons on grounds of sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, age or sexual orientation. All persons are expected to treat every person with courtesy, respect, and due consideration for the nature of any legitimate activity in which they are engaged. To perform their duties properly, they shall serve the public interest and refrain from any activities which could undermine or compromise their independence and the appropriate performance of their duties.

During the implementation of this Plan, all personnel must apply a zero-tolerance attitude with respect to the infringement of fundamental human rights.

This obligation is particularly important when dealing with persons who are in need of international protection. To that end, participants in EUAA operational support under this Plan shall comply and act in accordance with the 'EUAA Code of Conduct for persons participating in EUAA operational support activities'. Participants in operational support activities will be requested to sign a declaration on compliance with the EUAA Code of Conduct.

Participants in EUAA's operational activities⁵ who have reason to believe that a violation of the EUAA Code of Conduct has occurred or is about to occur, are obliged to report the matter to the Executive Director of EUAA and to the host Member State Coordinator for the Plan via the appropriate channel: complaints_operations@euaa.europa.eu. Such an incident is to be reported using the **Incident Report Form (Annex II)**.

⁵ The 'participants in EUAA's operational activities' are to be construed as persons deployed to asylum support teams ('AST') referred to in Section 6.3. of the Plan.

Pursuant to Article 49 of the EUAA Regulation, a Fundamental Rights Officer appointed by the Management Board shall be responsible for ensuring the Agency's compliance with fundamental rights in the context of its activities and promoting the respect of fundamental rights by the Agency. The Fundamental Rights Officer shall, *inter alia*, provide observations to the detailed evaluation reports, and be in charge of implementing the complaints mechanism of the EUAA⁶.

Under the complaints mechanism set up by the Agency⁷, any person who is directly affected by the actions of experts in the asylum support teams, and who considers that his or her fundamental rights have been breached due to those actions, or any party representing such a person, may submit a complaint in writing to the Agency.

5.4. Confidentiality, Public Access to Documents and Data Protection, Intellectual property rights

Without prejudice to the right of access to documents, as laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001⁸ and the EUAA implementing rules on access to documents⁹, all versions of this document shall be made available to the competent authorities in each EU Member State, as well as the associate countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

EUAA and the host Member State shall consult each other on any requests for public access to documents relating to this Plan and treat such requests in accordance with Regulation (EC) 1049/2001 or the respective national law, whichever is applicable.

Personal data will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data. The current Plan also takes into account the General Data Protection Regulation as updated in May 2018¹⁰ with a Corrigendum to the 2016/679 Regulation on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (Data Protection Directive), which is applicable to stakeholders at national level.

Whenever personal data is processed by EUAA within the activities agreed in the current Plan, EUAA will act as data processor on behalf of the competent authorities of the host Member State, following the applicable EU and national laws and regulations, as well as the instructions received from the Host Member State as the data controller.

In order to perform their tasks in accordance with this Plan, participants to activities under this Plan are only allowed to access the data bases mentioned below, under section 6.

EUAA will implement the necessary technical and organisational measures to ensure the security and confidentiality of the personal data it processes taking into account possible additional instructions received from the host Member State. This is to prevent any unauthorised disclosure of or access to this information.

The host Member State agrees that any personal data obtained in the course of the implementation of the Plan and by any EUAA personnel working on behalf of the Member State authorities can be processed in the EUAA IT systems, including cloud-based systems, exclusively under the instructions of the Member State and until an alternative system exists that can substitute the processing system used by EUAA.

⁶ As soon as it is established in the EUAA.

⁷ As soon as it is established in the EUAA.

⁸ Regulation (EC) 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001, regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents

⁹ Decision No. 6 of the Management Board of EASO of 20 September 2011 laying down practical arrangements regarding public access to the documents of EASO

¹⁰ Corrigendum, OJ L 127, 23.5.2018, p. 2 ((EU) 2016/679)

The host Member State also agrees to indicate a contact point in view of its role as a data controller for any data processed by EUAA on behalf of the national authorities of the host Member State.

All rights in any writings or other work produced by members of asylum support teams shall be the property of EUAA and/or the European Union, where such writings or work relate to activities undertaken in the context of the Plan. EUAA and/or the European Union acquires irrevocably ownership of the results and of all intellectual property rights, such as copyright, and industrial property rights, on the materials produced specifically for EUAA under the Plan and incorporated in such works, without prejudice, however, to the specific rules concerning pre-existing rights on pre-existing materials or other detailed rules contained in the relevant Framework Contracts concluded by EUAA for purposes related to the implementation of this Plan. Selected deliverables developed under this Plan may be published.

5.5. Civil and criminal liability of members of the Asylum Support Team

Articles 26 and 27 of the EUAA Regulation will be applicable to the members of the asylum support teams deployed in the host Member State.

5.6. Non-substantial changes during implementation

The Plan aims to provide effective and flexible support to the identified needs of the host Member State. Therefore, the foreseen activities will be implemented in consideration of the changing circumstances which may occur in the international protection and reception systems in the Member States or on the ground, as well as in the context of the availability of financial resources and experts.

The implementation of measures and delivery of technical and operational assistance foreseen in the Plan may be subject to non-substantial changes that may be accommodated within the objectives of a measure, so long as they do not affect the overall EUAA budget, do not require an amendment to or adaptation of the Plan, and that the host Member State is timely informed in writing.

Changes required to the agreed Input(s) and Output(s) in the framework of the Plan shall as a general rule be considered non-substantial, unless such changes require significant additional resources which cannot be accommodated within the overall EUAA budget, as well as when they impact on and/or require an amendment of the agreed Outcome(s).

5.7. Amendments to the Plan

Any changes that prove to require an amendment to or adaptation of the Plan, shall be agreed in writing between the Executive Director of EUAA and the host Member State, after consulting the participating Member States, where necessary, in line with Article 18(5) of the EUAA Regulation.

Changes to outcome(s) specified in Section 2.0. shall as a general rule be considered substantial changes and will be subject to an amendment.

5.8. Suspension of measures and/or the Plan implementation

In accordance with Article 18(6)(c) of the EUAA Regulation, the Executive Director shall, after informing the host Member State, suspend or terminate, in whole or in part, the deployment of the asylum support teams if the conditions to carry out the operational and technical measures are no longer fulfilled or if the Plan is not respected by the host Member State or if, after consulting the Fundamental Rights Officer of the EUAA, it considers that there are breaches of fundamental rights or international protection obligations by the host Member State that are of a serious nature or are likely to persist.

6.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATION STRUCTURE

This chapter describes the various conditions for and aspects of support to the authorities of the host Member State in the framework of the Plan.

6.1. Organisational Pre-Conditions

The host Member State will:

- designate an overall Plan Coordinator, as well as a specific Measure Coordinator for each measure stipulated in the Plan.
- grant appropriate access rights for the members of asylum support teams and EUAA representatives to all relevant databases and provide the relevant parties with the required information and data in the context of the implementation of this Plan.
- facilitate the provision of appropriate working space. Every effort shall be made by the Parties to provide suitable working conditions and, where required, working place for the participants in the activities implemented in the framework of the Plan. Minimum working and security conditions are considered as organisational pre-conditions.
- As far as operationally feasible, and where relevant, the working files shall be made available by the host Member State in English (unless otherwise agreed).
- The host Member State shall provide EUAA with information on the implementation of the Plan through timely input to the Early Warning and Preparedness System and the delivery of tailored information on the implementation of measures agreed in the Plan.

EUAA will:

- designate an overall Plan Coordinator (also referred to as Coordinating Officer in accordance to Article 25 of EUAA Regulation), as well as a specific Measure Coordinator for each measure stipulated in the Plan.
- provide technical support to experts participating in this Plan with the aim of ensuring that all deliverables make good use of the expertise and information already available to EUAA.
- provide the technical equipment required for the work of the asylum support teams and reimburse costs incurred by persons participating in the support activities deployed by EUAA in the framework of this Plan, according to the applicable EUAA rules.

6.2. Conditions for Deployment

General rules and conditions for deployment are published on the following platforms, which the experts/asylum support team members are obliged to consult:

- EUAA Operational Deployment Management System (ODMS)
- EUAA country-specific operations platforms. These platforms are made available to members of asylum support teams upon their deployment, allowing for preparation for deployment and daily implementation of their tasks.
- Other appropriate communication tools may be used as necessary.

The platforms contain relevant information, such as:

- special instructions for the members of asylum support teams, including databases that they are authorised to consult;
- description of specific tasks, workflows and procedures, as relevant;
- location in the host Member State where the asylum support teams will be deployed;
- logistical arrangements including information on working conditions, practical information concerning location of deployment and related workflows, etc.;

- equipment that members of asylum support teams may carry in the host Member State, transport and other logistics;
- other specific instructions and provisions as necessary.

Relevant thematic pages of the EUAA Information and Documentation System concerning the asylum and reception system of the host Member State, including information on relevant practices, legislation, case law and statistical background may be consulted.

The host Member State shall contribute to information concerning its asylum and reception systems, including information on relevant practices, legislation, case law and statistical background.

The host Member State and EUAA will provide experts with information on the general state of play with regard to the procedures for international protection and reception in the host Member State and specific information about the state of play of the deliverables as necessary for the specific measures on a continuous basis. Specific asylum support team deployment details may be provided under each measure, where relevant.

6.3. Composition of asylum support teams

The asylum support teams may be composed of the following resources:

- i. The Agency's staff members, i.e. statutory staff employed by the Agency subject to the Staff Regulations of Officials and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union¹¹;
- ii. Member States experts, including Member State experts made available through the Asylum Reserve Pool¹²;
- iii. Associate Countries experts, i.e. experts made available through contributions to the Asylum Intervention Pool by associate countries referred to in Article 34 of the EUAA Regulation, with which the European Union has an arrangement in place on the modalities of its participation in EUAA's work;
- iv. Seconded National Experts (SNEs), i.e. experts employed by a national, regional or local public administration of an EU Member State or an associate country or by a public inter-governmental organisation and seconded to the Agency¹³ for the provision of support to its operational activities;
- v. Other experts not employed by the Agency: experts on contract, i.e. individuals providing services in relation to the Plan upon conclusion of a public contract between the Agency and the legal entity with which these individuals have an employment and/or contractual relationship, including temporary agency workers, or with remunerated external experts in line with Article 93 of EUAA Financial Regulation¹⁴.

The implementation of the Plan shall be based on the common understanding that the provision of resources, other than EUAA (statutory) staff, to be deployed for the purposes described above can under no circumstances lead *per se* to the establishment of an employment relationship between EUAA and the members of the asylum support teams. Throughout the duration of the deployment of the asylum support teams in the activities undertaken in the context of the present Plan, the employer of the asylum support teams members is and remains their employer.

¹¹ As laid down by Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom, ECSC) No 259/68, OJ L 56, 4.3.1968, p.1.

¹² As soon as it is established in the EUAA.

¹³ Decision No 01 of the Management Board of EASO of 25 November 2010 laying down rules on the secondment of national experts (SNE) to the European Asylum Support Office (ref. number: EASO/MB/2010/03).

¹⁴ Article 93 of Management Board Decision No 54 of 14 August 2019 on the EASO Financial Regulation (as amended by Management Board Decision No 74 of 28 July 2021). The MB Decision nr 54 of 14 August 2019 remains in force despite EASO being replaced by the EUAA. Any references in the EASO Financial Regulation to 'EASO' or the 'EASO Regulation', should therefore be construed as references to the 'EUAA' or equivalent provisions in the 'EUAA Regulation', respectively.

7.0 SECURITY AND SAFETY

The principles of EUAA's Security Governance Framework¹⁵ are based on the security principles contained in the Commission's security rules. That Commission Decision 443/2013 on the security in the Commission defines that security shall be based on the principles of legality, transparency, proportionality and accountability.

The safety and security of persons participating in EUAA activities under the Plan falls under the overall legal framework of the host Member State and shall be provided by the respective authorities legally responsible and accountable for the public order and security and safety on the territory of that Member State.

EUAA will endeavour to support the identification of required security and safety measures and the implementation of those that are under its remit, both legally and functionally, in close cooperation with the MS security responsible (see relevant definition in Section 7.1 below).

To that end:

- Standard security and safety requirements, identified herewith, shall apply as a general rule.
- Specific security and safety requirements for the Plan, to be identified jointly by EUAA and the host Member State security responsible, shall be established in an annex to this plan.
- The safety and security measures shall be identified jointly on a basis of field assessment visits.

7.1. Standard security requirements

The standard security and safety requirements are rather pertaining to elements to be present in the implementation of the Plan, not to minimum security standards:

- Both the host Member State on one side and EUAA on the other shall appoint a single point of contact responsible for security matters under the Plan both at central and local level (hereafter 'security responsible').
- The host Member State shall ensure that the working conditions for the performance of the activities under the Plan are compliant with the national occupational health and safety norms and regulations.
- A pre-deployment briefing programme, drafted in close cooperation with the respective national authorities, focusing both on general security rules and awareness, as well as on specific security aspects for each deployment will be provided. With regard to the decentralised nature of deployments, the use of e-learning and other distance-based training techniques should be considered.
- Emergency (evacuation) plan. Certain operational activities, such as operations in field locations, require that staff shall have clear guidance and training on how to evacuate quickly in case of emergencies. In a more general context, there could be a need to evacuate from the operational area as well. Emergency plans shall be drafted and maintained up-to-date by the competent authority/person(s), whereas they shall be made available to the concerned parties and exercised regularly. A security responsible shall maintain updated information on the availability of evacuation plans and routes.
- Communication tools. As considered relevant by the EUAA Security Sector, EUAA operational staff shall have access to independent radio communication equipment. If possible, the equipment shall be interoperable with the local law enforcement in charge of the security of the operation.

¹⁵ Decision of the Executive Director No 61 of 12 April 2021 on the Security Governance Framework.

- Security of information. Sensitive non-classified and classified information shall be protected adequately, in accordance with the applicable legal framework¹⁶. EUAA's security responsible shall be involved in supporting the proper classification of relevant information.
- Security of IT and communication equipment. EUAA's IT equipment is adequately prepared to protect the information level it has been foreseen to process.
- Personal security behaviour shall be included in the pre-deployment training, led by operational teams and performed for the experts during the first days of arrival to the operational area. This may refer to the EUAA Code of Conduct as well.
- Reporting security incidents from the operational area to the EUAA Headquarters is essential to ensure an overview of the overall security management is maintained.

7.2. Specific security and safety requirements

- Specific security and safety requirements for the implementation of the Plan shall be defined on the basis of a pre-deployment security assessment visit with the aim of identification of specific potential risks, identification of mitigation measures and communication of those measures to the Member State and involved stakeholders, prior to the deployment of asylum support teams.

7.3. Suspension of operational activities on security and safety grounds

EUAA reserves the right to suspend operational activities on the basis of current risk assessment(s), while keeping informed the host Member State on the findings and identified mitigating measures required for resumption.

The host Member State may also suspend temporarily, in whole or in part, the implementation of operational activities in case of serious imminent safety and security incidents, developments, or as mitigating or preventive measures or direct threats to personnel, activities or physical presence. The EUAA Plan Coordinator and the EUAA security responsible shall be informed without delay.

The Parties will agree on conditions for resumption as soon as possible.

7.4. Security incident reporting

Any participant¹⁷ in EUAA's operational activities who becomes aware of a(n) (impending) incident related to the security and safety of persons, assets or premises is obliged to report the matter to the Executive Director of EUAA and to the Host Member State Coordinator for the Plan via the appropriate channel: security_incidents_operations@euaa.europa.eu. Such an incident is to be reported using the **Security Incident Report Form (Annex III)**.

8.0. COMMUNICATION

The Executive Director will appoint one or more experts from the Agency's staff to act or to be deployed as a Coordinating Officer in accordance with Article 25 of the EUAA Regulation.

¹⁶ Including, *inter alia*, the security principles contained in Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444.

¹⁷ The 'participants in EUAA's operational activities' are to be construed as persons deployed to asylum support teams ('AST') referred to in Section 6.3. of the Plan.

The Coordinating Officer will act as an interface between the Agency, the host Member State, and experts participating in asylum support teams, and will foster cooperation and coordination between the host Member State and the participating Member States.

The Coordinating Officer will also monitor the correct implementation of the operational plan, act on behalf of the Agency as regards all aspects of the deployment of asylum support teams and report to the Agency on all those aspects, and report to the Executive Director where the operational plan is not adequately implemented.

The host Member State and the Coordinating Officer will manage the exchange of information concerning the tasks under the Plan.

During the implementation of this Plan, members of asylum support teams shall be briefed regularly on the current situational and operational developments to address challenges and identify improvements.

Particular attention shall be paid to the need to continuously develop, improve and make available EUAA support tools. Should such need be identified or changed during the Plan implementation, it shall be communicated to EUAA for further consideration.

EUAA will maintain close cooperation and communication with the relevant stakeholders. EUAA will also provide information to its partners (i.e. the European Commission, concerned EU Agencies, and international organisations) about the operational activities, as appropriate and in line with EUAA transparency and communication policies. The timing and content of communication with the media shall be agreed upon between EUAA and the host Member State.

Where relevant, the Parties will facilitate media coverage to ensure a wider dissemination and visibility of results.

As a publicly funded EU body, the Agency is accountable for and committed to transparency for the public resources it makes use of.

In this regard, EUAA may brand its operational activities to ensure appropriate visibility. This includes the application of fixed branding and use of visibility items, such as on, but not limited to, containers and premises, as well as in offices where the Agency provides operational and technical assistance. It also includes the branding of mobile assets which it may deploy, including vehicles.

Such branding may also include visibility clothing and materials worn by personnel deployed by the Agency in order to identify their association to, or funding by, the Agency.

In specific cases, the Agency and the respective national authority/ies may agree on co-branding of visibility clothing and/or materials, in line with the visual identity rules and guidelines of both/all parties.

9.0. COOPERATION WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

9.1. Cooperation with the European Commission

All activities under this Plan will be closely coordinated with the host Member State and in close cooperation with the European Commission.

9.2. Cooperation with UNHCR

In accordance with Article 38 of EUAA Regulation, the Agency aims at a coherent and complementary continuation of the fruitful cooperation with UNHCR. The EUAA Coordinating Officer will liaise with the UNHCR office in the host Member State for a continuous cooperation and coordination of practical activities agreed with the host Member State under the current Plan.

9.3. Cooperation with IOM

In accordance with Article 52 of the EASO Regulation¹⁸, In July 2019 the Agency signed a working arrangement with IOM to establish a cooperation framework covering the relevant areas of common work and interest setting objectives and principles of such cooperation. Therefore, the EUAA Coordinating Officer will liaise with the IOM office in the host Member State for a continuous cooperation and coordination of practical activities agreed with the host Member State under the current Plan and in accordance with the working arrangement.

¹⁸ Reference to Article 52 of the EASO Regulation shall be construed as reference to Article 38 of the EUAA Regulation.

ANNEX I – Operational Measures

Measure LT 1: Reception Support	
<p>➤ Expected Outcome 1.1.: Enhance the capacity of the Lithuanian authorities in managing reception centres</p>	
Responsible Authority(ies)/Main National Partner(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania • Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania • State Border Guard Service • Refugees' Reception Centre
Operational Preconditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular coordination meetings are held among the concerned representatives of the national authorities and with EUAA to ensure effective collaboration and coordination; • The Lithuanian authorities make available the necessary office space for the Agency's deployed personnel and provide the necessary equipment for implementation of the activities, unless otherwise agreed; • A two-way data sharing procedure is in place between EUAA and the Lithuanian authorities to measure the impact of the intervention; • The Lithuanian authorities will be responsible for securing all permits necessary for the provision of the agreed support; • Host Member State authorities grant access to relevant databases/IT systems, where necessary.
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LT 1.0 Enhanced capacity of the State Border Guard Service under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania to manage reception facilities • LT 1.1 Enhanced capacity of the Refugees' Reception Centre under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania to manage dedicated reception facilities for vulnerable asylum seekers
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LT 1.0 Enhanced capacity of the State Border Guard Service under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania to manage reception facilities • Action 1.0.1: Provide support in the development and implementation of information provision, vulnerability workflows and interpretation. • Action 1.0.2: Provide support in strengthening workflows and procedures, including improvement of operational tools; • Action 1.0.3: Provide support with reception-related training to relevant national partners. • LT 1.1 Enhanced capacity of the Refugees' Reception Centre under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania to manage dedicated reception facilities for vulnerable asylum seekers • Action 1.1.1: Provide support in development and implementation of information provision, vulnerability workflows and interpretation. • Action 1.1.2: Provide support in strengthening workflows and procedures, including improvement of operational tools; • Action 1.1.3: Provide support with reception-related training.

<p>Inputs</p>	<p>Indicative number of the following inputs:</p> <p>LT 1.0</p> <p>Human Resources:</p> <p>Information Providers: Up to 6</p> <p>Reception Assistants (Vulnerability): Up to 6</p> <p>Interpreters/Cultural Mediators: Up to 25</p> <p>LT 1.1</p> <p>Human Resources:</p> <p>Information Providers: Up to 6</p> <p>Reception Assistants (Vulnerability): Up to 6</p> <p>Interpreters/Cultural Mediators: Up to 25</p> <p>For all:</p> <p>Cost for training, meetings and/or workshops.</p> <p>EUAA will offer technical advice, training and professional development activities based on needs and availability of resources, and translation of training material when necessarily</p> <p>Conditional upon EUAA assessment and approval of any request, and subject to budget availability for the present Operational Plan, support could include inter alia equipment, works, services, communication/promotional materials, costs for trainings/meetings/workshops, translation and interpretation costs when required, infrastructure costs, IT equipment, office supplies and other material and operational support where required for the joint EUAA and national authorities' activities.</p>
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Measure LT 2: Strategic Technical Support	
Expected Outcome 2.1.: <i>Effectiveness and efficiency of the Lithuanian Reception System is improved</i>	
Responsible Authority(ies)/Main National Partner(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania • Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania • State Border Guard Service • Refugees' Reception Centre
Operational Preconditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular coordination meetings are held among the concerned representatives of the national authorities and with EUAA to ensure effective collaboration and coordination; • Quarterly Measure Steering Committee¹⁹ meetings are held between EUAA and the LT responsible authorities, to ensure effective operational coordination, implementation and monitoring of the OP; • The Lithuanian authorities make available the necessary office space for the Agency's deployed personnel and provide the necessary equipment for implementation of the activities, unless otherwise agreed; • A two-way data sharing procedure is in place between EUAA and the Lithuanian authorities to measure the impact of the intervention; • The Lithuanian authorities will be responsible for securing all permits necessary for the provision of the agreed support; • Host Member State authorities grant access to relevant databases/IT systems, where necessary; • The necessary national legislation is adopted providing for the establishment of the new reception agency under the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania.
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LT 2.0 Enhanced capacity of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour to strategically conceptualize, design and develop the new Reception Agency of Lithuania, including the articulation of the required institutional structures and processes
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 2.0.1: Provide support through desk-research and the production of relevant materials and presenting an overview of different set-ups of reception agencies and systems across the EU+ Member States • Action 2.0.2: Provide support in conceptualising the institutional structure and processes related to the reception of asylum seekers in Lithuania, through the organisation of strategic workshop(s), including a kick-off meeting. • Action 2.0.3: Provide support to the organisational development of the new reception agency of Lithuania through technical expertise and capacity building (advice in setting up organisational structure, decision-making, communication and reporting lines) and its role within the national reception system. • Action 2.0.4: Provide support to the development of an HR strategy for the new reception agency of Lithuania by organising workshop(s)

¹⁹ The Steering Committee shall be composed of 1-2 high level representatives from EUAA and the 2 LT ministries who receive support, members with executive decision power. The Steering Committee will establish goals and targets, will monitor the implementation of the agreed activities and their result and decide on next steps, when need be, as well as to identify and address business risks. Each side will assign an equal number of representatives.

	<p>on the European Sectoral Qualification Framework for Asylum and Reception Officials and the related development of organigrams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 2.0.5: Provide support with facilitating liaison with reception authorities of other EU+ countries, by enhancing the participation to EUAA existing networks (in particular Reception Network and Vulnerability Network) and organizing ad-hoc bilateral exchanges, including through exchange visit(s) and/or deployment of MS expert(s).
<p>Inputs</p>	<p>Indicative number of the following inputs:</p> <p>LT 2.0</p> <p>Human Resources:</p> <p>Organisational Development Expert: 2</p> <p>Business Analysis Expert: 1</p> <p>For all:</p> <p>Cost for training, meetings, exchange visits/study visits and/or workshops.</p> <p>EUAA will offer technical advice, training and professional development activities based on needs and availability of resources.</p> <p>Conditional upon EUAA assessment and approval of any request, and subject to budget availability for the present Operational Plan, support could include inter alia equipment, works, services, communication/promotional materials, costs for trainings/meetings/workshops, translation and interpretation costs when required, infrastructure costs, IT equipment, office supplies and other material and operational support where required for the joint EUAA and national authorities' activities.</p>

ANNEX II - Incident Report Form

[CONFIDENTIAL] Incident Report

Location:	
Date:	
Name of EUAA staff:	
Name of responsible National Authority Authorised Representative:	

Date of incident:

Information on the incident:

ANNEX III – Security Incident Report Form

Security Incident Report

Location:	
Date:	
Name of EUAA staff:	
Name of responsible National Authority Authorised Representative:	

1. Time of the incident:
2. Date and time of the report:
3. Type of incident:
4. Persons involved:
5. Incident description:
6. Consequences:
7. Actions taken:
8. Annexes:
9. Recipients of Security Incident Report