



## Information Note

### *Consultative Forum Thematic Meeting*

#### *“Access to Information:*

#### *Exploring Existing Resources, Good Practices, and Ways Forward”*

### 1. Background and Context

The EASO Consultative Forum is a mechanism for the exchange of information and pooling of knowledge, created to ensure that a close dialogue is maintained between EASO and civil society organizations.

Dialogue and cooperation between EASO and civil society organizations takes place on the basis of different activities implemented throughout the year including, for example:

- Consultative Forum Meetings (the Plenary Forum and Thematic/Regional Meetings);
- Electronic consultations;
- Direct participation of civil society in various different EASO activities

Following discussions at the 2017 CF Plenary Meeting, where civil society organizations had the opportunity to make suggestions for planned 2018 Consultative Forum activities, EASO is organising a **CF Thematic Meeting** with a specific focus on “**access to information**”.

This thematic meeting is scheduled to take place on **Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018** from **09:00-17:00** at **EASO Headquarters in Malta**.

### 2. Aims and expected outcomes of the Thematic Consultative Forum Meeting

The overall aim of the meeting is to bring together specialised civil society actors with relevant experience on the provision of information in order to have in-depth discussions on information tools and activities developed by civil society organizations that aim at catering to the asylum-related information needs of individuals seeking international protection. The meeting offers an opportunity for the exchange of resources and experiences, cross-pollination of ideas, and appreciation of the multifaceted work that civil society organizations carry out in this field.

The discussions and the outcomes of the meeting will directly feed into EASO’s work by informing a section of the 2017 Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU, notably the section on the provision of information to applicants for international protection.

Results of the meeting may further also feed into EASO’s work in other multiple ways, with another possible output being the development of a briefing paper that would focus on the subject matter at hand.

### 3. Invited participants and possible reimbursements

The meeting is open to specialised civil society actors, international organisations, and EU institutions and agencies who have **relevant expertise and experience** with regard to the provision of information to applicants for international protection.



Interested organisations are kindly invited to **register via the following link**:

[https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/CF\\_Thematic\\_Meeting\\_ONLINE\\_REGISTRATION](https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/CF_Thematic_Meeting_ONLINE_REGISTRATION)

The **maximum number of places is limited** (to approximately 25-30 participants) and will be **granted on a first-come-first-serve basis**. You are therefore advised to register at your earliest convenience and **no later than Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018**.

Concerning possible reimbursement, attendance of the meeting may fall under **Category B** as detailed in the decision of the Executive Director of EASO detailing the rules concerning the reimbursement of the costs incurred by persons invited to meetings organised by EASO in support of its functioning or operational activities (EASO/ED/2014/306).

Kindly note that in this case a **flat rate for travel allowance set at 500 EUR** will be covered.

Please be advised, however, that your registration does not immediately guarantee reimbursement. In case of large number of expressions of interest, EASO would need to apply certain selection criteria for reimbursement purposes. These include (in line with the EASO Consultative Forum Operational Plan):

- Relevance of the organisation's participation vis-à-vis the theme discussed;
- Degree of knowledge and expertise in the area of provision of information;
- Degree of involvement of the organisation in the area of provision of information at national and EU level;
- Relationship of the organisation vis-a-vis EASO and/or involvement in EU Practical cooperation measures/training/academic activities in the field of asylum.

To facilitate the potential selection, you will be asked under the registration link, to briefly describe your organisation's activities concerning the provision of information. Following your registration, you will then be contacted by EASO within 48 hours with confirmation of your attendance and further information about possible reimbursement.

#### **1. Meeting preparation: online questionnaire to collect baseline information**

With a view of adequately preparing and maximising the outcomes of the meeting, EASO would like to, prior to the meeting, collect baseline information on tools and activities developed by civil society organizations that aim at catering to the asylum-related information needs of individuals seeking international protection. To that purpose, we kindly ask interested participants (including also those who cannot attend the meeting but who nevertheless want to contribute their relevant experience) **to complete, by 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018, the questionnaire available under the following link:**

<https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/4223831/Access-to-Information-Exploring-Existing-Resources-Good-Practices-and-Ways-Forward>

The collected information will ensure in-depth discussions during the meeting and will feed into the Annual Report as well as a possible briefing paper to be produced by EASO in cooperation with civil society following the meeting.

Below, for your convenience, some practical tips for completing the online questionnaire:

- Use the **'save'** button when wanting to save (partial) inputs and/or when you want to save what you completed as to come back to the questionnaire at a later time;
- Use the **'save'** button also if you would like to share the questionnaire with more than 1 person;
- Don't forget to click on **'submit'** to complete and send in your answers!