



Roadmap for Cooperation EASO - Serbia (2020-2022):

Strengthening the asylum and
reception systems in line with
the Common European
Asylum System and EU
standards



Roadmap for cooperation between EASO – Serbia (2020-2022): strengthening the asylum and reception systems in line with the Common European Asylum System and EU standards





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I. Acronyms

APD – Asylum Procedures Directive; **BIA/BID** – Best Interest Assessment/Best Interest Determination; **CEAS** – Common European Asylum System; **CoE** – Council of Europe; **COI** – country of origin information; **CSO** – Civil Society Organisation; **EASO** – European Asylum Support Office; **EU** – European Union; **EU+** – EU Member State and Associated Countries; **IOM** – International Organisation for Migration; **IPA** – Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance; **IPSN** – Identification of Persons with Special needs; **M&E** – Monitoring and Evaluation; **MOI** – Ministry of Interior; **MARRI** – Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative; **MoLEVSA** – Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs; **NGO** – Non-Governmental Organisation; **OSCE** – Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe; **Project Activity Plan** – Activity Plan for the IPA funded “Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey – Phase II”; **SCRM** – Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration; **TtT** – Train the trainers; **UAM** – Unaccompanied minor; **UNHCR** – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

II. Introduction and background

The cooperation between EASO and the Serbian authorities was initiated in the Phase I of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) funded Project “Regional Support to Protection-sensitive migration management in the Western Balkan and Turkey” (September 2016 - June 2019) throughout the implementation of the first Roadmap between EASO and Serbia (January 2017 - June 2019). Under the second phase of the project (July 2019 - June 2021), EASO has consolidated the cooperation with Serbia through the development and implementation of the second Roadmap as part of the expected results within the project.

The overall objective of the EASO – Serbia Roadmap is to enhance the protection space for asylum seekers and refugees by strengthening the asylum and reception system in Serbia in line with the CEAS and EU Member States’ practices. The present document identifies priority areas where EASO support to Serbia has an added value and, where relevant, has a direct impact on the implementation of the recommendations outlined in the European Commission annual Serbia Report¹ and in the framework of the accession negotiations related to Chapter 24: “Justice, Freedom and Security”. Furthermore, this Roadmap contributes to an increased harmonisation of asylum and reception systems at a regional level, therefore contributing to one of the objectives of the wider IPA financed project “Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey - Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance” – Phase II.

The EASO – Serbia Roadmap has been developed jointly between the Ministry of Interior of Serbia, as National Contact Point for the Project, other relevant Serbian authorities and EASO. The Ministry of Interior and EASO paid attention to including relevant authorities in the design of activities in line with their responsibilities within the asylum system of Serbia. Implementation is planned in cooperation with all relevant institutions, according to their responsibilities within the asylum system². Some activities include the possibility of having a broader scope in terms of stakeholders (such as other Ministries, national institutions and CSO) and the Ministry of Interior as a National Contact Point for the IPA project and for that Roadmap, coordinates the communication among them concerning the Roadmap alignment.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-serbia-report.pdf>

² See Annex I for an overview of the main national stakeholders with a description of their responsibilities.

During the implementation phase, EASO and the Ministry of Interior agree to an open two-way communication to ensure technical level, day-to-day support in smooth implementation of the activities planned within the Roadmap. To allow for flexibility and adaptability to the external circumstances, as well as the needs and available resources of both sides, the proposed implementation would include the possibility to alternate between face to face and remote meetings/activities. Moreover, this document can be revised, if need arises, upon agreement of EASO and the Ministry of Interior after consultation with other relevant authorities.

The implementation period of the Roadmap is 24 months from 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2022³. The Roadmap development and implementation are financed mostly through IPA funds and EASO will complement through its own funds and resources wherever the need arises and when the current IPA regional project implementation will end.

III. Methodology

a. Needs assessment and Rationale for the intervention

The Roadmap is based on a needs assessment carried out between September 2019 and March 2020 through a participatory approach and in close cooperation with national authorities. It is the result of a joint effort, which included exchanges of information, EASO field missions, meetings with national authorities and key stakeholders' consultations such as EUD, UNHCR, IOM, OSCE, CoE and CSOs.

This document is strongly linked to the EU accession process and accession negotiations in view of the development of comprehensive asylum and reception systems in line with international and European standards. EASO has considered the recommendations included in the peer review report drafted in June 2019 which focused on further alignment with EU legislation and standards and identified important elements to be addressed in view of the country moving forward on its European integration path. The report recommends all "asylum" initiatives taking place in Serbia implemented by various stakeholders to be clearly in line with the EU *acquis* objectives directions and specificities –as the whole forms a "system".

b. Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to ensure that progress is monitored and that the outcomes are reached, both EASO and Ministry of Interior of Serbia as National Contact Point for the Project, and all other relevant Serbian authorities involved in the implementation of the Roadmap to provide data and feedback and share the state of play for each activity.

Following the first year of implementation of the Roadmap a mid-term review will take place. The main goals of the mid-term review exercise will be to provide recommendations for adjusting activities during the Roadmap lifecycle. These will build on evaluation findings and will be structured in an actionable manner, allowing review, corrective actions and/or follow up. The mid-term review and its recommendations will be discussed at the Mid-term Review Meeting where the Roadmap might be adjusted in line with the recommendations (foreseen for September 2021).

A second evaluation exercise is foreseen following the end of the Roadmap, which will generate a Final Evaluation Report outlining findings and conclusions and producing an overall assessment of the

³ During the development of the current Roadmap, some activities which are a logical continuation of mutually agreed support provided under the 1st Roadmap (e.g. participation of the reception network) have been implemented before the final validation of the Roadmap.

Roadmap cooperation framework, building on the mid-term review and enhancing the preliminary findings. The Final Evaluation Report may be accompanied by an updated Needs Assessment exercise to assess revised needs, in view of possible further cooperation.

Regular updates and coordination meetings will also make possible the adjustment of the Roadmap implementation in order to reach the necessary results and impact.

IV. General Pre-conditions and Assumptions

- Financial and human resources, on both EASO's and Serbia's sides, are available for effective and timely implementation;
- All relevant stakeholders from both EASO and Serbia are committed to participate actively in the agreed activities and to implement their commitments in line with the envisaged timeline;
- EASO and Serbia are willing to change/adapt in order to take advantage of the exposure to best practices;
- EASO and Serbia are willing to maintain an open two-way communication at technical level, compatible with the normal workload of relevant human resources.

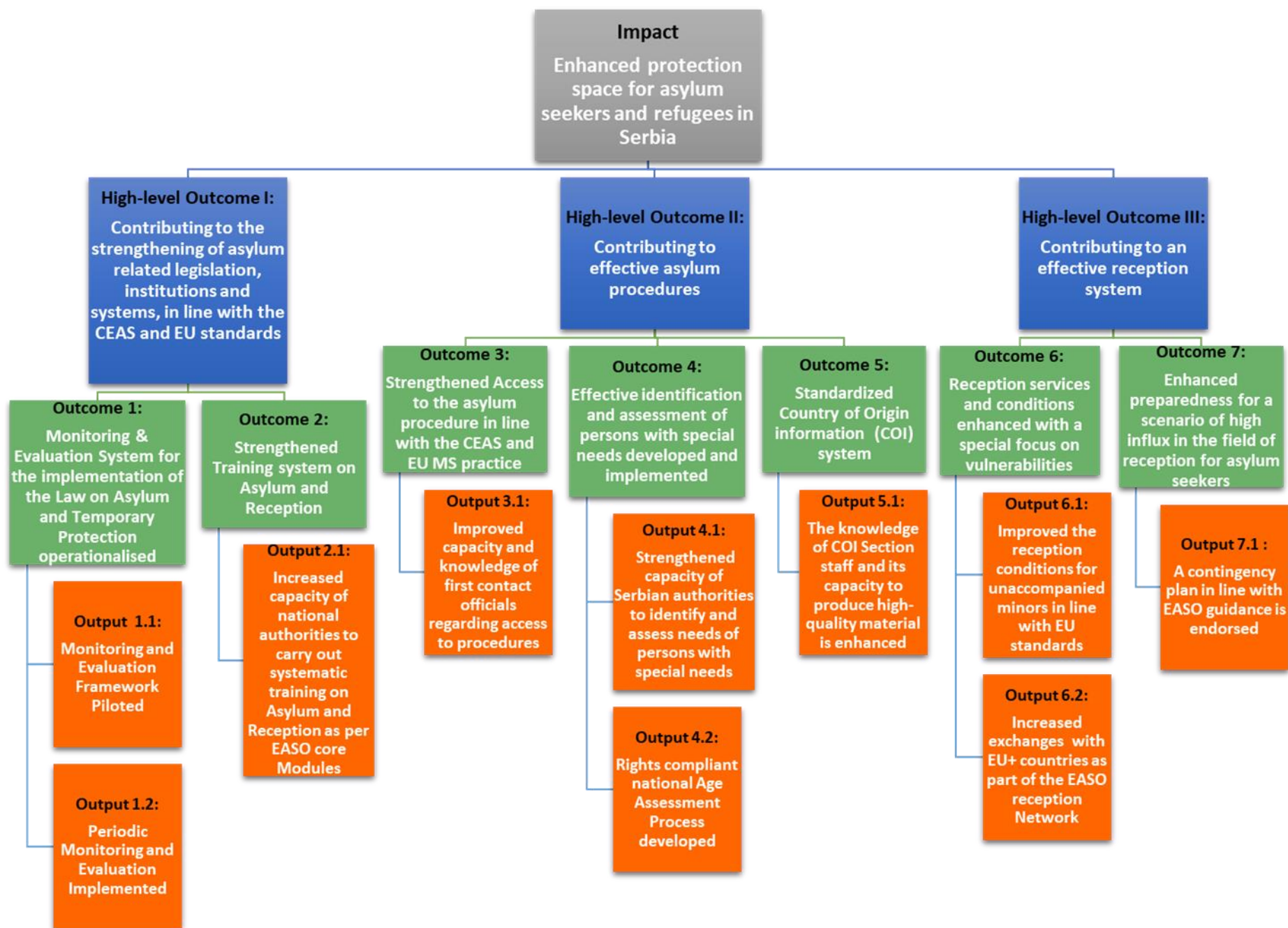
V. Summary

The overall objective of the "Roadmap for cooperation between EASO and Serbia (2020 – 2022): strengthening the asylum and reception systems in line with the CEAS and European Union standards" (herein: EASO – Serbia Roadmap) is to enhance the protection space for asylum seekers and refugees in the Republic of Serbia in line with the CEAS and EU standards.

This Roadmap addresses the key areas along the asylum procedure and reception where priorities have been identified by EASO based on needs assessment's missions, desk work and stakeholders' consultations carried out in 2019 and 2020. It is a flexible document which takes into consideration the absorption capacity and the priorities of the Serbian authorities and of EASO. Based on the discussions, as part of the needs assessment, held throughout the second half of 2019 and on the outcomes of the fruitful exchanges with national authorities and relevant stakeholders, targeted interventions aimed at contributing to (1) strengthening of asylum related legislation, institutions and systems in line with the CEAS and EU standards, (2) establishing effective asylum procedures and (3) an effective reception system in Serbia were identified.

The implementation period of the Roadmap is from 1st October 2020 to 30th September 2022.

Agreed objectives and outputs resulting from the identified targeted interventions are summarised through the following diagram tree:



Areas of priority and Activities

- I. Contributing to the strengthening of asylum related legislation, institutions and systems in line with the CEAS and EU standards

1. Operationalised Monitoring and Evaluation System for the implementation of the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection	
Output (expected results)	Output 1.1: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Piloted Output 1.2: Periodic Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Implemented
Responsible Authorities/target group	Ministry of Interior Commissariat for Refugees and Migration Administrative Court Judges
Description and assessment of the situation/ EASO added value	<p>In the last years, the Government of Serbia has adopted several laws as well as strategic documents and legal texts in relation to asylum and migration issues. In particular, a new Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection has been adopted in March 2018 and entered into force in June 2018. Numerous by-laws, further regulating international protection in Serbia - including on an operational level - have been adopted too⁴.</p> <p>In addition, the above-mentioned Law still needs to be rolled out completely on some important areas.</p> <p>Under the first Roadmap, EASO supported the establishment of the initial steps regarding a Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism of the new Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection, in line with the Action Plan under Chapter 24. Further support in this area has now been discussed in order to make it operational and complete.</p>
Pre-conditions(s)/Assumptions	Inter-institutional Working Group on Monitoring and Evaluation is appointed.
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and Evaluation Framework pilot in place • Monitoring Report released on a quarterly basis

⁴ If developments on the CEAS package take place during the implementation of the Roadmap, EASO is ready to look into request for support.

<p>Description of the activities and indicative timeline</p>	<p>Output 1.1: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Piloted</p> <p>Activity 1.1.1: Series of experts' mission to discuss the state of play, recommendations on the pending tasks and next steps (Q4 2020)</p> <p>Activity 1.1.2: Experts mission to support the pilot phase of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (Q1/Q2 2021)</p> <p>This activity might include the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Adjustment of the scope and selection of the indicators included in Monitoring and Evaluation Action Plan developed under Phase I in view of reporting purpose; ii) Pilot collection of the statistics and additional data collection in line with the Framework; iii) Support in the drafting of the Pilot Monitoring Report. <p>Output 1.2: Periodic Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Implemented</p> <p>Activity 1.2.1. Meeting to adopt the Final M&E Framework developed based on the pilot (Q2/Q3 2021).</p> <p>Activity 1.2.2. Expert mission/follow up meeting to support the periodic implementation of the M&E Framework based on the pilot (Q4 2021/Q1 2022).</p>
<p>Synergies</p>	<p>The EU-Twinning project⁵ intends to work on this topic and UNHCR is working on "Quality Assurance Initiative" including the development of indicators therefore joint efforts and synergies will be closely explored.</p>

⁵ The Twinning project "Support to Strengthening Migration Management and National Asylum System in the Republic of Serbia" funded by the European Union within the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) and implemented by Commissariat for Refugees and Migration and Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia in partnership with the Swedish Migration Agency, Immigration and Neutralisation Service of the Netherlands and Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Slovenia.

2. Strengthened training system on asylum and reception	
Output (expected results)	Output 2.1 Increased capacity of national authorities to carry out systematic training on asylum and reception, relying mainly on the EASO core Modules as per EASO curriculum
Responsible Authorities/ target group	Ministry of Interior (Asylum Office) Asylum Commission The Commissariat of Refugees and Migration (SCRM)
Description and assessment of the situation/ EASO added value	<p>The amended Act of systematization (that regulates the number of positions within the State bodies) gradually foresees 30 workplaces at the Asylum Office in the Section for COI and Section for determining right to asylum (2 Heads, 13 status determination officers and various positions on registration, 2 country of information researchers, clerks, etc.). 24 positions are already filled.</p> <p>Since 2015, the Asylum Office and the Commissariat of Refugees and Migration has undergone many trainings related to asylum. These trainings have been provided by different stakeholders such as UNHCR and EASO.</p> <p>Under the implementation of the first Roadmap (January 2017-June 2019), EASO has directly organised or facilitated the participation in relevant EASO trainings normally targeting EU+ case workers and reception officers as well as participation of the members of the Asylum Commission. EASO has supported the national roll-out sessions of the EASO core Modules on Inclusion (June 2018), Interview Techniques and Evidence Assessment (September 2018).</p> <p>So far, Asylum Office, Border Police, and Commissariat of Refugees and Migration staff have undergone the following EASO trainings:</p> <p>Common European Asylum System : 3 officers Communication with and provision of information to asylum seekers in context of COVID-19 response: 1 officer Country of Origin Information: 2 officers End of Protection: 2 officers Evidence Assessment: 10 officers Exclusion: 1 officer Fundamental Rights and International Protection in the EU: 2 officers Gender, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation: 3 officers Inclusion: 18 officers Inclusion advanced: 1 officer Interview techniques: 15 officers Interviewing Vulnerable Persons: 3 officers Module for Managers: 3 officers Reception: 2 officers Remote Personal Interviews: 1 officer</p> <p>Additionally, in accordance with the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection, the Commissariat of Refugees and Migration performs tasks related to (among others): material reception conditions, accommodation to persons who have been granted asylum and programmes of voluntary return. In addition, Commissariat performs different tasks related to the policy making processes. The Commissariat has department dedicated to the provision of material reception conditions employing 14 persons. There are 30 managers and 150</p>

	<p>reception staff working in asylum centres and centres for the reception of migrants in irregular situation who are transiting or stranded in Serbia. Other departments in Commissariat have different tasks in order to support overall reception system (legal department, data processing department, monitoring and policy making department, project design and implementation departments, procurement and financing departments) with different training needs that may be related to CEAS. In accordance to the Law on Civil Servants, Commissariat prepared Special Training Programme for the employees that among other foresees delivery of two EASO module for which SCRM has certified trainers – reception and inclusion module.</p> <p>This built “capacity” needs to be further developed in view of the newly recruited staff so it can have a long-lasting impact on the overall asylum procedure.</p>
Pre-conditions(s)/ Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Interior and relevant institutions of Serbia identifies training needs of asylum/reception officials based on their daily tasks and duties; • Working level of English to participate in the EASO TtT which are delivered in English; • MOI and SCRM willing to regularly roll out and transfer the expertise gained in trainings during the EASO Train the Trainers’ session in view of maintaining a pool of trainers and ensuring the sustainability and efficiency of the trainings delivered; • Relevant serbian authorities create incentives to recognise national trainers within its system and retain this qualified staff.
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translation of the EASO Modules in Serbian (as per modalities developed in the implementation plan); • Establish a pool of at least 8 National trainers trained on the EASO Modules; • At least 5 case officers trained on Inclusion EASO Core Module; • At least 2 trainers for reception module available to roll out trainings • Serbian representatives trained on training needs assessment methodology and acquainted with EASO training methodology; • Serbian representatives introduced to basic methodology of training evaluation (Kirkpatrick methodology).
Description of the activities and indicative timeline	<p>Output 2.1 Increased capacity of national authorities to carry out systematic training on asylum and reception, relying mainly on the EASO training core Modules as per EASO curriculum</p> <p>Activity 2.1.1: Workshop on EASO training needs assessment and training methodology for Serbia representatives;</p> <p>Activity 2.1.2: Annual planification of training needs (in line with EASO training curriculum) and organisation and participation to these trainings according to the plan (Q1 2021);</p> <p>Activity 2.1.3: Participation in EASO Modules in the relevant areas, as per identified annual needs.</p> <p>This activity may include:</p>

	<p>i) Serbian representatives' participation to the priority EASO Train the Trainer sessions of Advanced Modules, (normally restricted to EU+ countries).</p> <p>ii) Ad hoc Training organized by EASO which may be complementary to the EASO training Modules (e.g. Webinars on remote personal interviews)</p> <p>Activity 2.1.4: EASO support to the roll-out by the Asylum office of one Inclusion EASO core Module training session (Q1 2022).</p> <p>Activity 2.1.5: Introduction to basic methodology for training evaluation (Kirkpatrick methodology)</p>
Synergies	<p>EASO will complement these national activities through regional level with the organisation of Regional WB Train the Trainer sessions on Inclusion (c.f 2.1.7.1, Project Activity Plan⁶), Evidence Assessment (c.f 2.1.7.3, Project Activity Plan) and Interview Techniques (c.f 2.1.7.2, Project Activity Plan)</p> <p>To accompany the knowledge gained during the trainings EASO will translate, proofread and publish the following documents: EASO practical guide on qualification for international protection and the EASO core Module on Evidence Assessment (c.f 2.1.6, Project Activity Plan).</p> <p>Synergies will be explored with UNHCR, and specific topics will be agreed in coordination with the authorities and other partners.</p> <p>IOM has carried out under the Phase I of the IPA project a round of national consultation regarding the transposition of the EASO and Frontex curricula. Under the Phase II, IOM is planning to develop a Roadmap in each of the six WB, in close coordination with EASO to identify the next steps in order to transpose the EU Agencies curricula. EASO will contribute to the efforts to establish a sustainable training system in Serbia in cooperation with IOM and other partners, where needed.</p>

⁶ Activity Plan for the IPA funded "Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey – Phase II"

II. Contributing to effective asylum procedures

3. Strengthened access to the asylum procedures in line with the CEAS and EU standards	
Output (expected Result)	Output 3.1 Improved capacity and knowledge of first contact officials to fulfil their obligations to ensure access to asylum procedures
Responsible Authorities/ target group	Ministry of Interior (Border Police, Police stations, Asylum Office at the Asylum centres and polices working on detention center).
Description and assessment of the situation/ EASO added value	<p>Currently, the Asylum legal framework of Serbia is generally compatible with the EU acquis. Serbia plans to further adapt its legislation on international protection, especially when it comes to important structural features of the EU asylum system, such as effective “access to the procedures”.</p> <p>During the implementation of the first Roadmap, EASO and the Serbian authorities have been working in close cooperation to adapt the EASO-Frontex toolkits on “Access to Procedures” to develop a Serbian version of it. This tool is in the latest phase of finalisation and, once ready, shall be printed and disseminated as necessary.</p>
Pre-conditions(s)/ Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EASO and Serbia to agree on a final Serbian version based on the EASO-Frontex Access to Procedures Tool kit; • Serbia to make it accessible electronically at working level; • The relevant first contact officials⁷ are involved.
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed Serbian version of the Access to Procedures tool kit based on the EASO – Frontex tool • Migration authorities trained on Access to Procedures in line with EU standards
Description of the activities and indicative timeline	<p>Output 3.1: Improved capacity/knowledge of the first contact officials to fulfil their obligations to ensure access to asylum procedure:</p> <p>Activity 3.1.1: Proofread, layout and print the Serbian version of the Access to Procedures tool based on the EASO-Frontex tool (Q1 2021);</p> <p>Activity 3.1.2: Disseminate the Serbian version based on the EASO-Frontex toolkit in the relevant locations (Q2 2021);</p> <p>Activity 3.1.3: Operational training on registration with the relevant migration authorities in view of ensuring a wider and sustainable dissemination of knowledge (multiplier effect/synergies) (Q3/Q4 2021);</p> <p>Activity 3.1.4: Participation in the regional workshop on Access to Procedures organised under the IPA II project (Q1 2021/Q2 2021).</p>
Synergies	Possible synergies with Frontex and UNHCR can be envisaged as part of the IPA II Project and beyond.

⁷ Officials who are often (or likely to be) the first point of contact for third country nationals reaching Serbia, i.e. border guards, police, immigration authorities and personnel of detention facilities.

4. Effective identification and assessment of persons with special needs developed and implemented	
Outcome (Expected Result)	Output 4.1 Strengthened capacity of Serbian authorities to identify and assess persons with special needs Output 4.2. Rights compliant national Age Assessment Process developed
Responsible Authorities/ target group	Ministry of Interior (Asylum Office and Border Police) Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs (case workers and guardians) The Commissariat of Refugees and Migration (reception officers)
Description and assessment of the situation/ EASO added value	<p>As part of the Phase I of the IPA Project, EASO has translated, proofread and uploaded on the EASO website the Serbian version of the identification of persons with special needs (IPSN) tool. The IPSN tool is focused mainly on the identification of persons with special needs for non specialised officials.</p> <p>In addition, EASO organised regional and national workshops on IPSN (in cooperation with the EU-Twinning⁸). In the framework of this new Roadmap, the Serbian authorities have expressed their interest to focus on the practical implementation of the tool.</p> <p>In line with the article 24 of the Asylum Procedures Directive, the art. 17 of the Law on asylum and temporary protection prescribes some special procedure for applicants with special needs (such as minors, victim of trafficking, torture, etc.). The Commissariat for refugees and migration is using offline IPSN tool, and according to each individual case, refers the applicant to the right state body.</p> <p>Although assessment is obligatory at the reception in the centre and continuously during the stay, there is no formal assessment procedure. Therefore, under the Phase II, the Commissariat is interested in introducing the IPSN tool as obligatory in line with the guide on national referral procedures drafted in 2017 by SCRM. The Commissariat wants to update this guide and establish links between IPSN and national referral procedures and use printed report as part of the personal file.</p> <p>Regarding the identification of minors, Serbia lacks formal age assessment procedures for unaccompanied children. EASO has developed two practical guides on age assessment. The last one offers practical guidance, key recommendations and tools on the implementation of the best interests of the child when assessing the age of a person from a multidisciplinary and holistic approach. It also brings up-to-date information on the methods conducted by EU+ states and on new methods still not in use as possible or future alternatives.</p>
Pre-conditions(s)/ Assumptions	EASO can only support a national process on age assessment in line with a rights compliance approach, as detailed in the EASO guide. Other type of approach can only receive a more limited support, upon discussions with Serbia.

Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 10 officers (case officers, reception officers, social workers, etc.) trained on identification of persons with special needs • Recommendations on the use of IPSN tool provided • Basic preconditions for starting development of rights compliant Age Assessment Process are accomplished (Current legal framework analyses conducted and proposal on Age Assessment procedures); • EASO Practical guide on the best interests of the child in asylum procedures translated in Serbian language.
Description of the activities and indicative timeline	<p>Output 4.1: Strengthened capacity of the Serbian authorities to identify and assess persons with special needs</p> <p>Activity 4.1.1: Operational training on identification of persons with special needs (Q2/Q3 2021);</p> <p>Activity 4.1.2: On the job coaching to look into the national referral procedures for identification and assessment of vulnerabilities leading to recommendations on the use of IPSN tool (Q3/Q4 2021);</p> <p>Output 4.2. Developed rights compliant national Age Assessment Process</p> <p>Activity 4.2.1: Expert mission(s) to introduce best practices in EU on age assessment in view of developing a national process (Q2 2021);</p> <p>Activity 4.2.2: Current legal framework analyses conducted in order to identify obstacles for rights compliant Age Assessment;</p> <p>Activity 4.2.3: Prepare proposal on Age assessment procedures for discussion among key stakeholders;</p> <p>Activity 4.2.4: Translation/proofreading of Practical guide on the best interests of the child in asylum procedures (Q1 2021).</p>
Synergies	<p>IOM will organise two regional workshops for social workers on BIA/BID including transfer of EU practices (c.f 1.5.1, Project Activity Plan).</p> <p>EASO will organise a regional workshop on age assessment (c.f 1.4.2.1, Project Activity Plan) for policy makers to introduce the pros and cons of the different methods in order to promote a rights compliance age assessment process.</p> <p>As part of project, the translations of the EASO Guidance on Age Assessment and two videos animations for officials and children are foreseen (c.f 2.1.6 Project Activity Plan).</p> <p>CSO IDEAS, UNHCR and UNICEF with the cooperation of the MoLEVSA have developed Standard Operating Procedures for the protection of refugee/migrant children (SOPs) in 2016. Also, MoLEVSA has two complementing Instructions with specific regulation on providing care and accommodation for unaccompanied Minor.</p> <p>UNHCR will build capacities of MoLEVSA focusing on guardianship scheme to ensure individualized approach and full respect of the best interest of unaccompanied and separated children. Possible synergies can be envisaged.</p>

5. Standardised Country of Origin information (COI) system	
Output (Expected Result)	Output 5.1 The knowledge of COI Section staff in the Ministry of Interior and its capacity to produce high-quality material is enhanced
Responsible Authorities/ target group	Ministry of Interior (Asylum Office)
Description and assessment of the situation/ EASO added value	<p>In February 2014, the Asylum Office planned to recruit 2 Country of Origin Information (COI) experts. These positions were filled in 2018. In addition, in line with the new Rulebook on internal organisation and job classification in the Ministry of Interior adopted in 2018, a new section was established to collect and document information on countries of origin.</p> <p>Under the implementation of the first Roadmap EASO facilitated and organised a series of activities in this field, i.e. Train the Trainer on Country of Origin Information (October 2017), on the job coaching (November 2017) and two regional workshops on COI (December 2016 and December 2019).</p>
Pre-conditions(s)/ Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge transferred to the COI staff by EASO/MS experts is integrated systematically in the daily system/work of the COI section (through systematic trainings, workflows, procedures, checklists etc...)
Deliverable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COI Section staff trained on COI Methodology, COI Writing and Referencing Standardised COI System in Serbia
Description of the activities	<p>Output 5.1: The knowledge of COI Section staff and their capacity to produce high-quality input are enhanced.</p> <p>Activity 5.1.1: Participation in the Joint EASO/ACCORD Conference on COI Methodology (Q4 2019);</p> <p>Activity 5.1.2: Series of provisions of expertise on COI quality control, peer-reviewing, according to EASO COI Report methodology and standards (Q3 2021). This activity will be composed by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing/Workshop on EASO COI Methodology and COI Writing and Referencing and Coaching/Expert mission(s) and/or (remote) provision of expertise in view of the establishment/enhancement of a standardised COI system.
Synergies	<p>EASO Regional workshop on Country of Origin Information, on 3-4 December 2019 in Sarajevo (c.f 2.2.1.2, Project Activity Plan);</p> <p>EASO Regional workshop on Country of Origin Information for WB Judges (c.f 2.2.1.2, Project Activity Plan).</p>

III. Contributing to an effective reception system

6. Reception services and conditions enhanced with a special focus on vulnerabilities	
Output (Expected Result)	Output 6.1 Improved reception conditions for unaccompanied children in line with EU standards Output 6.2. Increased exchanges with EU+ countries as part of the EASO reception Network
Responsible Authorities/ target group	The Commissariat of Refugees and Migration (reception officers); Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs (Center for social workers and guardians); Ministry of Interior (officials from the Asylum Office, border police officials, police stations officers and officers from Detention centres) ⁹ .
Description and assessment of the situation/ EASO added value	<p>The Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection states that asylum applicants are entitled to accommodation and other material facilities for the duration of the asylum procedure. Serbia has currently various accommodation centres for asylum applicants¹⁰ in the following locations: Banja Koviljaca (120), Bogovada (200), Krnjaca (1,000), Sjenica (250) and Tutin (200). The total capacity of beds being currently: approx. 1,770 beds with an extension of up to + 10-15 % beds if needed and in a very short period of time.</p> <p>The accommodation facilities are continuously improving, in order to comply with the EU standards, as detailed in the EASO guidelines for reception conditions: operational standards and indicators.</p> <p>In accordance with the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection the competent authority for the reception and accommodation of unaccompanied children/minors is SCRM (Art. 52). The number of unaccompanied minors, accommodated in asylum, reception and transit centres varying from less than 150 during the summer to 500 during the winter.</p> <p>The main challenges for further alignment of the Serbian accommodation system with Directive 2013/33/EU relate to handling special cases of the most vulnerable persons (i.e. mentally ill during acute phase of disease, dependent elderly persons, persons with disabilities needed support of third person in daily activities, unaccompanied children under 14, drug and alcohol addicts.)</p> <p>The Law on Asylum and Temporary protection foresees that exceptionally, if the necessary conditions for his/her accommodation cannot be provided at the Asylum Centre, accommodation in specialized social welfare institution shall be provided by the Commissariat, based on a decision of the Centre for Social</p>

⁹ These activities are mainly focused on the area of reception, targeting reception officials but whenever it will be important to reinforce the referral of vulnerable categories, relevant bodies within the Ministry of Interior may be involved.

¹⁰ At the beginning of 2020, there were additional 12 reception centres for irregular migrants (not in the asylum procedure), while the remaining two are in preparedness.

	<p>Work¹¹. However, such accommodation is extremely hard to implement due to various reasons.</p> <p>The situation is better in the case of unaccompanied minors, where three centres are dedicated to special cases (very young children, minors with mental health problems, etc.) and have a capacity of 40 beds within national network of the social institutions. In these centres, minors receive more specialised and tailor-made services. There are also two NGO who run shelters (in Loznica and Belgrade) with another 28 places, which are under the supervision of the local centre for social work. MoLEVSA is trying to upgrade and upscale existing capacities in other social welfare institutions with the assistance of international partners, most of all the EU in order to be able to respond to the high fluctuation in the number of unaccompanied minors with specific needs.</p> <p>The SCRM has partially turned the Banja Koviljaca centre to a centre for “vulnerable persons”, given the proximity and experience of local social and health facilities and that the centre is rather suited in terms of facilities- for this specific category of asylum applicants. In addition, Asylum Centres in Bogovadja and Sjenica are used for unaccompanied minor accommodation depending of the total number of unaccompanied minors.</p> <p>A more transparent and coordinated referral system from asylum centres to specialized institutions is needed.</p>
Pre-conditions(s)/ Assumptions	Cooperation between the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration and Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs (case workers and guardians) is ensured with clear sharing of communication and understanding of the lead institutions and various roles of each stakeholders.
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 3 reception officers and 3 reception managers trained on Reception and/or Reception of Vulnerable Persons; • At least 1 Reception officer and reception manager awareness raised on the EASO Guidance on reception conditions for unaccompanied children: standards and indicators in the asylum centres dedicated to the accommodation of unaccompanied children/minors; • Practical guidance on reception conditions for unaccompanied children: operational standards and indicators for Serbia is introduced; • EASO practical guide on family tracing produced in Serbian language. • Serbian authorities informed on EU MS discussions/practices on Reception.
Description of the activities and indicative timeline	<p>Output 6.1: Improved reception conditions for unaccompanied children in line with EU standards</p> <p>Activity 6.1.1: Participation in the EASO TtT module on Reception and/or Reception of Vulnerable Persons;</p> <p>Activity 6.1.2: Proofreading and publication of the translated version of the EASO Guidance on reception conditions for unaccompanied children: operational standards and indicators (Q1 2021);</p>

¹¹ This is a standard procedure, same as for Nationals where Centre for Social Work assess and decides about justification for such accommodation.

	<p>Activity 6.1.3: Awareness raising workshop/and introduction to the EASO Guidance on reception conditions for unaccompanied children: operational standards and indicators in the relevant centers (Q2 2021);</p> <p>Activity 6.1.4: On the job coaching to support the implementation of the practical guidance on reception conditions for unaccompanied children: operational standards and indicators at national level (with a special focus on the assessment of the reception system for unaccompanied children/minors) (Q2/Q3 2021)</p> <p>Activity 6.1.5: Translation, proof reading and publication of the EASO practical guide on family tracing (Q1 2021).</p> <p>Output 6.2: Increased exchanges with EU+ countries and EASO as part of the EASO reception Network</p> <p>Activity 6.2.1: Participation in the EASO Reception Network (2 NCP meetings and 2 thematic meetings per year as a continuation of the already established cooperation under phase I).</p>
Synergies	<p>As part of the project, the translations of the EASO Guidance on Age Assessment and two video animations for officials and children are foreseen (c.f 2.1.6 Project Activity Plan: translation, proofreading and dissemination of the relevant EASO guides, tools or modules).</p>

7. Enhanced preparedness for a scenario of high influx in the field of reception for asylum seekers	
Output (Expected Result)	Output 7.1 A contingency plan in line with EASO guidance is endorsed
Responsible Authorities/ target group	The Commissariat of Refugees and Migration in coordination with relevant Institutions (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Science and Technical Development).
Description and assessment of the situation/ EASO added value	<p>Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, as authority responsible, in accordance with the Law on Migration Management for proposing Plan to the Government for approval, coordinates and collects inputs from relevant authorities responsible for the implementation of different activities and with ministries responsible for financing (Ministry of Finance and Ministry for EU integration). Currently once per year, existing Plan is updating and after approval of the Working Group for Mixed Migration Flows is sent to the Government for adoption.</p> <p>Currently the Response plan follows structure of UN Refugee and Migrant response plans which are more focused on strategy, priority sectors and existing needs than on the practical and operational solutions. The focus is put on accommodation, health protection and education.</p> <p>In view of a scenario of an increasing influx, Serbia authorities needs support to develop more operational plans to face and accommodate higher numbers of asylum applicants in short period which utilized EU best practices.</p> <p>EASO organised in cooperation with Serbia an information workshop on the EASO guidance on contingency planning in the context of reception in 2018. In the framework of this new Roadmap and in line with the Action Plan of the Chapter 24, EASO will further enhance the skills and preparedness of the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration and other relevant stakeholders in charge of the preparation of these plans based on EASO methodology and in accordance with the Law on Migration Management.</p>
Pre-conditions(s)/ Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cooperation of all relevant actors along the process is ensured (State institutions, local authorities providing reception conditions, NGO); • The development of the Contingency plan requires a commitment along the process, and it entails a high number of meetings and preparatory work in coordination with the facilitator of the drafting process (EASO, tbc) with national authorities in the lead; • Contingency Planning Experts available within reception network for the whole process.
Deliverable	Contingency plan
Description of the activities and indicative timeline	Output 7.1: A contingency plan in line with EASO guidance is endorsed Activity 7.1.1: Organisation of series of workshops to prepare the basis to draft a contingency plan.

	<p>The workshops will include topics such as: refresher session on EASO Guidance on contingency planning, scope and structure of the draft contingency plan, including focus on specific content (e.g. risk analysis, managing housing capacity, provision of reception conditions, resources management, human resources), roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders, decision making process and coordination and communication. (Q4 2020/ Q4 2021)</p> <p>Activity 7.1.2: Expert missions/provision of expertise/coaching to guide the work of the lead institutions/working group in the drafting of the contingency plan (to cover the needs between the activities described under 7.1.1). (Q4 2020/ Q4 2021)</p>
Synergies	N/A

Annex I: Main National stakeholders

Organisation	Responsibilities
Ministry of Interior	The Ministry of Interior has overall responsibility for control of movement and stay in the border area and control of movement and stay of foreigners in Serbia.
Border Police Directorate (Ministry of Interior)	Border Police Directorate registers in the database "ASYLUM", issues a certificate and informs the foreigner of the address of the Asylum Center where the foreigner needs to register within 72 hours. In the case of unaccompanied minor, it determines that a foreigner is a minor and contacts the local centre for social work. Furthermore, each police directorate has both a standalone anti-trafficking unit and officers.
Asylum Office (Ministry of Interior)	Asylum Office is responsible for RSD procedure under a Regular Procedure (3 months) as well as the Accelerated Procedure (1 month); prepares and lodges the asylum applications; carries out the interviews with the asylum seekers and issues 1 st instance decisions and identity cards in a prescribed format to the asylum seekers within 3 days from the date of the application. The Asylum Office has the authority to allow the applicant to reside outside the Asylum Centre at own cost and the Asylum Centers need to inform the Asylum Office if the applicant left accommodation without authorization.
Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (CRM)	Commissariat for Refugees is state authority organized as a special organisation within the public administration system of Serbia, established to carry out professional and administrative tasks related to the care, return and integration of refugees. Specifically, the CRM is responsible for material reception conditions and has capacity to reduce or abolish material reception conditions; performs the preliminary risk assessment, including identification of vulnerable categories; refers the person to the responsible institutions, including informing the Centre for social work to appoint a guardian for unaccompanied minors; ensures access to elementary and secondary education; implements programs of voluntary return and integration of persons who have been granted asylum. Furthermore, the CRM can propose goals, priorities and measures on migration policy to the Government and carries out tasks related to collection, analysis and reporting on data and indicators on migration.
Asylum Commission	Asylum Commission is an inter-ministerial body consisting of a Chairperson and eight members appointed by the Government for the period of four years. It acts as 1 st appeal instance within the Asylum procedure and takes decision on appeals made by the Asylum Office.
Administrative court	Takes decisions on administrative disputes lodged against final decisions taken by the Asylum Commission.
Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs (MoLEVSA)	Highest authority (ministerial level) in charge of the definition of labour and employment policies, including the right to access to the labour market of foreigners, as well as for overall social protection policy including for the persons in vulnerable position.
Centers for Social Work (CSW)	Centres for Social Work (CSW) are established by the local governments and monitored by the Ministry of the Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs. CSW is the main institution of social welfare system in Serbia and sole guardianship authority competent to make decisions on all issues relating to children, other beneficiaries and wards in need of social protection based on their best interest. It

Organisation	Responsibilities
	<p>provides a guardian to the minor and all status and rights related procedures are done in the presence of the guardian.</p> <p>Guardian assess if the minor is to be accommodated in the asylum centre or relevant institution for social protection based on the assessments of his/ her's best interest and propose to the CSW in order to bring official decision. CSW is responsible for coordination of all activities/ services related to protection of a particular child and ensuring individualized approach.</p>
National Employment Service (NES)	National Employment service is a government body, under supervision of MoLEVSA, that provide assistance related to employment and unemployment of asylum seekers and refugees. NES is providing job matching services for job seekers, career guidance and counselling, job creation subsidies for employers, support to self-employment, further education and training, etc. It is the main competent body for issuing work permits for foreigners.
Centre for Human Trafficking Victims Protection (CHTVP)	CHTVP is in charge of identification and coordinating protection of Victims of Trafficking and providing shelter.
Ministry of Health	Highest authority (ministerial level) in charge of the definition of health policies, organizing and financing health services for asylum seekers and those with international protection, specifically it defines and oversees the implementation of the procedure for mandatory medical checks.
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	Highest authority (ministerial level) in charge for education and science policies, specifically it guarantees the enforcement of the right to free primary and secondary education in accordance with relevant legislation and implement activities aimed to ensure sufficient capacities in regular education system through local school authorities.