



EUAA Training and Learning Strategy

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EUAA/MB/2022/054

**Management Board Decision No 102
of 7 March 2022**

on the EUAA Training and Learning Strategy

THE MANAGEMENT BOARD,

HAVING REGARD to Regulation (EU) 2021/2303 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2021 on the European Union Agency for Asylum¹ (hereinafter ‘the EUAA Regulation’), and in particular Article 8 thereof,

WHEREAS:

- 1) One of the tasks of the Agency is to coordinate and strengthen practical cooperation and information exchange between the Member States, amongst others by means of its training activities.
- 2) Pursuant to Article 8(4) of the EUAA Regulation, the training offered by the Agency shall be of high quality. That requirement should be applied across all stages of planning, development, implementation and evaluation of the Agency’s training activities.
- 3) It is therefore necessary to lay down the general principles and strategic orientation for the Agency’s activities in the field of training, through the adoption of an EUAA Training and Learning Strategy.
- 4) In accordance with the administrative and management structure of the Agency, the Executive Director should be authorised to adopt a Training Quality Assurance Framework providing for the detailed policies and procedures necessary for the implementation of the Strategy.
- 5) The adoption of the Training Quality Assurance Framework aims at providing for alignment with the European Qualifications Framework² and ensuring that it complies with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area³.

¹ Regulation (EU) 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 439/2010, (OJ L 468, 30.12.2021, p. 1).

² Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, (OJ C 111, 6.5.2008, p. 1).

³ Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). (2015). Brussels, Belgium (weblink: https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf)





HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

**Article 1
Adoption**

The EUAA Training and Learning Strategy (hereinafter ‘the Strategy’), as annexed to this Decision, is hereby adopted.

**Article 2
Implementation**

1. The implementation of the Strategy shall be the responsibility of the Executive Director, who shall for this purpose adopt a Training Quality Assurance Framework laying down the quality assurance standards applicable to EUAA training activities.
2. The Training Quality Assurance Framework shall provide for alignment of the EUAA training with the European Qualifications Framework and shall ensure compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

**Article 3
Repeal**

This Decision repeals the EASO Training and Learning Strategy approved by the Management Board of the European Asylum Support Office at its 32nd meeting held on 17-18 June 2019.

**Article 4
Entry into force**

This Decision enters into force on the date of its adoption.

Done at Valletta Harbour

For the Management Board

Signature on file

Mikael Ribbenvik
Chairperson of the Management Board



Annex: EUAA Training and Learning Strategy.



Annex

EUAA Training and Learning Strategy

1. Background

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), established by Regulation (EU) 2021/2303, is responsible for contributing to ensuring the efficient and uniform application of Union law on asylum in Member States in full respect of fundamental rights and facilitating and supporting the activities of Member States in the implementation of the Common European Asylum System ('CEAS'). The Agency is also tasked with improving the functioning of the CEAS, including by providing operational and technical assistance to Member States, in particular those whose asylum and reception systems are under disproportionate pressure.

With the implementation of the EUAA Training and Learning Strategy, the EUAA is committed to supporting Member States by providing training for members of its own staff, members of relevant national administrations, and of national authorities responsible for asylum and reception, and members of Asylum Support Teams, including those not employed by the Agency. The EUAA's support in this area will be provided through the continuous development of the European asylum curriculum, which aims to promote best practices and high standards in the implementation of Union law on asylum and reception. Through the provision of training and learning opportunities, the EUAA will contribute to the development and strengthening of the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy of asylum and reception officials, upholding common standards, and enhancing the overall implementation of the CEAS.

This Strategy, replacing the previous version of the EASO Training Strategy (2019), outlines the principles that guide the EUAA in the implementation of its mandate as provided for in Article 8 of the EUAA Regulation.

2. Definitions

In this document, the following terms are defined as follows:

- "accreditation" means a process of quality assurance through which accredited status is granted to an education or training provider, showing it has been approved by the relevant legislative or professional authorities by having met predetermined standards;
- "certification" means a process of issuing a certificate, diploma or title formally attesting that a set of learning outcomes (knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual have been assessed and validated by a competent body against a predefined standard;
- "competence" means the ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities in work or study situations and in professional and personal



development. In the context of the European qualifications framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy;

- “formal learning” means learning that occurs in an organised and structured environment (such as in an education or training institution or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or resources). Formal learning is intentional from the learner’s point of view. It typically leads to certification.
- “informal learning” means learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support. Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner’s perspective.
- “learning outcomes” means statements regarding what a learner knows, understands and is able to do upon completion of a learning process. They are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and responsibility and autonomy.
- “non-formal learning” means learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support), but which contain an important learning element. Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner’s point of view. It typically does not lead to certification.

Other definitions relevant for this Strategy may be found in the EUAA Glossary of training terms⁴.

3. Principles

In line with the EUAA Regulation, the implementation of the EUAA’s Training and Learning Strategy shall be guided by the following principles:

- (i) In implementing this Strategy, the EUAA takes an open, constructive and dynamic approach while remaining fully committed to upholding the highest standards of quality, efficiency and transparency. To this end, the EUAA will develop a Training Quality Assurance Framework based on the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (‘ESG 2015’)⁵. The EUAA will also duly take into consideration the EU education

⁴ Available at: www.euaa.europa.eu

⁵ The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) are used by institutions and quality assurance agencies as a reference document for internal and external quality assurance systems in higher education. Moreover, they are used by the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR), which is responsible for the register of quality assurance agencies that comply with the ESG.



and training framework, including the Bologna⁶ and Copenhagen⁷ principles and the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning.

- (ii) The EUAA will cooperate closely with and rely on the commitment of various actors whose expertise can contribute to designing and delivering EUAA training and learning material. These include primarily Member States' asylum and reception authorities but also the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) as well as relevant training entities, academic institutions, judicial associations, training networks and other relevant organisations. This cooperation will take place amongst others in the framework of the 'Reference Group', composed of the European Commission, other EU Agencies, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other relevant actors. As required by the EUAA Regulation, the Fundamental Rights Officer and the Consultative Forum will be consulted on the European asylum curriculum.
- (iii) The EUAA's training and learning activities target primarily Member States' asylum and reception authorities⁸. In accordance with the EUAA Regulation, the Agency will broaden the scope of these activities to other relevant national authorities in the Member States. In line with the relevant working arrangements, it may also include other actors such as EU agencies, the UNHCR, academia, relevant international and civil society organisations and third countries, as per the EUAA External Cooperation Strategy.
- (iv) The implementation of this Strategy will enable Member States to provide their staff with high-quality training based on the European asylum curriculum and in accordance with their obligations under Union law on asylum. In particular, Member States are required to include core parts of that curriculum in the training provided to their asylum and reception officials. This in turn contributes to greater convergence of methods, decisions and legal practices in the Member States in compliance with the CEAS.
- (v) The EUAA is committed to the highest standards of professional and ethical behaviour in all its training activities. The Agency shall, in the context of implementation of the Training Quality Assurance Framework, develop and manage a Code of Conduct for participants in EUAA training

⁶ The Bologna Process is an intergovernmental cooperation of 48 European countries in the field of higher education. It guides the collective effort of public authorities, universities, teachers, and students, together with stakeholder associations, employers, quality assurance agencies, international organisations, and institutions, including the European Commission, on how to improve the internationalisation of higher education. The main focus is the introduction of the three-cycle system (Bachelor/Master/Doctor), strengthened quality assurance and easier recognition of qualifications and periods of study (https://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/higher-education/bologna-process-and-european-higher-education-area_en).

⁷ The Copenhagen Process was launched by the Copenhagen Declaration, approved on 30 November 2002 by ministers responsible for vocational education and training (VET) in the Member States, candidate countries, EFTA-EEA countries, the European Social Partners and the European Commission. They agreed on priorities and strategies for the promotion of mutual trust, transparency and recognition of competences and qualifications in order to increase mobility and facilitate access to lifelong learning. The Declaration calls for enhancing European cooperation in VET across Europe. It focuses on the contribution of VET to the challenges identified in the Lisbon strategy: strengthen the European dimension of VET, improve transparency, information and guidance systems, recognise competences and qualifications, including non-formal and informal learning promote cooperation in quality assurance (<https://www.eqavet.eu/What-We-Do/European-Policy/Copenhagen-Process>).

⁸ The development of the professional material for the members of Courts and Tribunals is not covered under this strategy.



activities, as well as a training complaints procedure whereby, amongst others, violations of the Code may be brought to the attention of the EUAA for adequate investigation and follow-up.

- (vi) While the EUAA is fully committed to this Strategy, the commitment of Member States and their involvement at all levels is crucial to its implementation.

4. Objectives

By implementing a Training and Learning Strategy, the EUAA aims to:

- (i) Develop the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy of asylum and reception officials

The EUAA aims to support Member States in ensuring that asylum and reception officials are provided with the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy required to perform their job at a satisfactory level. In this regard, the European Sectoral Qualification Framework (ESQF) for asylum and reception officials identifies both the tasks that asylum and reception officials perform, as well as the learning outcomes required for their successful performance. The ESQF therefore provides comprehensive guidance on what asylum and reception officials should know and be able to do, under a specified degree of responsibility and autonomy, in order to perform their duties and tasks. Its use throughout the training cycle ensures that EUAA training is relevant and fit-for-purpose.

- (ii) Increase capacity and preparedness

The EUAA's training and learning activities assist national administrations in Member States to strengthen the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy of their personnel, thereby enhancing their capacity to fulfil their day-to-day tasks, as well as to increase their resilience when confronted by situations of disproportionate pressure. Having knowledgeable and skilled officials enables national administrations to be well prepared to respond rapidly to situations of increased influx of asylum seekers, in particular by applying efficient procedures, while at all times ensuring compliance with the CEAS.

- (iii) Promote active learning

Learners have a central role in their learning and development experience and the EUAA aims to provide a safe learning environment where adult learners can explore issues and discuss practical challenges under the guidance of a trainer/coach with expertise in the field. Central to the active learning approach is the peer-learning element, where the learning and training environment enables a stimulating opportunity for learners to discuss challenges and exchange views with other practitioners in the field.

- (iv) Promote continuing professional development

The EUAA's continuing professional development (CPD) activities address both asylum and reception officials as well as trainers in EUAA modules and courses. CPD activities are organised as part of the EUAA's lifelong learning strategy in the field of asylum and reception, allowing for the reinforcement



of the lifelong knowledge, skills and competencies of asylum and reception officials. CPD is pivotal to meet learning needs with a view to increased convergence in the implementation of the CEAS.

It is also critical to the EUAA that trainers in the European asylum curriculum have opportunities to develop and keep their content-related competences and andragogical skills up to the highest standards, including through a process of certification. This also includes CPD of transversal competences such as digital and intercultural communication.

(v) Implement an assessment strategy

In line with the ESG 2015 and the EUAA's long-term vision of achieving accreditation as a higher education provider (i.e., a prospective EUAA Academy) delivering accredited programmes and modules, the Agency is implementing transparent, fair and reliable assessments as an essential part of its training. Assessment forms an integral part of any training and learning process. Well-designed assessment activities demonstrate that learners have achieved the intended learning outcomes and thus provide assurance of what the learner should know and be able to do once the learning process has been completed. The assessment of learners undertaking EUAA training and learning activities is designed to be rigorous, transparent and consistent. In order to ensure the integrity of the assessment process, the Agency shall, in the context of implementation of the Training Quality Assurance Framework, develop and manage an assessment appeal procedure for instances where irregularities in the assessment task or procedure unduly affect a learner's performance in the assessment, as well as a procedure for the investigation and follow-up of instances of academic misconduct (refer to section 3, point (v)).

(vi) Recognise prior learning

The EUAA acknowledges and recognises prior learning including formal, informal and non-formal learning. The pre-existing knowledge, skills and competences of learners bring additional value to the learning process and strengthen the peer-learning component. The EUAA, therefore, puts in place and implements procedures for recognizing prior learning and experience. Such recognition is also aimed at reducing the repetition of learning, thereby maximising efficiency.

5. Training frameworks

EUAA training is delivered in three main contexts:

(i) European asylum curriculum sessions

The European asylum curriculum is one of the EUAA's practical tools contributing to the effective implementation of the CEAS. The learners' curriculum is mainly composed of training modules, with the possibility for voluntary assessments leading to certification, but also includes a broad range of CPD material. Designed mainly to train case officers and other asylum and reception practitioners throughout the EU, EUAA training modules are integrated into a common training system, which covers the entire field of international protection by means of a set of interactive modules.



The learners' curriculum is complemented by a distinct curriculum for trainers which is composed of a set of courses on content as well as assessed modules on adult learning and assessment techniques for trainers. The European asylum curriculum can be used in the context of permanent support to assist Member States in establishing a training framework for their personnel or to complement their existing national training structures by means of high-quality and commonly developed training materials.

(ii) Training in the context of operational and technical assistance

One of the key functions of the EUAA is to provide Member States with operational and technical assistance, in particular where their asylum and reception systems are subject to disproportionate pressure. The European asylum curriculum forms the basis for the implementation of operational training activities. Depending on the specific tasks to be performed on the ground, as well as the specific characteristics of the operational context, specific complementary training material may be developed.

Training delivered in order to support Member States whose asylum and reception system is subject to disproportionate pressure is guided by the provisions of Article 8 of the EUAA Regulation, as well as by the nature and scope of the operating plans. Whenever necessary, it is delivered in coordination with the deployment of asylum support teams. In this regard, the EUAA is tasked with verifying and ensuring that experts deployed as part of asylum support teams have received the required training. Where necessary, it may provide them, in advance of or upon their deployment, with training which is specific to the operational and technical assistance being provided.

(iii) Training activities in the context of working arrangements

The EUAA is also mandated to engage in capacity-building activities with third countries under the EUAA External Cooperation Strategy, within the framework of working arrangements concluded with the authorities of those countries. Capacity-building support may also include the training of third-country asylum and reception officials.

In the framework of other working arrangements, the Agency may also engage in training activities with other EU bodies as well as international organisations. These may include the exchange of good practices in the area of training, mutual participation in training activities or the joint development of specific training actions.

6. Training needs analysis

The EUAA applies a flexible, structured and evidence-based methodology to support Member States' asylum and reception authorities and other stakeholders in identifying training and learning needs. The methodology is applied in a collaborative manner with the full involvement of all relevant counterparts in national administrations, and in particular Training National Contact Points (NCPs), who act as a liaison with their respective administrations on training-related matters. Training NCPs are nominated by Member States, following EUAA recommendations on the needs and



responsibilities related to the performance of this function. Extensive consultations with these counterparts are embedded within the methodology.

The methodology is designed to take into account the asylum situation at national and European level when identifying competence needs drivers, to fully incorporate the use of the ESQF and to focus on training needs for both newly recruited and experienced asylum and reception officials.

The EUAA applies the methodology both on a European as well as on a national level, particularly in the context of operational and ad hoc support.

7. Training design and development

7.1 Training design

The EUAA designs its training based on a learning outcomes approach, thus focusing on the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy that the learner should acquire once the training is completed. The implementation of learning outcomes in the design of training contributes to a learner-centred approach, placing the focus on what the learner will know and will be able to do. The most appropriate learning strategy is then identified, and assessments are developed to measure and demonstrate the achievement of the learning outcomes.

This approach provides the foundation for the accreditation of the European asylum curriculum, which is supported by Member States through the EUAA Certification and Accreditation Working Group (CAWG), and which is without prejudice to national systems.

7.2 Development of training material

Training material is developed by the EUAA in close cooperation with the Member States, who are invited to contribute to the drafting process in a supportive role through the nomination of content experts. In accordance with the EUAA Regulation, other entities such as the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) as well as relevant training entities, academic institutions, judicial associations, training networks or other relevant organisations may be involved where appropriate. When needed, the EUAA may also utilize the services of external remunerated experts with extensive knowledge and experience of the topics in question.

In particular, the EUAA collaborates with relevant stakeholders in the framework of the Reference Group, which acts as a reviewer of content. The Reference Group is composed of representatives from the European Commission, the UNHCR, members of civil society, academia and where relevant members of courts and tribunals.

The EUAA also fosters an open dialogue with civil society organisations in its training activities through the Consultative Forum, which is consulted on the European asylum curriculum. In order to underscore the EUAA's commitment to fundamental rights, the curriculum is also the subject of consultations with the Fundamental Rights Officer.



Through its cooperation with internal and external stakeholders as part of the design and development process, the EUAA promotes mutual understanding and collaboration among relevant EU actors to further enhance consistency and compliance of the training material with the standards set in international and European law and jurisprudence.

In all cases, the ultimate responsibility for the content of the training material is retained by the EUAA.

When the EUAA develops, upgrades and updates training material, an inclusive approach is adapted to different audiences taking into account needs analysis, time and cost-efficiency considerations, as well as the needs of a diverse learner population, in particular in terms of preferred learning styles. The EUAA uses innovative training and learning methodologies making extensive use of its blended learning approach which consists of an e-Learning element and face-to-face training or webinars, as well as on-the-job training and coaching, peer learning, mobility learning, workshops and professional conferences.

EUAA training material is developed in English. All modules are however available for translation into any EU official language on request from the Member States, in accordance with established needs and depending on the availability of resources. On the same basis, and in view of working arrangements with associated and third countries, the EUAA may also translate training modules into the national languages of these countries. All language versions are made available on the EUAA's Learning Management System (LMS).

7.3 Review of training

The EUAA reviews the European asylum curriculum on a regular basis. Each module has its 'life cycle' of an average duration of five years. At the end of its life cycle, the module is reviewed, and a decision is taken on the need to update or upgrade it. The EUAA also retains the right to discontinue a module following an evaluation on its use and discussions with the Member States.

8. Training delivery and facilitation

The implementation of the EUAA's main training activities relies primarily on a train-the-trainer system (which sustains a multiplier effect) to facilitate the implementation of the European asylum curriculum within national administrations. Through this system, the EUAA sets up an annual training plan for the provision of training to national trainers who, upon completion of the training, organise and deliver training for their peers at the national level. This system not only maximises the EUAA's training efforts but also allows greater flexibility in the organisation of training events and provides for durable capacity building within Member States.

The EUAA further supports regional cooperation on training initiatives from which more than one EU+ country could potentially benefit. Additionally, the EUAA supports the organisation of training activities at a regional level, including train-the-trainer sessions as well as national training sessions with the aim of reducing organisational costs and promoting regional cooperation.



On ad hoc arrangements, the EUAA may also provide tailor-made training to asylum and reception officials.

8.1 EUAA Training Pool

Trainers in the European asylum curriculum are key actors in ensuring quality and they play an essential role in the implementation of the CEAS. The EUAA has set up a Training Pool to coordinate the involvement of Member States' experts in the development and implementation of training activities. The Pool contributes to fostering existing cooperation in the field of asylum and the promotion of best practices. The Pool is managed by the EUAA in coordination with Member States and consists of content experts, content trainers and didactics experts. The EUAA also manages a trainer and expert network through communication channels and relevant meetings.

While the Pool is generally restricted to members of national asylum and reception administrations, the EUAA may exceptionally include other relevant actors (e.g., the UNHCR) to support training in specific areas.

The EUAA follows an internal procedure to manage the selection of trainers, content experts and didactic experts/trainers for EUAA training-related activities.

Alongside the content trainers, content experts and didactic experts from the Pool, the EUAA also makes use of qualified staff as well as external experts for EUAA training activities, where relevant.

9. On-going monitoring, evaluation, and periodic review

The EUAA maintains a monitoring system for all its training activities based on the continuous collection of sound data on a number of key performance indicators. Monitoring data is kept under constant review by the EUAA and on an annual basis by a Training Quality Assurance Advisory Group composed of senior officials from Member States' national administrations. Corrective action is taken whenever issues that may impact quality are detected.

Monitoring data also feeds into periodic evaluations of training activities. Such evaluations are carried out in accordance with a standardised methodology and their outcomes are taken into account in order to identify gaps in the curriculum and in reviewing the quality of training activities. Progress on the implementation of conclusions and recommendations from monitoring and evaluation activities are regularly reviewed by management to ensure that they result in the continuous improvement of training activities. Further to this, the EUAA encourages informal and formal communication with all relevant stakeholders to identify potential areas of improvement for EUAA training and learning activities.

The EUAA reports periodically on the implementation of its training activities and relevant achievements, as well as on the results of evaluations. On a yearly basis, the EUAA publishes a training report on the implementation of the EUAA's training activities at both EU and national level. An annual report based on training monitoring data is produced in consultation with the Training



Quality Assurance Advisory Group. The timely and accurate provision of data by Member States through the Training NCP network allows the EUAA to successfully exercise its training and learning function.

