

Training Needs Analysis Manual



Training needs analysis manual

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CEAS	Common European Asylum System
ESQF	European Sectoral Qualifications Framework (for asylum and reception officials)
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
EU	European Union
TNA	Training needs analysis



1. Foreword

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) was established by Regulation (EU) 2021/2303. The Agency contributes to ensuring the efficient and uniform application of Union law on asylum in the Member States in a manner that fully respects fundamental rights.

It also facilitates and supports the activities of the Member States in the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), including by promoting convergence in the assessment of applications for international protection across the European Union and by coordinating and strengthening practical cooperation and the exchange of information.

The Agency establishes, develops and reviews training for members of its own staff and members of the staff of relevant national administrations, courts and tribunals, and of national authorities responsible for asylum and reception.

To ensure that its training offer is relevant to asylum and reception officials, the EUAA has developed the European Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Asylum and Reception Officials (ESQF)¹ in cooperation with Member States. The ESQF follows a matrix approach and aims to identify relevant training for national asylum and reception officials on the basis of their duties and tasks. To that end, the then EASO's *Training and Learning Strategy 2019* specified that the office would develop a methodology which would use a structured, and evidence-based framework to support countries' asylum and reception authorities as well as other stakeholders to identify training needs.

Enhanced insight into countries' training needs would, on the one hand, enable the EUAA to tailor its training offer further to countries' needs, and, on the other hand, allow countries to make more informed use of the EUAA's training support. The ultimate objective is therefore to focus training efforts on those training needs which, if addressed, contribute most to enhancing the functioning of the CEAS.

This manual is a practical tool intended to support the EUAA to achieve those objectives. The manual is primarily meant for use by staff in the EUAA's Training and Professional Development Centre to support them in:

- Adopting a common training needs analysis (TNA) methodology; and,
- Designing and implementing training needs analysis in practice.

The manual is structured as follows:

- Section 2 contains an overview of the main characteristics and benefits of the approach to training needs analysis, thereby explaining the rationale of the methodology;
- Section 3 describes the TNA methodology in detail and is structured according to the main phases of the TNA process:
 - Phase 1 – Select desired competences;
 - Phase 2 – Assess current competences;
 - Phase 3 – Analyse learning needs;

¹ <https://euaa.europa.eu/publications/european-sectoral-qualifications-framework>



- Phase 4 – Prioritise training needs;

This manual refers to several other EUAA and former EASO documents which provide useful additional reading material to deepen the reader’s understanding of the concepts and principles described. The reference documents include:

- EASO Training and Learning Strategy 2019;
- EUAA’s Training Quality Assurance Framework;
- The EUAA training catalogue;
- European Sectoral Qualifications Framework (ESQF) for asylum and reception officials - Educational Standards;
- EUAA Training Evaluation Manual.

2. Characteristics of the approach – explanatory report

The TNA methodology described in this manual is designed to support the EUAA to promote a common, evidence-based approach to assessing training needs. The overarching goal of adopting a more robust and standardised TNA methodology is to enable the EUAA to tailor its training offer further to countries’ training needs as well as to allow those countries to make a more informed and decisive use of the EUAA’s training support, thereby focusing on the training needs which, if addressed, would contribute most to the functioning of the CEAS.

All parties involved should agree a timeline at the beginning of the TNA exercise.

In order to ensure that the TNA results in useful insights to support these objectives, the methodology is both forward-looking and evidence-based, whilst also taking into consideration the views and experiences of national stakeholders. As training helps national asylum and reception authorities to address current challenges and to prepare for future ones, the TNA methodology foresees a **forward-looking** contextual analysis aimed at identifying the skills, competences, and knowledge which asylum and reception officials are expected to need given wider developments in the national and international asylum field. Moreover, to ensure a rigorous analysis of training needs, the methodology relies on a solid **evidence base** which may include management consultations and liaison with EUAA operational counterparts.

A forward-looking contextual analysis is particularly relevant in the case of third countries where the asylum and reception contexts **may be very different to that of Member States or associated countries, depending on the respective third country**. The EUAA works with third countries with a wide variation in asylum and reception legislation and systems, and as such, it is important to adopt a flexible needs assessment approach where assessment phases and target groups can be adapted to these contexts.

The methodology has been designed in such a way that it can be used to inform any of the EUAA’s training activities, whether they are part of the EUAA’s permanent, operational, or third country support. At the same time, the methodology can be **adapted** to the different organisational and functional characteristics of various national asylum and/or reception authorities.

This versatility has been built in by design by ensuring that the methodology is both flexible and



modular. **Flexible** in the sense that the inputs considered for the analysis as well as the related roles and responsibilities can be adapted to both the national practices and preferences (e.g., in terms of governance, organisational structure, etc.) of the country at hand as well as the type of EUAA training support. **The context in which the TNA takes place allows for full flexibility in its implementation, including the possibility of bypassing certain phases if necessary. In such cases appropriate justification should be provided.**

Modular in the sense that the scale and the scope of the analysis can be tailored by including or excluding different components of the analysis (e.g., certain data collection or stakeholder consultation steps, etc.) from both the needs of the specific training support for which the TNA is conducted (e.g., to provide a "rapid" TNA in the case of operational support), as well as the country's capacity and its objectives for the TNA.

The methodology further foresees **close cooperation between the EUAA and the country** to ensure that, on the one hand, the TNA can be completed with minimal time investment of national officials, while, on the other hand, ensuring that the TNA is tailored to the national context and preferences. Following the commencement of a TNA, the EUAA will take into consideration the country's needs, capacity, and preferences.

3. EUAA training needs analysis methodology

In this section, the TNA methodology is described. The section is structured according to the four main phases of the TNA process as outlined in the section below. The section aims to serve as a practical guide for conducting a TNA.

3.1 Introduction to the TNA methodology

Figure 1 below provides an overview of the four main phases of the TNA process. While the approach to and depth to which each of these phases is implemented depends on the context and objectives of the TNA at hand, it is good practice for every training needs analysis to go through each of these phases.

Phase 1 – Explore the situational context

During this phase, desk research is carried out to gain a thorough overview of the national context in the country in which the TNA will be conducted. This may include gathering information about aspects such as the stakeholder's organisational structure, job profiles as expressed in the language of occupational standards indicated in the ESQF, as well as any information concerning the situation in the field, asylum and/or reception trends, and challenges faced.



Activities performed			
Desk research may gather information on aspects such as the stakeholder's organisational structure, job profiles, as well as information concerning the situation in the field, asylum and/or reception trends, and challenges faced. The legal and regulatory environment as well as developments may be explored. Past participation in EUAA training may also be explored. There is a high level of flexibility in how phase 1 is structured.	A survey of key stakeholders is conducted, reviewing the ESQF competences of the asylum and/or reception authority and its staff in terms of reported importance for overall functioning of the CEAS in the national context. As a result, insights are gathered to identify potential areas where further support might be needed. There is a high level of flexibility in how phase 2 is structured.	An interview is held with key national stakeholders to follow up on the previous phases and identify learning needs. The discussion also seeks to gather information about the challenges that the stakeholder faces as well as gather information concerning any recruitment foreseen including profiles, as well as availability for future training. There is a high level of flexibility in how phase 3 is structured.	A prioritisation matrix is created which plots the relative importance of competence areas against their urgency. This follows on from the stakeholder interview(s) in the previous phase. There is a high level of flexibility in how phase 4 is structured.
Information to take into consideration			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contextual analysis Key entities and their functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESQF competency area importance rating Job profile Experience level Preference of delivery modality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results of contextual analysis Results of survey Planned recruitment Availability for training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcomes from stakeholder interview(s) Results of contextual analysis Results of survey
Outputs resulting from each phase			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of the national context Previous participation in EUAA training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey results showing indicative importance of ESQF competence areas for functioning of the CEAS in national context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed notes/minutes with clarifications and overview of key learning needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritisation matrix of training needs

Figure 1: Overview of the four main phases of the TNA process



Phase 2 – Determine competence areas of importance for the functioning of the CEAS in the national context

In this phase, a survey of key stakeholders in the respective country is conducted, reviewing the ESQF competences of the asylum and/or reception authority and its staff in terms of reported importance for the overall functioning of the CEAS within the national context. As a result, insights are gathered to identify potential areas where further support might be needed.

Phase 3 – Analyse learning needs

In this phase, an interview is held with each key national stakeholder to follow up on the previous phases and identify learning needs. The findings are discussed with the stakeholder and used to further identify and finetune learning needs. The discussion may also seek to gather information about the challenges that the stakeholder faces, information concerning any new employees foreseen to be recruited, as well as their availability for future training.

Phase 4 – Prioritise training needs

In this phase, the findings from the interview phase (phase 3) are included in a prioritisation matrix which plots the relative importance of competence areas against their urgency. Competence areas that are highly important for the functioning of the CEAS may not always be urgent training needs, so these two factors are plotted in a matrix visually, following the stakeholder interview. Recommended training is therefore that which is most urgent and of highest importance.

3.2 Phase 1 – Explore the situational context

The aim of the first phase of the training needs analysis process is to gather information about the country in which the TNA is conducted. This may include aspects such as the stakeholder's organisational structure, job profiles, as well as any information concerning the situation in the field, asylum and/or reception trends, and challenges faced. This phase may also explore the legal and regulatory environment in the country concerned, as well as latest updates and developments where available.

Source of information for this phase of the TNA conducted in Member States **may** include the Information and Documentation System (IDS). For third countries, information is sourced from other depositories and/or retrieved with the support of colleagues in the Institutional and Horizontal Affairs Centre (C4) dealing with international cooperation issues, where possible.

During this phase, initial insights may emerge into the key issues faced in the relevant country, as well as aspects relating to the size of the operation and/or national administration, dealing with asylum and/or reception. This may in turn yield some initial indications of potential learning needs. Documentation of Phase 1 will ordinarily be 2-3 pages in length, as a general guideline.

Conduct situational analysis

The first step to explore the situational context in the country concerned will ordinarily involve examining the national asylum and/or reception authority's legal and regulatory framework, which affects the division of work between national entities. These vary from country to country and may



comprise both state and non-state actors. It is also important to note that TNAs may be conducted in both Member States and third countries, for which reason the generic term ‘country’ is used.

The contextual analysis phase may explore the key drivers of competency and capacity needs that emerge on the basis of the EUAA’s and national asylum information tools and data (asylum trends, key political and policy developments in asylum and reception, possible challenges identified and reported by various stakeholders, etc.) as well as other relevant sources about internal and external factors (political priorities, strategic or operational priorities of the national asylum or reception authority, technological developments, organisational developments, etc.). The situational context section will vary in length depending on the level of existing familiarity with the country concerned, and the level of prior engagement and availability of reliable information sources.

The final section of the situational context phase is to provide an overview of the country’s past engagement in EUAA training. This may include information such as past participations, job profiles, and sessions followed.

The following inputs are to be considered for the overview:

- EUAA asylum information tools and data: EUAA Asylum Report, Information and Documentation System (IDS), etc.;
- EUAA training data;
- External sources such as Eurostat data, International Organisation for Migration reports, as well as data and reports published by other trusted sources;
- National asylum information.

3.3 Phase 2 – Determine competence areas of importance for the functioning of the CEAS in the national context

In phase 2, a survey of key stakeholders in the respective country or countries is conducted, which will embed a review of the ESQF competences of the asylum and/or reception authority and its staff in terms of reported importance for the overall functioning of the CEAS in the national context. In countries where the CEAS is not implemented (third countries without an existing agreement to implement the CEAS), insights are sought into the importance of the competence areas, nevertheless. As a result of the survey, insights are gathered to identify potential areas where further support might be needed. These will be followed-up in the stakeholder interview phase that follows (phase 3). **There is a high level of flexibility in how phase 2 is structured, and questions may be adjusted as deemed necessary.**

The survey is ordinarily conducted using the EU Survey platform. In building the survey, initial questions are embedded that concern the nature of the job profile of the respondent and their respective area of work. The survey is to be completed on an anonymous basis in order to optimise the findings.

The survey strives to understand the national authority’s key competences. Key competences are the ESQF competences which are considered to be of relatively higher importance for the functioning of the CEAS, given the overarching context of the country concerned. All ESQF competences are to be listed in the survey.



The selection of key competences does not account for current competency levels (and are thus not an indication of training priorities). To see the difference, consider the example of a trend in migration flows showing an increase in unaccompanied minors (from phase 1). This might point to the increased relative importance of related competences, but as this does not consider whether current competence levels are sufficient to deal with the increase or not, it does not in itself stipulate a training need. This can only be ascertained during the stakeholder interview phase later.

To assist in pinpointing the key competences, a relevance rating is applied to each of the competence areas in the ESQF. To this end, a relevance scale is applied representing the importance of the competence as its expected contribution to the national asylum authority’s operational performance. Table 1 below presents the relevance scale.

Relevance scale level	NA	1 Very Low	2 Low	3 Moderate	4 High	5 Very high
Description	The competence area is not applicable to the duties and tasks of the organisational entity/ occupational group.	The competence area has a minor role in ensuring organisational performance; it is beneficial for the quality of officials’ work but is not essential.	It would be useful if officials possessed the competence; however, it is not urgent. It is sufficient if widespread fulfilment is guaranteed in 2-3 years.	It would be advantageous if officials widely possessed the competence within a year; it would contribute to organisational performance, however, not significantly.	Widespread possession of this competency is essential, it is necessary to be ensured within a year’s time as it is important for the organisation to perform.	It is critical that all relevant officials possess this competency as soon as possible; it is crucial for the successful performance of duties.

Table 1: Competence relevance scale

3.4 Phase 3 – Analyse learning needs

During the third phase of the TNA, learning needs are identified following an interview with key stakeholders. There may be multiple interviews, depending on the number of stakeholders. Interviews build on the previous two phases, given that they provide an opportunity to cross-check and explore the previous findings, and then discuss the extent to which training may be used to reinforce knowledge, skills, and competences in relation to the areas that have been identified as important for the functioning of the CEAS in the national context.

Particular attention is to be given to the areas that were identified as important or highly important, and which, following the analysis of findings, it is apparent that there has not been notable training in the near past. There is a high level of flexibility in how phase 3 is structured and questions may be adjusted as deemed necessary.

During this phase, the findings of the contextual analysis and survey are presented to the stakeholder and used as a basis for discussion to further identify needs as well as their urgency. The discussion also gathers information about additional areas including the challenges that the stakeholder faces as well



as whether any recruitment (and if so, for which job profiles) is foreseen, given that such issues impact on learning needs. In addition, there are questions regarding availability for future training (time available). The interview may also explore the level of interest and availability in national staff becoming trainers. The standard stakeholder interview questions are provided in the table below. It is however possible to adapt and adjust these questions to a certain degree as needed, depending on the context in which the TNA is conducted. A wider discussion with the national stakeholder usually also takes place.

General questions	
1	Do you agree or in any cases disagree with the overall findings of the survey?
2	Can you indicate the main job profiles, and give an overview of the main duties and tasks of the target audience?
3	Do you offer or develop any in-house training, or do you already use any training provided by other organisations?
4	Do you foresee further recruitment? If yes, in which profiles?
5	Based on your observations of day-to-day operations can you identify additional training required and in which areas? Also indicate preferred content and methodology.
6	What are the main challenges that are faced?
7	Can you identify any procedural processes that could be improved by training and upskilling staff?
8	How much time (ideally in working days per month) is available for training?
9	What are your expectations from the EUAA's training and how could this bring value to building capacity to the target audience?
10	Would you consider allowing some of your staff to undertake the <i>Becoming an EUAA Trainer and Assessor</i> (BETA) course so that they can become trainers at national level? If so, how much time would be available for them to deliver training?
Specific questions	
1	Can you provide an overview of the structure of your organisation (i.e., departments, sizes, responsibilities)?
2	Generally, how many employees are currently deployed in the field and in the offices and how many are dealing with <i>[insert relevant topics]</i> ?
3	What would be a realistic number of sessions to schedule for the next 6-12 months?
4	Do you have any other comments and suggestions that you would like us to bear in mind when formulating priorities?

3.5 Phase 4 – Prioritise training needs

It is possible that not all training requests are equally important in terms of addressing the competence gaps of national authorities and enhancing the functioning of the CEAS.

The fourth phase of the TNA consists of a prioritisation of the training needs identified, mapping them according to their overall importance level for the functioning of the CEAS in the national context (as identified in the survey, and discussed to take place (in the stakeholder interview during phase 3)). This approach balances the importance of the respective training need with the urgency of it being



addressed.

The prioritisation matrix in Table 2 is formulated after insights are gathered from interviews, survey results, participation records, and asylum trends. This matrix incorporates two main dimensions: *importance* and *urgency*. The importance has been evaluated through survey results, the interview(s), and participation records, while urgency derives from the interview and asylum trends.

The prioritisation matrix is set out in a practical way, to ease its use following the conclusion of the training needs analysis to create the training plan and refers directly to European Asylum Curriculum modules. In addition, a method of assigning pluses to training modules is also used, based on data gathered from surveys, interview, participations records and/or asylum trends. The number of pluses assigned to each training module indicates its level of significance or relevance. For instance, in the examples below, ‘Professional wellbeing’ received high responses rate in survey results (+), as it was mentioned in the interview (+), was registered in participations records (+), therefore resulting in a total of three pluses (+++).

High Urgency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with an interpreter (++) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional wellbeing (+++) Country of Origin Information (+++) Vulnerability (+++) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexual orientation and gender identity ++ Trafficking in human beings (++) Gender-based violence (++) Law, policy and procedures (+++)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General communication (+) Information security, IT, and databases (+) Psychosocial support and guidance (+) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health, safety, and security (+) Conflict management and meditation (+) Learning and professional development (+)
	Low Importance	High Importance

Table 2: Prioritisation matrix

4. Summary of changes

Version no.	Changes
01	New system-specific document
02	Extensive revision of sections 2 to 3

