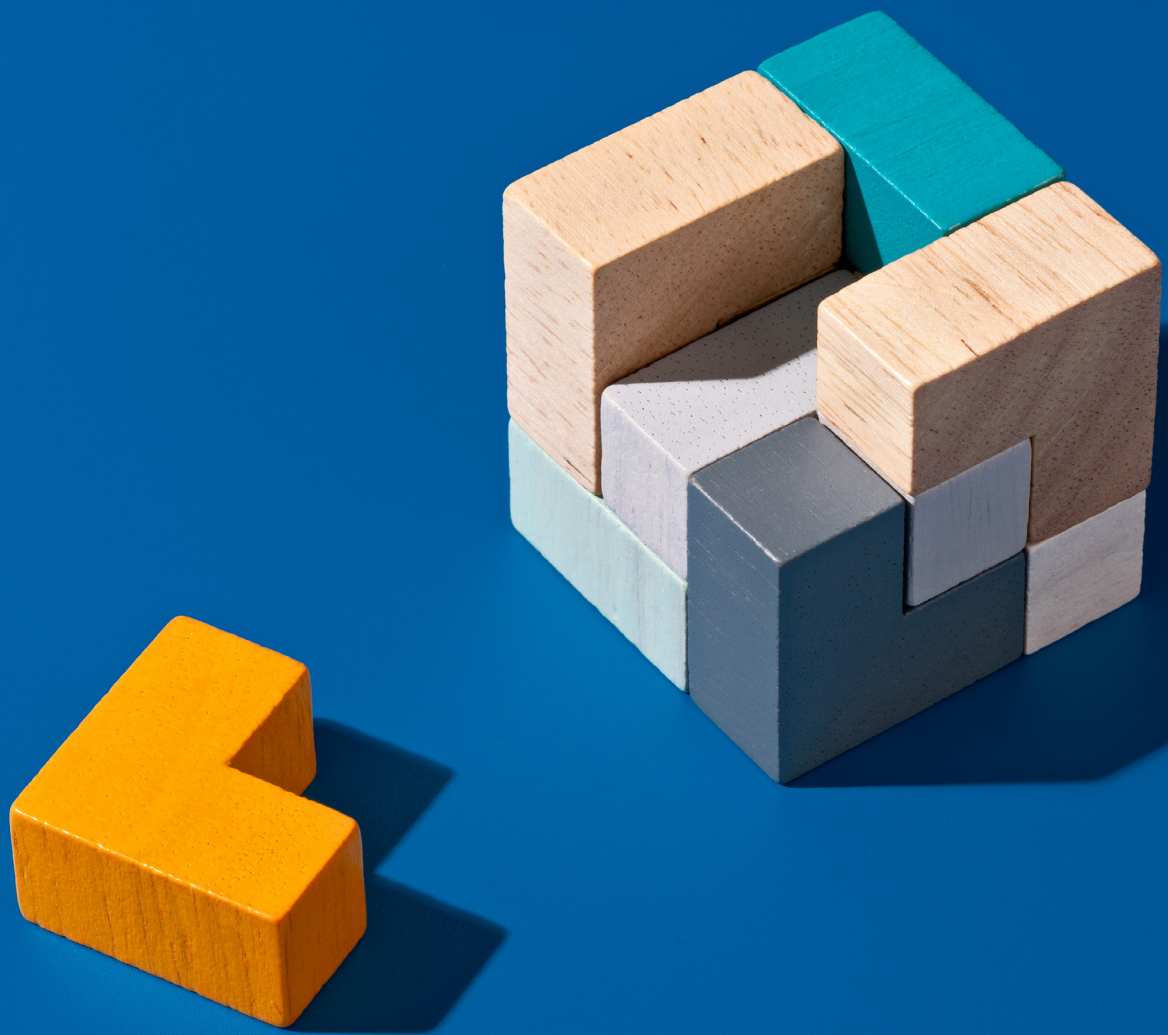


# Country Guidance: Methodology



# Country Guidance Methodology

**November 2024**

This methodology encompasses the development, review and update of country guidance. It was adopted by the EUAA Management Board during its 53<sup>rd</sup> meeting on 24 September 2024 and supersedes the ‘Country Guidance Methodology’ (1 November 2019) in regulating the work of the EUAA Country Guidance Network and all related processes.



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# 1. Background

The Agency's work on country guidance was initiated in June 2016, following the [Outcome of the 3461st Council meeting](#).

Among the tasks entrusted with the EUAA to facilitate and support the activities of the Member States in the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), including by enabling convergence in the assessment of the applications for international protection based on high protection standards<sup>(1)</sup>, the Agency shall 'organise activities and coordinate efforts among Member States to develop common analysis on the situation in countries of origin and guidance notes'<sup>(2)</sup>.

The Agency's work on country guidance is currently regulated under Article 11 of the EUAA Regulation:

*1. To foster convergence in applying the assessment criteria established in Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council (20), the Agency shall coordinate efforts among Member States to develop a common analysis on the situation in specific countries of origin (the 'common analysis') and guidance notes to assist Member States in the assessment of relevant applications for international protection.*

*In the development of the common analysis and guidance notes, the Agency shall take note of the most recent UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Asylum-Seekers from specific countries of origin.*

*2. The Executive Director shall, after consulting the Commission, submit guidance notes to the Management Board for endorsement. Guidance notes shall be accompanied by the common analysis.*

*3. Member States shall take into account the common analysis and guidance notes when examining applications for international protection, without prejudice to their competence to decide on individual applications for international protection.*

*4. The Agency shall ensure that the common analysis and guidance notes are regularly reviewed and are updated as necessary. Such a review and update shall be carried out where there is a change in the situation in a country of origin or where there are objective indications that the common analysis and guidance notes are not being used. Any review or update of the common analysis and guidance notes shall*

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<sup>1</sup> Recital (3) of 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, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32021R2303>, hereafter 'the EUAA Regulation'.

<sup>2</sup> Article 2 of the EUAA Regulation.





*require consultation of the Commission and endorsement by the Management Board as referred to in paragraph 2.*

*5. Member States shall submit to the Agency any relevant information indicating that a review or an update of the common analysis and guidance notes is necessary.<sup>(3)</sup>*

Recital 17 of the Regulation provides for context and reasoning for the common analysis and guidance notes as follows:

*In order to foster convergence in the assessment of applications for international protection and the type of protection granted, the Agency should, together with the Member States, develop a common analysis on the situation in specific countries of origin (the ‘common analysis’) and guidance notes. The common analysis should consist of an assessment of the situation in relevant countries of origin based on country-of-origin information. The guidance notes should be based on an interpretation of that common analysis developed by the Agency and Member States. When developing the common analysis and guidance notes the Agency should take note of the most recent United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Asylum Seekers from specific countries of origin, and it should be able to take into account other relevant sources. Without prejudice to the competence of the Member States to decide on individual applications for international protection, Member States should take into account the relevant common analysis and guidance notes when assessing applications for international protection from applicants who originate from third countries for which a common analysis and guidance notes have been developed in accordance with this Regulation.<sup>(4)</sup>*

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<sup>(3)</sup> Article 11 of the EUAA Regulation.

<sup>(4)</sup> Recital (17) of the EUAA Regulation.





## 2. Aim and guiding principles

The aim of the EUAA activities on country guidance is to foster convergence in the application of the common EU asylum *acquis*. The following are considered the guiding principles in achieving this aim:

**Figure 1. Country Guidance: guiding principles.**



## 3. Actors

This section provides the terms of reference for the role of the different actors involved in the Country Guidance processes and their nomination or selection, where relevant.

### 3.1. The EUAA Management Board

The Management Board shall give general orientation for the Agency's activities and shall ensure that the Agency performs its tasks. In particular, the Management Board shall: 'endorse the guidance notes concerning country-of-origin information and any review or update of those guidance notes in accordance with Article 11(2) and (4);'<sup>(5)</sup>.

In this context, the EUAA Management Board may in particular:

- Adopt any review or update of the Country Guidance methodology, initiated following suggestions by the Country Guidance Network or on its own initiative.
- Discuss and adopt the annual planning of the development and update of Country Guidance documents following suggestion by the Country Guidance Network. See [4. Planning](#).
- Discuss and endorse guidance notes accompanied by the common analysis<sup>(6)</sup> after the final confirmation by the Country Guidance Network. See [5. Country Guidance development process](#) and [6. Country Guidance review and update process](#).
- Discuss and confirm the communication strategy regarding Country Guidance documents.

### 3.2. The Country Guidance Network

The Country Guidance Network is a network of senior-level policy officials from Member States and associated countries (EU+ countries), as well as representatives from the European Commission and UNHCR, coordinated by the EUAA. This network was established in June 2016 in light of the Outcome of the 3461st Council meeting and continues its activities in accordance with Article 11 of the EUAA Regulation.

The Country Guidance Network is constituted by the Country Guidance Network for general and strategic matters and a country-specific Country Guidance Network for each country of origin covered by a Country Guidance document.

Its aim is to support EU-level policy development based on common COI, by jointly assessing the situation in the respective country of origin in relation to the potential international

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<sup>(5)</sup> Article 41.1 (w) of the EUAA Regulation.

<sup>(6)</sup> Article 41.1 (w) of the EUAA Regulation.



protection needs of applicants from that country in accordance with the applicable international and EU legislation and case law.

### 3.2.1. Role of the Country Guidance Network

The role of the Country Guidance Network is to jointly develop or update common analysis and guidance notes on specific countries of origin. To this end, the Country Guidance Network provides initial input to each development and update of country guidance, and reviews the documents drafted by the respective Drafting Team, taking into account the input provided by the European Commission and UNHCR.

The members of the Country Guidance Network shall in particular:

- contribute to the design and the improvement of the country guidance methodology;
- contribute to the planning of the country guidance activities;
- nominate national experts to take part in a Drafting Team;
- participate in Country Guidance Network meetings on general and on country-specific matters;
- share information concerning national caseload, policies and practice concerning specific countries of origin subject to country guidance processes;
- contribute to the terms of reference for the production of country-of-origin information (COI) for the purposes of the country guidance processes;
- provide initial input to the respective Drafting Team, including on topics found to be of particular relevance to be covered by the guidance on the given country of origin, as well as additional feedback as requested;
- review the drafts of the common analysis and guidance notes submitted by the respective Drafting Team in written consultations;
- discuss and review the drafts of the common analysis and guidance note submitted by the respective Drafting Team during Country Guidance Network meetings;
- agree on the final common analysis and guidance note, which are to be submitted to the EUAA Management Board by the Executive Director of the EUAA;
- ensure efficient coordination with their senior management within their national administration and/or their representative in the EUAA Management Board in view of informing the Country Guidance Network in a timely manner of any concern regarding the content of the Country Guidance document under development or update;
- submit to the EUAA any relevant information indicating that a review or an update of an existing country guidance is necessary, such as a change in the situation of a country of origin<sup>(7)</sup>;
- participate in other activities related to country guidance.

### 3.2.2. Nominations to the Country Guidance Network

All EU+ countries are invited to nominate representatives to the Country Guidance Network.

A regular member shall be nominated in order to participate in the activities of the Country Guidance Network, and in particular in discussions on general and strategic matters. This

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<sup>(7)</sup> Article 11(5) of the EUAA Regulation.



member shall have senior-level policy and/or decision-making experience and shall have knowledge of national decision-making practices and, if applicable, national policies.

In addition to the regular member, EU+ countries may nominate up to two representatives to take part in country-specific activities such as the development, review and update of country guidance on particular countries of origin. These representatives shall have knowledge of the national decision practices and, if applicable, of policies concerning the country in question. They can participate in Country Guidance Network activities in addition to or as an alternate to the regular member. In the latter case, they shall have the capacity to participate in decision-making as a regular member of the Network. In line with the [Decision of the Executive Director No 13 of 27 January 2023](#), nominated experts are obliged to ensure that they have no conflict of interest in relation to any of the topics to be addressed in the course of the country guidance process.

The nominations to the Country Guidance Network shall be made by the EU+ country by communicating the name of the nominated official, their role in the organisation, and their contact details. See [Annex I. Nomination Form – EUAA Country Guidance Network \(template\)](#).

### 3.3. The Drafting Team

Each country guidance process (development or update) is supported by a Drafting Team of selected national experts.

#### 3.3.1. Role of the Drafting Team

The role of the Drafting Team is to support the Country Guidance Network in a particular development or update of a country guidance document in expert capacity. The Drafting Team shall draft the common analysis and guidance note on the basis of common COI concerning the country of origin and by applying the legal framework, taking into account the EUAA horizontal guidance and the approach defined by the Country Guidance Network.

The experts in the Drafting Team shall in particular:

- summarise the relevant common COI for the purposes of the analysis in a concise, objective and balanced manner while providing sufficient basis for the required factual and legal analysis;
- analyse the COI to draw conclusions for the common analysis and propose relevant guidance;
- review and provide input on parts of the analysis, as drafted by other members of the Drafting Team;
- ensure consistency with the latest version of the '[Country Guidance: Explained](#)';
- if relevant, propose amendments to the standard structure and/or the horizontal framework of country guidance documents;
- seek clarifications and further guidance from the Country Guidance Network during written consultations, in case of doubts regarding the approach to be followed on specific issues;



- participate in and provide expert input during Country Guidance Network discussions, including participation in Country Guidance Network meetings concerning the respective development or update of country guidance;
- review the draft in light of feedback from the Country Guidance Network, in particular following written consultations;
- review the draft in light of the relevant EUAA country of origin information query update(s) or any other relevant EUAA country of origin information publication;
- provide other input as required in a particular development or update of country guidance;
- respect the agreed timelines for the particular process, in particular regarding the steps involving their contribution.

Appointed national experts will hold Drafting Team meetings and engage in remote drafting.

### **3.3.2. Nominations of national experts to a Drafting Team**

All members of the Country Guidance Network are strongly encouraged to nominate national experts to take part in the Drafting Team for a specific development or update of country guidance.

Experts shall meet the following criteria (required):

- ✓ minimum of two years of practical experience related to asylum decision-making, including for example policy-making, case work, etc. (relevant experience of more than three years will be considered advantageous);
- ✓ working knowledge of English;
- ✓ good drafting skills; and,
- ✓ good presentation and communication skills.

In addition, the following experience shall be considered advantageous:

- ✓ expertise in the respective country of origin;
- ✓ experience in developing country guidance, policy and/or instructions for case officers;
- ✓ experience in developing guides or tools or participating in networks in the context of the EUAA; and,
- ✓ experience of working in an international environment.

Upon adoption of each year's annual workplan by the Management Board, a general call for nominations of national experts to the drafting teams of all country guidance processes scheduled during that year will be shared with the Country Guidance Network with a view to securing and, if needed, allocate sufficient resources across all processes.

The provisional planning for the process, including the envisaged involvement of the Drafting Team will be communicated in the respective call. When nominating national experts, EU+ countries shall provide information on the expert's current position within the organisation and contact details as well as their availability for either full or partial participation in the Drafting Team. They shall also demonstrate how the expert meets the requirements outlined above. Nominations for the Drafting Team are to be accepted up to the deadline, as communicated



by the EUAA. In line with the [Decision of the Executive Director No 13 of 27 January 2023](#), nominated experts are obliged to ensure that they have no conflict of interest in relation to any of the topics to be addressed in the course of the country guidance process.

The EUAA shall send a specific Nomination Form for each development and update. See [Annex II. Nomination Form – Drafting Team experts \(template\)](#).

### **3.3.3. Selection of national experts to a Drafting Team**

Each Drafting Team can be composed of up to 7 national experts. For reasons of representativeness, efficiency, and workability, drafting teams shall have a minimum of 2 members from different EU+ countries for updates to existing country guidance documents and at least 3 members from different EU+ countries for developing common analyses and guidance notes for new countries.

The EUAA Country Guidance Sector assesses the qualification of the nominated experts according to the criteria outlined above. The EUAA shall aim to ensure balance in the participation of experts, representing different EU+ countries, expertise and background (e.g., case-working experience, legal background, etc.), different jurisprudential traditions, policy approaches, and institutional set-ups.

Where alternate experts are nominated, their qualification will also be assessed according to the outlined criteria. No additional expert should be nominated following completion of the selection process.

If no national experts or an insufficient number of national experts are nominated for the Drafting Teams, this will be communicated to the Country Guidance Network together with a renewed call to secure and allocate sufficient resources for the specific process(es). The same applies if the EUAA has received only one nomination or two nominations from only one country. If no further nominations are proposed, an explanatory note outlining possible actions, which may include postponing, suspending, discarding the respective country guidance process, or, when it comes to updating an existing CG document, assigning this task, either entirely or in large part, to the EUAA internally, should be submitted to the Management Board for further guidance.

In case the EUAA fully undertakes drafting duties, the possibility of involving a team of national experts as reviewers may be explored.

## **3.4. The EUAA Country Guidance Sector**

The EUAA Country Guidance Sector (CGS) shall organise the activities of the Country Guidance Network and the Drafting Teams and coordinate efforts to develop and update common analysis on the situation in countries of origin and guidance notes<sup>(8)</sup>. The CGS fulfils this role in close cooperation with relevant sectors of the EUAA Asylum Knowledge Centre.

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<sup>(8)</sup> Recital (17), article 2(1)(g) and article 11(1) of the EUAA Regulation.



The main types of support the EUAA shall provide include:

**Figure 2. Role of the EUAA in Country Guidance.**



In the framework of the above support, the EUAA furthermore ensures the synergies between the Country Guidance Network and other relevant EUAA networks.

### 3.4.1. Planning, organisation and coordination

With regard to planning, organisation and coordination, the EUAA Country Guidance Sector's role includes the following:

- analyse current needs and priorities in order to ensure an informed selection of countries of origin for country guidance activities;
- ensure the appropriate planning of the country guidance activities and its timely communication to relevant stakeholders;
- collect, compile and analyse information regarding EU+ countries' caseload, policies and practices concerning a particular country of origin, in preparation for a country guidance process;
- facilitate the set-up and functioning of the Country Guidance Network and keep record of membership and participation in relevant activities;
- organise, chair and facilitate meetings, including general/strategic meetings of the Country Guidance Network, as well as country-specific meetings of the Network and the respective Drafting Teams;
- organise and coordinate written consultations of the Country Guidance Network;
- foster open and inclusive policy discussions to encourage diverse perspectives and collaborative decision-making during meetings or consultations with the Country Guidance Network;
- organise the selection of Drafting Teams in accordance with the agreed criteria;
- support the Drafting Teams in their drafting and/or reviewing responsibilities, including by providing input and ensuring consistency with the latest version of the '[Country Guidance: Explained](#)';
- ensure the communication between the Country Guidance Network and the Drafting Teams;
- ensure relevant communication with the EUAA Management Board;
- ensure relevant communication with other stakeholders, including the European Commission and the UNHCR;
- regularly update the Member Area of the EUAA Country Guidance Network and ensure access is granted only to authorised members of the CGNet and Drafting Team members;





- ensure access to the EUAA Query Portal - used for the surveys on COI Needs and on National caseload, policies, practices and jurisprudence - is granted only to authorised members of the CGNet and Drafting Team members;
- ensure synergies with other EUAA sectors and networks as relevant;
- issue certificates of appreciation for the Drafting Team members, acknowledging their contribution to the respective process;
- support the work of the Country Guidance Network and the Drafting Teams in other ways as required.

### **3.4.2. EUAA Country of Origin Information**

The common analysis and guidance notes shall be based on ‘relevant, reliable, objective, accurate and up-to date information on relevant third countries in a transparent and impartial manner, making use of relevant information, including child-specific and gender-specific information, and targeted information on persons belonging to vulnerable and minority groups.’<sup>(9)</sup> In this regard, and in accordance with the COI methodology<sup>(10)</sup>, the COI Sector of the EUAA shall provide the following support:

- Ensure the terms of reference of relevant EUAA COI reports meet the information needs concerning the respective country guidance development or update;
- liaise and coordinate as appropriate with the EUAA COI StratNet or the relevant COI Country Specialists Network for the purpose of drafting or reviewing country-guidance related COI products;
- ensure that the planning of COI production adheres to the timelines of country guidance processes and that the relevant COI products are delivered accordingly;
- participate in and provide input during Country Guidance Network meetings and Drafting Team meetings as relevant;
- ensure that the COI included in the common analysis presents the available information correctly and appropriately;
- ensure the ongoing monitoring of the situation in relevant countries of origin and communicate significant developments and new trends which may require the review and potential update of existing country guidance;
- ensure the provision of up-to-date information until the launch of a country guidance process, including by producing a COI query response to cover the latest relevant developments in the country at stake;
- seek to respond to information gaps that may arise in the course of a development or update of country guidance;
- provide other COI-related support as required.

### **3.4.3. EUAA Horizontal Guidance**

The common analysis of the situation in a particular country of origin shall take into account the general EUAA guidance concerning the qualification for international protection (horizontal

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<sup>(9)</sup> Article 9(1) of the EUAA Regulation.

<sup>(10)</sup> The EUAA COI report methodology can be found on the EUAA website at <https://euaa.europa.eu/country-origin-information>







guidance)<sup>(1)</sup>). In this regard, the Asylum Processes Sector of the EUAA shall provide the following support:

- communicate relevant existing and new horizontal guidance to the Country Guidance Network and to Drafting Teams;
- take note of the needs for developing or updating horizontal guidance that may arise from country guidance processes;
- participate in and provide input during Country Guidance Network meetings and Drafting Team meetings as relevant;
- ensure that the common analysis takes into account and is consistent with the available EUAA horizontal guidance;
- liaise and coordinate as appropriate with the other EUAA Networks to collect input on issues and relevant chapters of the country guidance document pertaining to exclusion from international protection;
- provide other support related to horizontal guidance as required.

#### 3.4.4. EUAA Latest Asylum Trends

With a view to fostering convergence of national policies and practices, the latest asylum trends respecting the countries of origin at stake shall be taken into account in the development and update of country guidance documents. In this regard, the Data Analysis and Research Sector of the EUAA shall provide the following support:

- provide information on the latest asylum trends pertaining to relevant countries of origin, including statistics and analysis on main receiving countries of applications, profiles of applicants, first instance and final decisions issues as well as pending cases at the national level;
- provide information on recognition rates at EU+ and national levels, as well as variation rates between EU+ countries.

### 3.5. The European Commission

The European Commission shall be informed about the Country Guidance activities and shall be invited to provide relevant input to written consultations and during Country Guidance Network meetings concerning the development, review or update of country guidance.

The input of the European Commission shall be taken into account with particular regard to the EU *acquis* and the relevant case law.

The European Commission normally does not participate in opinion polling among the network members.

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<sup>(1)</sup> EUAA horizontal guidance mainly refers to the available EUAA Practical Guides, which can be found at <https://www.euaa.europa.eu/practical-tools>.





The European Commission shall be consulted prior submission of guidance notes accompanied by the common analysis to the Management Board. This also applies to any review or update of existing country guidance document<sup>(12)</sup>.

### 3.6. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

In the development of the common analysis and guidance notes, where available, the Agency shall take note of the most recent UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Asylum-Seekers from the relevant countries of origin.<sup>13</sup>

The UNHCR shall be invited to provide input related to their available guidance concerning relevant general questions of qualification for international protection and concerning the specific country of origin. In particular, the UNHCR takes part in written consultations stemming from the development, review or update of country guidance. The UNHCR is invited to participate in Country Guidance Network meetings.

The UNHCR shall act as an observer with regard to the decisions taken by the Country Guidance Network and shall not take part in decision-making procedures pertaining to country-specific guidance and conclusions (e.g., slido votes).

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<sup>(12)</sup> Article 11(2) and 11(4) respectively of the EUAA Regulation.

<sup>(13)</sup> Article 11(1) of the EUAA Regulation.



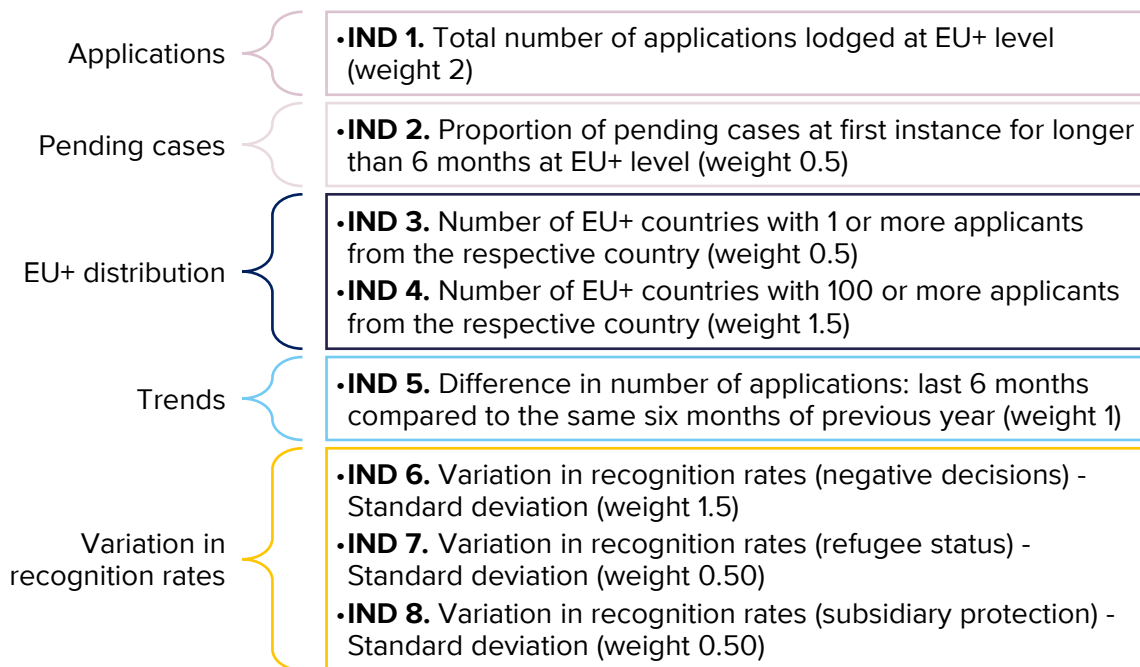
## 4. Planning

The planning of country guidance activities shall be based on an analysis of needs identified by the EUAA and the Country Guidance Network. It shall be discussed during the annual meeting of the Country Guidance Network for general and strategic matters and submitted to the Management Board for discussion of priorities and final decision.

The actual number of country guidance documents issued per year will depend on available resources and potentially changing priorities, including in the case of a sudden deterioration of respect of basic human rights and/or change in the security situation in relevant countries of origin. Each year's annual workplan will aim to strike a balance between regular updates and new developments and will be adopted by the Management Board.

The selection of countries of origin on which a guidance will be developed or updated shall be informed by the following indicators on the basis of the latest available EUAA Early warning and Preparedness (EPS) data<sup>(14)</sup>:

**Figure 3. Quantitative indicators to inform the selection of countries of origin.**



Further information concerning those quantitative indicators is available in [Annex III. Indicators for the selection of countries of origin](#).

The outcome of this pre-selection will be presented to the Country Guidance Network for discussion and further input from CGNet members concerning national priorities and guidance

<sup>(14)</sup> The data provided to the EUAA by the EU+ countries are provisional, operational data and therefore might differ from validated data submitted to Eurostat (according to Regulation (EC) No 862/2007).



needs. In case of differing views, a poll may be organised at the level of the Country Guidance Network. The final selection shall form the basis of the yearly planning of country guidance activities and be submitted to the Management Board for final decision.

Country guidance documents shall be reviewed and updated regularly, including on the basis of information submitted by EU+ countries, where there is a change in the situation of a country of origin and/or where there are objective indications that the common analysis and guidance notes are not being used<sup>(15)</sup>. Updates may be limited to specific issues or profiles related to qualification for international protection. Alternatively, a country-specific document may be entirely discarded if it is deemed irrelevant or obsolete.

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<sup>(15)</sup> Article 11(4) of the EUAA Regulation.





## 5. Country Guidance development process

This section describes the process of developing guidance on a new country of origin. The country guidance development process generally takes place over 3-4 months depending on the complexity of the situation in the country of origin. The overall duration from the initial survey on national caseload, policy and practice to the endorsement and publication of the country guidance generally is 9 to 12 months, including the production of relevant COI. In case of country guidance development with limited scope, these timeframes could be shorter.

The figure below provides a general overview of the steps envisaged in the country guidance development process.

Adaptations to this process may be made as appropriate and justified.

**Figure 4. Country guidance development process overview.**



## 5.1. Additional/alternate nominations to the Country Guidance Network

At the outset of a new development, EU+ countries are offered an opportunity to nominate up to two additional/alternate members to the Country Guidance Network to focus on that process.

See [3.2.2. Nominations to the Country Guidance Network](#) above.

## 5.2. Selection of a Drafting Team

Upon adoption of the annual workplan, and if needed at the outset of a new development, the EUAA calls on members of the Country Guidance Network to nominate experts to take part in the Drafting Team(s).

See [3.3.2. Nomination of national experts to a Drafting Team](#) and [3.3.3. Selection of national experts to a Drafting Team](#).

## 5.3. COI production for Country Guidance

The development of country guidance requires relevant recent COI, which provides sufficient basis for an assessment of the situation in the respective country of origin in light of the requirements for qualification for international protection.

In general, reports should focus on:

**Figure 5. Themes for COI reports for the purposes of country guidance.**



Furthermore, COI produced primarily for the purposes of country guidance should answer specific questions. These questions are outlined in [Annex IV. COI information needs](#). The questions should be used as a basis for the development of country-specific terms of reference for the respective COI report(s).

In general, the process of development and finalisation of the COI terms of reference shall take place in the following steps:



### Terms of reference for COI production for the purposes of Country Guidance development

- |   |
|---|
| ① Available information (e.g., existing COI reports, including national COI report, meeting reports, relevant queries) is collected by the EUAA in preparation of consultations of the Country Guidance Network respecting the scope of the intended country guidance document and related COI needs. |
| ② A survey on COI needs is launched with the Country Guidance Network in order to determine information requirements based on the actual caseload and interests of EU+ countries.   |
| ③ Draft terms of reference for COI production are developed by the EUAA and shared with the Country Guidance Network for confirmation.  |
| ④ Taking into account any comments received, the terms of reference are finalised and shared with the Country Guidance Network for information  |

In order to bridge the gap between the finalisation of the COI report(s) and the final Drafting Team meeting, additional COI will be produced and made available in the form of a COI query response.

## 5.4. Survey on national caseload, policy and practice

A survey on national caseload, policy and practice as well as any relevant national jurisprudence is conducted before the launch of the country guidance development.

The survey is addressed to the Country Guidance Network, with an indicative timeline for response of three weeks.

The information collected, including concerning the most commonly encountered and/or complex cases/profiles, serves as a starting point for defining the scope of the document. It also aids in the initial common assessment of the potential international protection needs of applicants from that country of origin. However, it is important to note that this information is not conclusive or determinative of the final common analysis and guidance note.

The members of the Country Guidance Network and/or Drafting Team will conduct further analysis and deliberation to synthesise this initial information with additional insights, expert opinions, and relevant data asylum trends.

In the context of this survey, EU+ countries are also invited to share their national guidance, where feasible. By facilitating the dissemination of national guidance, the network seeks to enhance collective understanding and collaborative efforts among its members. The shared guidance will be restricted to members of the Country Guidance Network (CGNet). In cases where national guidance is classified, a summary may be shared, ensuring transparency and knowledge-sharing within the network.



## 5.5. Drafting process

The drafting process involves meetings of the selected Drafting Team, as well as remote drafting. In general, each development requires a minimum of four meetings of the Drafting Team. The extent of remote drafting may vary depending on the complexity of the situation in the country of origin, the number of experts in the Drafting Team, etc.

The **Drafting Team** shall be expected to:

- familiarise fully with the available common COI;
- familiarise fully with the available EUAA horizontal guidance, in order to apply it in the analysis of the situation in the respective country of origin;
- draft parts of the common analysis and guidance note according to agreed distribution of tasks and deadlines;
- convene for meetings, including:
  - kick-off meeting;
  - meeting(s) to finalise the first draft – one or more such meetings may take place; and,
  - meeting(s) to review the draft according to Country Guidance Network feedback – separate meetings are envisaged following a written consultation with the Country Guidance Network and following a Country Guidance Network meeting; two or more such meetings may take place as necessary.

The drafting process shall be supported by the **EUAA**, which:

- coordinates the process, ensuring deadlines are met;
- organises meetings;
- facilitates the communication between the Drafting Team and the Country Guidance Network, as well as other stakeholders and the EUAA networks as needed;
- provides COI input as needed and reviews the accuracy of COI included in the common analysis;
- provides horizontal guidance input as needed and reviews the draft common analysis and guidance note to ensure consistency of the application of the EUAA horizontal guidance;
- provides other support to the Drafting Team as needed;
- ensures that the final product is drafted in accordance with EUAA publication guidance and standards.

## 5.6. Written consultation

A written consultation of the Country Guidance Network shall be organised upon the completion of the first draft of the common analysis. The anticipated timeline for this consultation will be three weeks.





In parallel, the specialist EUAA Exclusion Network is invited to provide input to the draft chapter concerning exclusion issues.

## 5.7. Country Guidance Network meetings

Country-specific meetings for the development of country guidance, will generally be organised, in person and/or online, for the purposes of:

- ▶ launching the development and providing initial guidance to the Drafting Team;
- ▶ reviewing the draft; and
- ▶ finalising the common analysis and guidance note to be submitted to the Management Board for endorsement.

Network meetings shall be attended by the nominated Country Guidance Network members. Exceptionally, another representative of the respective EU+ country may be registered to participate in Country Guidance Network meetings, due to unavailability of the nominated Country Guidance Network member.

Drafting Team experts shall be invited to participate in the Network meetings related to the respective development.

In general, the European Commission and UNHCR shall be invited to Country Guidance Network meetings. Where justified, sessions may be restricted to EU+ countries and the European Commission or to Member States and the European Commission.

Reimbursement of participants is in line with general EUAA rules of reimbursement.

The meetings are designed to foster engaging and active policy discussions among participants. These discussions will tackle critical issues, share national practices, and foster innovative joint solutions. Participants are encouraged to actively participate and contribute their knowledge to stimulate meaningful dialogue, achieving consensus on key matters.

A flash report summarising the discussions and outcomes of the kick-off and final meetings is prepared and shared with Country Guidance Network contact points nominated for matters related the country-specific process. This report includes key points and any polling results, ensuring transparency and providing insight into the process. Dissenting opinions and sensitive topics are recorded in a clearly visible separate section. Such flash reports, along with other relevant material, are also made available to Executive Board and Management Board members through a dedicated Country Guidance page on the restricted Management Board area.



## 5.8. Decision-making process

In general, deliberations of the CGNet in the framework of final meetings should aim at reaching decisions by consensus. In the event the network members do not find agreement on a specific issue, a poll may be organised to reach a conclusion. In such cases, a majority of at least 2/3 of the countries participating in the poll (qualified majority) is required for a given proposal to be considered adopted.

Network members may choose to abstain from voicing an opinion, indicating neutrality or the absence of a preference on the matter at hand. Abstentions will be recorded along with the polling results to ensure clarity and transparency in decision-making processes.

Poll is initiated by the EUAA Chair of the meeting in consultation with the participating members, or by proposal of a participating EU+ country. The poll is non-anonymous, with one voice per EU+ country. Abstentions are also recorded. The results of the poll are communicated immediately.

## 5.9. Final confirmation and endorsement by the EUAA Management Board

Following finalisation, the CGNet members are asked to express their agreement with the final draft within two weeks.

Following consultation with the European Commission, the EUAA Executive Director shall submit the guidance note, accompanied by the common analysis, to the Management Board in accordance with article 11(2) of the EUAA Regulation. An explanatory note should also be prepared, outlining any objection raised during the final confirmation stage as well as points on which agreement could not be reached, as appropriate. The Chair of the Management Board indicates the endorsement procedure to be followed in accordance with the EUAA Regulation and the Rules of Procedure of the Management Board.

## 5.10. Publication and translation

The Country Guidance shall be publicly available and published on the EUAA website.

Translation of Country Guidance, be it of the guidance note or of the guidance note accompanied by the common analysis, may be provided on a case-by-case basis.



## 6. Country Guidance review and update process

By its nature, country guidance is time-sensitive, as it represents an assessment of the situation in the country of origin at a particular point in time. Therefore, a regular review and update of the guidance shall be envisaged in accordance with article 11(4) of the EUAA Regulation.

Pending such review and update, the existing guidance shall be considered valid unless significant developments or new trends have emerged. This is without prejudice to the responsibility of decision-makers to examine each application on the basis of the individual circumstances of the applicant and the situation in the country of origin at the moment of the decision, according to precise and up-to-date COI.

### 6.1. Types of updates

The appropriate regularity of planned updates shall be discussed and decided on at the completion of the development of country guidance, taking into account the situation in the particular country of origin and the availability of resources, including the feasibility of the required COI production and country guidance engagement at the EUAA and at national level.

Regular updates shall be taken into account in the overall planning of country guidance activities. This planning may be revised based on agreed reprioritisation. See [4. Planning](#).

In addition, ad hoc review and update may be required in the following circumstances:

- **changes in the situation in the country of origin:** such changes may be identified by the EUAA, including based on input from its COI Networks, or communicated by Member States in accordance with article 11(5) of the EUAA Regulation.
- **changes in legislation and applicable case law**, such as new jurisprudence of the CJEU or as a result of the entry into application of the Pact on Asylum and Migration; new or amended EUAA horizontal guidance may also justify the need for update of (all) existing country guidance;
- **objective indications that the common analysis and guidance notes are not being used**, such as where a given country guidance document has lost its relevance. In such cases, the Country Guidance Network shall be invited by the EUAA to consider the significance of the changes and the need to fully or partially update the respective country guidance. This consultation shall take place in a swift written procedure or during a Country Guidance Network meeting by the mean of a poll. It may be agreed that certain updates are limited to particular sections/topics of the country guidance or that the respective country-specific document should be discarded in its entirety, in particular if it is deemed irrelevant or obsolete. The modalities of agreeing on and implementing such changes will be decided on a case-by-case basis.



Depending on the nature and significance of the changes, the Country Guidance Network may decide to suspend the use of the current country guidance, including by applying a disclaimer on the EUAA webpage, and notify the MB accordingly.

## 6.2. Update process

The process of updating the country guidance shall apply the same modalities as for the country guidance development process by analogy. However, in general it contains fewer steps and is expected to require less resources.

From the kick-off to the final meetings, the update process is generally expected to span over 12 working weeks. From the start of preparation, including the COI production and a new survey on national caseload, policy and practice, to the endorsement and the publication of the updated country guidance, the process is expected to take place over approximately 7 months. Depending on the scope of the update and the volume of COI required, these timeframes could be shorter.

**Figure 6. Country guidance update process overview.**





Further information on the steps above and how they compare to the relevant steps of country guidance development process is provided below:

### ***Preparation***

- The Country Guidance Network members approached in relation to the update shall be the regular members and/or the additional or alternate members involved in the development or previous review or update of the country guidance on the respective country of origin, unless EU+ countries nominate a new alternate/additional member.
- The scope and, if relevant, the terms of reference for the update of the COI, will be consulted with the Country Guidance Network.
- Under certain conditions, the Drafting Team may be composed of EUAA staff only. See [3.3.3. Selection of national experts to a Drafting Team](#).
- A specific survey on national caseload, policy and practice shall be conducted in order to identify relevant new trends and/or changes in national policy and practice.

### ***Update***

In general, the update of the country guidance is organised in the following steps:

- Launch of the update process by way of a kick-off meeting of the Country Guidance Network.
- Drafting and consultation process: generally, the drafting processes should be completed with remote drafting following the kick-off meeting for the update, one meeting to finalise the first draft of the update and one meeting of the Drafting Team to review the draft in light of the consultation with the Country Guidance Network. This consultation shall take place over a period of 3 weeks. Depending on the scope of the update, the EUAA Exclusion Network may be consulted in parallel with the written consultation of the Country Guidance Network. If necessary, additional meetings may be organised.
- Finalisation of the updated draft: following the Country Guidance Network consultation and Drafting Team review meeting, the Country Guidance Network shall meet to finalise the draft. Once finalised, the draft is shared with the Country Guidance Network for their final confirmation. The anticipated timeline for this confirmation will be two weeks.

### ***Endorsement and publication***

The endorsement of the update of the common analysis and guidance note by the EUAA Management Board is organised in the same manner as the endorsement of a new country guidance document. See [5.9. Final confirmation and Endorsement by the EUAA Management Board](#) above.

The update shall be made publicly available and published on the EUAA website.



## 7. Use and Impact

### 7.1. Dissemination of the Country Guidance documents

The primary channel of dissemination for the Country Guidance documents is the [EUAA website](#) on which they are published and made available to the public.

The Country Guidance documents should be published in pdf format as well as in html format to enable usage of the automated translation on the EUAA webpage.

In order to cite the country documents, users are requested to provide a reference to the document they are citing including the name, date of publication and the link where it is accessible as for example: EUAA, Country Guidance: Syria, April 2024, available at <https://euaa.europa.eu/publications/country-guidance-syria-april-2024>.

### 7.2. Use and Impact of Country Guidance

The EUAA shall take initiatives to regularly evaluate and promote the use and impact of country guidance at national level, including at first (administrative) instance and by appeal instances. Such initiatives include, *inter alia*, launching events and tailor-made workshops for national asylum authorities.

Relevant information on the use and impact of country guidance shall be collected via the Country Guidance Network and/or other appropriate channels. Additionally, the EUAA shall track the visits to the country guidance webpage(s).

The Country Guidance Network and the EUAA Management Board will be informed about the findings on the use and impact of country guidance.



# Annex I. Nomination Form – EUAA Country Guidance Network (template)

This form should also be used to make a new nomination, replacing the previous member(s) and to update the relevant details concerning a current member.

## Step 1. Fill in the details:

<b>First name:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>Surname:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Country:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>Organisation:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Email:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>Phone:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Current position within the organisation:</b>			<input type="text"/>

## Step 2. Select all applicable dissemination lists

**2.1** Is the member nominated to receive communication on general and strategic matters?

- Yes
- No

**2.2** Is the member nominated to receive country-specific communication to the Country Guidance Network? If so, for which country/ies?

- No
- Afghanistan
- Iran
- Iraq
- Nigeria
- Russia
- Somalia
- Syria
- [New country]

## Step 3. Indicate preferred access to resources:

**3.1** Should the member have access to the restricted Country Guidance Network **member area** on the EUAA website?

- Yes
- No





**3.2** Should the member have access to the restricted Country Guidance Network Surveys on the **EUAA Query Portal**? If so, please indicate which role should apply:

No

**or**

(multiple Respondent roles can apply)

- Respondent – all CGNet Surveys
- Respondent – Afghanistan (no viewing access to other CGNet Surveys)
- Respondent – Iran (no viewing access to other CGNet Surveys)
- Respondent – Iraq (no viewing access to other CGNet Surveys)
- Respondent – Nigeria (no viewing access to other CGNet Surveys)
- Respondent – Russia (no viewing access to other CGNet Surveys)
- Respondent – Somalia (no viewing access to other CGNet Surveys)
- Respondent – Syria (no viewing access to other CGNet Surveys)
- Respondent – [New country] (no viewing access to other CGNet Surveys)

**or**

Audience – viewing access only (all CGNet Surveys)

**Step 4.** *Indicate individual preferences about receiving other communication relevant to the country guidance work*

Occasionally, communication such as information on launching events, updates on publications, etc. will be shared with a broader audience. Please indicate whether the member is interested in receiving communication from the EUAA Country Guidance Sector beyond the topics indicated above.

- This member should receive notifications about new Country Guidance products or open events (e.g. launching events) as well as other updates relevant to the country guidance work.
- No additional communication should be sent.

**Step 5.** *Privacy notice and confirmation*

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) is committed to protecting your privacy. The EUAA collects and further processes personal data pursuant to [Regulation \(EU\) 2018/1725](#).

By filling in this EUAA Country Guidance Network nomination form, you agree that the data shared will be processed for the purposes indicated above. More specifically, we may use your personal data for creating user accounts for the relevant platforms selected above, for compiling mailing lists, for channelling communication, for sending invitations to meetings and other events, and for reporting purposes, databases, audits and external evaluations. Furthermore, files are kept in electronic form in our dedicated internal document management system.

**Step 6.** *Note any additional remarks*







## Annex II. Nomination Form – Drafting Team experts (template)

### Nomination Form: National Expert

#### Drafting Team for the development/update of Country Guidance: [Country of origin]

In order to nominate a member of the Country Guidance Drafting Team, please fill in the fields below. In particular, please describe how the nominated expert meets the selection criteria.

First name:	<input type="text"/>	Surname:	<input type="text"/>
Country:	<input type="text"/>	Organisation:	<input type="text"/>
Email:	<input type="text"/>	Phone:	<input type="text"/>
Current position with the organisation:		<input type="text"/>	

#### Criteria for selection of national experts:

Please describe how the nominated expert meets the following selection criteria:

##### Required:

A minimum of two years of practical experience related to asylum decision-making, including for example policy-making, case work, etc. (relevant experience of more than three years will be considered advantageous).

....

Working knowledge of English.

....





Good drafting skills.

....

Good communication and presentation skills.

....

**Advantageous:**

Expertise in the respective country of origin.

....

Experience in developing country guidance, policy and/or instructions for case officers.

...

Experience in developing guides or tools or participating in networks in the context of the EUAA.

....





Experience of working in an international environment.

...

**Additional question:**

Would you be interested in an extra session at the beginning of the drafting process, introducing you to the process of drafting the EUAA country guidance, as well as to relevant EUAA thematic guidance? Which topics would be of interest?

....

Privacy notice

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) is committed to protecting your privacy. The EUAA collects and further processes personal data pursuant to [Regulation \(EU\) 2018/1725](#).

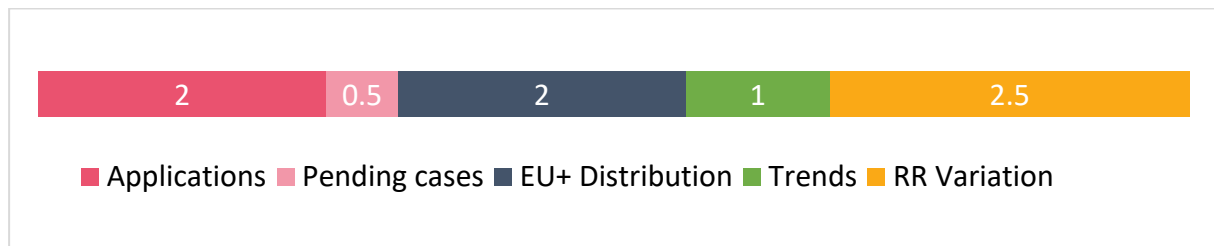
By filling in this EUAA Drafting Team nomination form, you agree that the data shared will be processed for the purposes indicated above. More specifically, we may use your personal data for creating user accounts for the EUAA website member area, for compiling mailing lists, for channelling communication, for sending invitations to meetings and other events, and for reporting purposes, databases, audits and external evaluations. Furthermore, files are kept in electronic form in our dedicated internal document management system.



## Annex III. Indicators for the selection of countries of origin

The following quantitative indicators can be taken as a basis for the analysis of relevance of countries of origin for the purposes of their prioritisation in the Country Guidance planning:

**Figure 7. Overview, Indicators for the selection of countries of origin for the purposes of country guidance.**



The assessment of these indicators and the ranking of countries on its basis aims to inform discussions at the Country Guidance Network. However, the country selection shall take into account all relevant considerations, and in particular the qualitative information provided by the Country Guidance Network.

These indicators can, in particular, be applied when planning the development of country guidance, i.e. selecting a new country to be added to the list of countries on which country guidance is produced. In addition, they can be applied in the prioritisation of review and update processes concerning existing country guidance in light of prior planning and available resources.

EUAA EPS data will be used to assess the indicators in the table below<sup>(16)</sup>.

General indicator	Code	Sub-indicator	Individual weight	Combined weight
Applications at EU+ level	IND1	<b>Total number of applications lodged at EU+ level (last 12 months)</b>	2	2
		<i>This indicates the inflow of applicants in the last 12 months and the overall relevance of the country of origin at EU+ level.</i>		
Pending cases at EU+ level	IND2	<b>Proportion of pending cases at first instance for longer than 6 months at EU+ level (latest stock data available)</b>	0.5	0.5

<sup>(16)</sup> The data provided to the EUAA by the EU+ countries are provisional, operational data and therefore might differ from validated data submitted to Eurostat (according to Regulation (EC) No 862/2007).



		<p><i>The stock of cases pending for a longer period than 6 months (backlog) may indicate the need for guidance in facilitating more efficient decision-making. It may be related to the (perceived) complexity of applications related to the country in question. It may also be linked to suspension of decision-making, such as in the case of an undergoing change in national policy and guidance.</i></p> <p><i>A cut-off of at least 500 pending cases per country of origin is included under this indicator.</i></p>		
EU+ distribution	IND3	<p><b>Number of EU+ countries with 1 or more applicants from the respective country of origin (last 12 months)</b></p> <p><i>This indicates relevance of the country of origin at national level in absolute terms.</i></p>	0.5	2
	IND4	<p><b>Number of EU+ countries with 100 or more applicants from the respective country of origin (last 12 months)</b></p> <p><i>The assessment of relevance is balanced by taking into account only the number of countries with a volume of at least 100 cases in their respective national caseload.</i></p>	1.5	
Trends	IND5	<p><b>Difference in number of applications at EU+ level (last 6 months compared to the same period the year before)</b></p> <p><i>An increase in the number of applications may indicate an increase in the relevance of a particular country of origin, especially for countries which have not been among the top countries of origin for a long period of time. It may also indicate that some EU+ countries deal with it as a new country of origin and may be in particular need of country guidance.</i></p> <p><i>A cut-off of countries of origin with at least 500 applications at EU+ level is introduced.</i></p>	1	1
Variation in recognition rates	IND6	<p><b>Variation in recognition rates (negative decisions) - Standard deviation (last 12 months)</b></p>	1.5	2.5
	IND7	<p><b>Variation in recognition rates (refugee status) - Standard deviation (last 12 months)</b></p>	0.50	



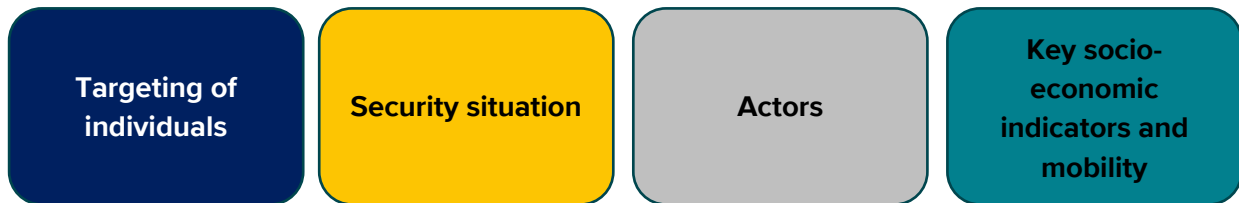
<b>IND8</b>	<b>Variation in recognition rates (subsidiary protection) - Standard deviation (last 12 months)</b>	0.50	
<i>Standard deviation is a number used to tell how measurements for a group are spread out from the average or mean. A low standard deviation means that most of the numbers are close to the average, while a high standard deviation means that the numbers are more spread out.</i>			
<i>Only EU+ countries with more than 200 decisions in the last 12 months are considered.</i>			

These indicators shall be duly weighted according to the information above, and countries will be ranked by a balanced score. The balanced score is an adjustment by taking into account the real differences in values (in contrast to only comparing differences in ranks, i.e. simple score). In the balanced score, the first country is always given 10 points, and the ranking of the following countries is adjusted proportionately. The balanced ranking also allows for all countries of origin to be taken into account under all indicators (rather than only the top 10 countries per indicator).



## Annex IV. COI information needs

The COI reports produced (primarily) for the purposes of country guidance, are designed to provide COI on four key thematic areas, which will support the application of the relevant legal concepts:



The EUAA COI reports provide the Country Guidance Network with reliable, relevant, accurate and objective country of origin information that has been researched and produced in line with the EUAA's COI research methodology.

The questions below outline the COI information needs per topic. They are to be further developed into country-specific terms of reference for each COI report to be produced.

### Reference period

Broadly speaking, the most recent information should be included in the COI reports. Relevant historical background that is necessary to understand the country context at the time of the Country Guidance process may be included as well; such information should be limited, concise, and pertinent to the topic.

The exact reference period will be determined according to the country in question, as well as the availability of existing EUAA COI reports on the topic.

### COI needs per topic

Sufficient COI should be provided for the objective assessment in the general situation in the country of origin, in particular concerning the questions outlined below.

Some questions may overlap between the different themes and COI reports. In such cases, it is preferable to provide the COI only once, i.e. in one of the reports where it appears the more relevant. If appropriate, a link may be additionally provided in the other relevant COI report(s).

### Targeting of individuals

The purpose of this report is to provide the necessary COI to respond to questions relevant for country guidance on actors of persecution or serious harm, refugee status, as well as subsidiary protection under Article 15(a) and (b) QD.



The report should provide information concerning the following:

## 1. Main actors involved in targeting of individuals

- Who are the main actors who carry out targeted violence and violate human rights?
- What is their aim / motives?
- What is their structure / hierarchy?
- Where do they operate and what is their presence / strength?
- Whom do they target and why? Do they target some individuals more than others?
- What is the treatment of those individuals whom they target? What forms of targeting happen? What violations of human rights do they commit?

In this regard, the death penalty by the State and executions by non-State actors should be given special consideration (in light of the provision of Article 15(a) QD):

- Does the law envisage the death penalty? For which crimes?
- Is the death penalty carried out in practice? Is the application in practice related to any discrimination?
- Does the State carry out extrajudicial executions?
- Are there non-State actors who operate somewhat formalised system of prosecution and/or punishment?
- Are executions by such actors taking place?

## 2. Individual profiles

For the identified relevant profiles, the following questions should be answered in the COI provided:

- What are the characteristics of this profile in the context of the country of origin?
- Have individuals under this profile experienced harm? Have they encountered human rights violations and/or discrimination?
- By whom?
- What kind of targeting / treatment happens?
- Why are they specifically targeted?
- Where?
- When (and how often?)
- Are there circumstances / factors that make it more or less likely for such a person to be targeted?
- Is it possible to avoid or escape the targeted violence (e.g. if they relocate?)
- Do they have means of redress? Are those means accessible and effective (this topic may also be covered under the theme 'Actors of protection')?

## Security situation

The purpose of this report is primarily to provide the necessary COI to respond to questions relevant for the development of country guidance on Article 15(c) QD: serious and individual





threat to a civilian's life or person by reason of indiscriminate violence in situations of international or internal armed conflict. It should respond to the following questions:

- Are armed confrontations taking place?
- Who are the armed groups?
- What are their areas of control / activity?
- What are the areas where confrontations take place?
- What confrontations take place?
- What is the nature/extent of the violence and its impact on civilians?

In order to assess the level of indiscriminate violence taking place, COI should be provided concerning the following elements, potentially at a regional/local level:

- Presence of actors in the conflict.
- Nature of methods and tactics used by the actors (referring to likelihood to cause civilian casualties).
- Number and frequency of security incidents.
- Geographical scope (specifying areas with different intensity if applicable).
- Number of civilian casualties.
- Conflict-induced displacement.
- Further impact on the civilian population (damage to livelihoods, health services, education, infrastructure; impact on ability of the state to secure law and order; humanitarian situation of IDPs and returnees in the area, etc.).
- Are certain civilians affected by the conflict/violence more than others?

Patterns and trends, as well as relevant examples illustrating the above should be provided where possible.

## Actors

In order to provide relevant COI to assess the ability and willingness of the State or parties or organisations controlling substantial parts of the territory of the State to provide protection that is effective, non-temporary, and accessible, in light of Article 7 QD, COI should address the following questions:

- Is the State law enforcement system functioning effectively?
  - Mandate and structure of relevant bodies.
  - Geographical reach and presence.
  - Legal procedures for response to and investigation of crime.
  - Effectiveness in prevention and investigation of crime.
  - Accessibility (e.g. issues of discrimination of certain groups).
  - Integrity (e.g. issues of corruption).
- Are the State prosecution and judicial systems functioning effectively?
  - Jurisdiction, structure and independence of relevant bodies.
  - Geographical reach and presence.
  - Legal procedures for prosecution and punishment of crime.





- Effectiveness in prosecution and adjudication.
- Accessibility (e.g. issues of discrimination of certain groups).
- Integrity (e.g. issues of corruption).
  
- Are there human rights bodies or oversight bodies that a person can make a complaint to?
  - What redress are those bodies able to provide?
  - Are they effective?
  - Are they accessible?
  
- Are there any parties or organisations controlling significant part of the territory?
  - Do they ensure effective law enforcement (in reference to the questions above)?
  - Do they ensure effective prosecution and adjudication (in reference to the questions above)?

### Key socio-economic indicators and mobility

The report on key socio-economic indicators and internal mobility will provide information about factors that would allow for the assessment of the applicability of Article 8 QD (internal protection alternative) to (a) certain part(s) of the country of origin. Some of these elements may be of relevance also for return considerations.

This report should address the elements of accessibility (travel and admittance) and reasonableness to settle in the respective territory. The element of 'safety' would be addressed under the other three reports.

This report may focus on or be limited to (a) particular part(s) of the country of origin.

- Are the areas accessible in terms of:
  - What are the main areas that are relatively more accessible for those outside the country?
  - Are there any legal requirements for travelling to the area?
  - Are (safe) travel routes available, including flights, roads, checkpoints, etc.?
  - Are there any legal and/or practical requirements for gaining admittance to the area?
  - Are there any legal and/or practical requirements to settling permanently?
  - Are there barriers faced by particular groups more than others?
  
- What is the situation in the area(s) in terms of:
  - Presence of different religious, ethnic, linguistic or other communal groups in the area.
  - Food security.
  - Availability and accessibility of shelter and housing.
  - Availability and accessibility of basic health care.
  - Water safety, hygiene and sanitation situation.
  - Availability and accessibility of basic education for children.





- Availability and accessibility of basic subsistence and livelihood opportunities (employment, available aid/assistance).
- What networks, if any, provide support, in what form, for what duration, etc.?
- Level of common criminality and civil order.
- Situation of specific groups (e.g. women who are divorced/single/widowed, children, orphans, IDPs, returnees, etc.).





Country Guidance webpage

<https://euaa.europa.eu/asylum-knowledge/country-guidance>



Member area of the Country Guidance Network

<https://euaa.europa.eu/member-area/euaa-country-guidance-network>



Contact the EUAA Country Guidance Team

[country.guidance@euaa.europa.eu](mailto:country.guidance@euaa.europa.eu)







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