



Input by civil society to the EASO Annual Report 2017

EASO has started the production of the 2017 Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the European Union, in line with Article 12 (1) of the EASO Regulation. The report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of important asylum-related developments at EU+ and national level, and the functioning of all key aspects of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). While the final product comes out of an analytical and synthetic process that takes place in-house, a critical part of information is elicited through valuable contributions by a multiplicity of stakeholders from EU+ countries, civil society organizations, UNHCR, and other actors possessing in-depth knowledge on main developments in asylum policies and practices in EU+ countries. Previous reports are [available for review at EASO's website](#).

We would like to kindly invite you to take part in this process, by sharing your observations **on developments in asylum law, policy or practice in 2017 (and early 2018) in the areas listed on page 2**. The topics listed there reflect the structure of Chapter 4 of the EASO report, which focuses on the 'Functioning of the CEAS'. To this end, your observations may concern national practices of specific EU+ countries or the EU as a whole. Overall, the EASO Annual Report is not meant to describe the national asylum systems in detail, but present key developments in 2017, including **improvements and new/remaining concerns**. In terms of format, your contributions would be preferably offered in the form of bullet points, which would facilitate further processing of your input.

Please, bear in mind that the EASO Annual Report is a public document. Accordingly, it would be desirable that your contributions, whenever possible, be supported by references to relevant sources. Providing links to materials such as analytical studies, articles, reports, websites, press releases, position papers/statements, and press releases, would allow for maintaining transparency. For your reference, you may review the [contributions offered by civil society actors for the 2016 Annual Report](#). If you do not consent on EASO making your submission available, please inform us accordingly.

In our effort to provide an inclusive overview of all relevant developments, we strive to incorporate as many contributions as possible. At the same time, the final content of the EASO Annual Report is subject to its set terms of reference and volume limitations. To this end, your submissions, which are gratefully received and acknowledged, may be edited for length and clarity so that the final product concisely serves the objectives of the Annual Report: to improve the quality, consistency, and effectiveness of CEAS. From our side, we can assure you that the valuable insights you offer feed into EASO's work in multiple ways and inform reports and analyses beyond the production of the Annual Report.

Please, kindly provide your input by filling in this document (with attachments, if needed) and returning it to ids@easo.europa.eu **AND** consultative-forum@easo.europa.eu **by 16 February 2018**.

Within each area, please highlight the following **type of information**:

- NEW positive developments; improvements and NEW or remaining matters of concern;
- Changes in policies or practices; transposition of legislation; institutional changes; relevant national jurisprudence.

You are kindly requested to make sure that your input falls within each section's scope. Please, refrain from including information that goes beyond the thematic focus of each section or is not related to recent developments. Feel free to use Section 16 to share information on developments you consider important that may have not been covered in previous sections.

Name of the contributing stakeholder: Asylum Research Consultancy (ARC)

[Contact details]

1) Access to territory and access to asylum procedure

2) Access to information and legal assistance

3) Providing interpretation services

4) Dublin procedure

5) Specific procedures (border, accelerated, admissibility)

6) Reception of applicants for international protection

7) Detention of applicants for international protection

8) Procedures at First instance

9) Procedures at Second Instance

10) Availability and use of Country of Origin Information

On 31 January 2018 the UK Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration published his report of [‘An inspection of the production and use of Country of Origin Information’](#). This inspection examined the efficiency and effectiveness of the Home Office functions that produce and use COI, specifically how COI products are commissioned, developed and disseminated, and how they are used within the asylum process. The report made 7 recommendations:

The Home Office should:

1. Adhere to the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) Methodology for Country of Origin Information (COI) products, or publish (on GOV.UK) its own methodology with a clear explanation of where this deviates from EASO and why (in either case, putting an immediate stop to the inappropriate use of the description “policy” in its COI products).

2. Move (and rename) the Country Policy and Information Team (CPIT) under the management of UK Visas and Immigration Directorate (UKVI), so that it is better aligned with its principal Home Office ‘customers’ (better able to understand and meet their needs, including for particular COI, for training in understanding and using of COI, and in when and how to conduct independent research).

3. Carry out a thorough and open needs analysis for Country of Origin Information (COI), involving both Home Office ‘customers’ and external stakeholders, and use the results to ‘right-size’ CPIT and resource it appropriately, and to establish effective ongoing feedback mechanisms.

4. Review the user requirements for the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) “transformation programme” and ensure that these capture the data needs of CPIT, including asylum nationality and basis of claim.

5. Review, formalise and seek ministerial approval for the use of an external consultancy to provide quality assurance of draft Country of Origin Information (COI) products.

6. Explore with UNHCR whether a marker can be attached to CPIT's superseded Country of Origin Information (COI) products on Refworld.org to show that there is a more up to date product on GOV.UK.

7. Produce and maintain a risk register covering Country of Origin Information (COI) production and use.

Also note the Home Office published a ['Response to an inspection report on the Home Office's production and use of country of origin information'](#).

11) Vulnerable applicants

12) Content of protection – situation of beneficiaries of protection

13) Return of former applicants for international protection

14) Resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes

15) Relocation

16) Other relevant developments