



European Asylum Support Office

EASO PRACTICAL TOOLS

Overview of practical tools developed in the EASO
Quality Matrix activities and activities on
vulnerable persons

March 2017



SUPPORT IS OUR MISSION

EASO PRACTICAL TOOLS

Overview of practical tools developed in the EASO
Quality Matrix activities and activities on
vulnerable groups

Update: March 2017

**The practical tools, including available language versions,
can be found at:**

<https://www.easo.europa.eu/practical-tools>

Asylum Processes – EASO Quality Matrix activities

EASO, as the EU centre for expertise on asylum, is focusing its efforts in contributing to the effective, coherent and consistent practical implementation of the EU asylum *acquis*. With the ultimate goal of achieving a genuinely Common European Asylum System (CEAS), EASO supports EU Member States in the continuous improvement of the quality standards of their asylum systems.

EASO develops practical tools based on the information collected in the particular thematic phase of Quality Matrix process and on Member States' expertise, with valuable additional input from the European Commission, UNHCR and other relevant organisations, which may be consulted according to the topic and nature of the tool.

The purpose of the tools is to provide practical support to those on the ground. They translate the legal obligations, standards and good practices into commonly agreed guidance in various user-friendly formats, including checklists, pocket books, posters, web-based interactive tools, etc.

See <https://www.easo.europa.eu/asylum-processes-quality>

Vulnerable groups

Since its establishment, EASO has been supporting and developing practical cooperation on issues related to applicants with special needs. Its focus to-date has been on activities related to children, including unaccompanied children; and on the link between asylum and trafficking in human beings. Identification and response to the special needs of vulnerable persons is further mainstreamed in all EASO activities, including in particular training, quality support and country of origin information.

See <https://www.easo.europa.eu/training-quality/vulnerable-groups>

Featured practical tools

ACCESS TO THE ASYLUM PROCEDURE

- Practical Tools for First-Contact Officials: Access to the Asylum Procedure

DUBLIN PROCEDURE

- *To be published in 2017:* Practical Tool on the implementation of Dublin III Regulation

EXAMINATION OF THE APPLICATION

- EASO Practical Guide: Personal interview
- EASO Practical Guide: Evidence assessment
- EASO Practical Guide: Implementation of Article 15(c) QD in EU Member States
- EASO Practical Guide: Exclusion
- *To be published in 2017:* EASO Practical Guide: Qualification for international protection

RECEPTION

- EASO Guidance on reception conditions: operational standards and indicators
- *To be published in 2017:* EASO Guidance on contingency planning

VULNERABLE GROUPS

- EASO Tool for Identification of Persons with Special Needs (IPSN)
- EASO, Age assessment practice in Europe
- EASO practical guide on family tracing
- *To be published in 2017:* EASO Practical Guide on Best Interests Assessment

ACCESS TO PROCEDURE

Practical Tools for First-Contact Officials: Access to the Asylum Procedure



Target group: first-contact officials, in particular at the border or in transit zones and in detention facilities (border guards, including coast guards, police officers, immigration authorities, personnel at detention facilities, etc.)

This toolkit on access to the asylum procedure was jointly developed by EASO and Frontex, and in close collaboration with FRA and UNHCR.

The toolkit is intended to support the identification of third country nationals and stateless persons who may wish to apply for international protection.

Each toolkit folder includes:

- **Practical Guide:** Provides guidance on core obligations of the first-contact officials, the rights of persons in need of international protection and information on applicable procedural guarantees.
- **Posters:** The poster presents the 10 main messages on access to the asylum procedure.
- **Pocket books:** This small booklet suitable for operational purposes features the core principles and main messages.
- **Leaflets on frequently asked questions:** This leaflet provides answers to some of the common questions that first-contact officials may have on access to the asylum procedure.

DUBLIN PROCEDURE

To be published in 2017:

EASO Practical Tool on the Implementation of the Dublin III Regulation

Target group: Dublin practitioners

EASO is currently developing a practical tool to support Dublin practitioners in their daily work in the implementation of the Dublin III Regulation.

The tool will look at two particular topics in the context of the Dublin procedure:

- ▶ Personal interview
- ▶ Evidence assessment

EXAMINATION OF THE APPLICATION

EASO Practical Guide: Personal interview

Target group: case officers conducting interviews with applicants for international protection

The EASO Practical Guide: Personal interview was the first practical tool developed within the EASO Quality Matrix process.

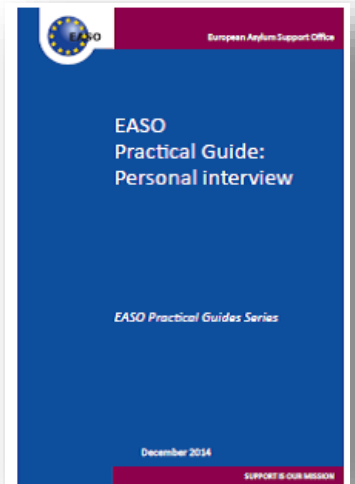
The Practical Guide includes interactive checklists and brief guidance on:

- ▶ Preparation for the personal interview
- ▶ Opening the interview and establishing an atmosphere of trust
- ▶ Interview techniques for conducting the interview
- ▶ Substantive elements which need to be explored during the interview
- ▶ Closing the interview and post-interview actions

In addition, the guidance links to legal references and the tool leaves additional space for variations in national law, guidance and practice.

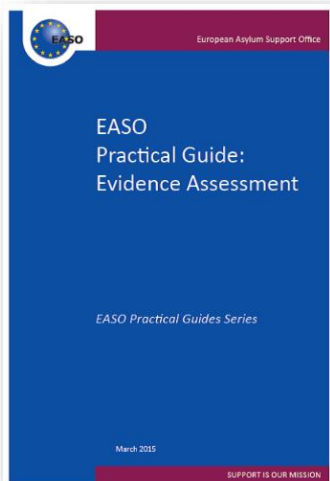
The interactivity of the tool allows the user to go directly, by using the hyperlinks, to the parts of the guidance that are of interest and to consult further relevant legislation and case law.

The Guide is developed in consistence with the EASO Training Curriculum module on Interview Techniques; however, it can by no means fulfil the need for training in this core module.



EXAMINATION OF THE APPLICATION

EASO Practical Guide: Evidence assessment



Target group: case officers involved in conducting personal interviews and/or in decision-making

The EASO Practical Guide: Evidence assessment is designed in a similar way to the Practical Guide: Personal interview. It is intended to provide support for the daily work of case officers and addresses the challenging tasks related to evidence assessment:

- ▶ Gathering information
- ▶ Credibility assessment
- ▶ Risk assessment

A structured approach to evidence assessment, following the three steps above, is represented in checklists and brief guidance, further linking to legal references, case law and a dedicated space for possible variations of national practice.

The Guide also encloses a template, which can be used for individual cases and supports the application of the structured evidence assessment method.

The different layers of the Practical Guide are hyperlinked to assist the user in accessing the parts of the Guide they are interested in.

The Practical Guide is fully consistent with the upgraded EASO Training Curriculum module on Evidence Assessment; however, it can by no means fulfil the need for training in this core module.

<https://www.easo.europa.eu/practical-tools>

EXAMINATION OF THE APPLICATION

EASO Practical Guide: Implementation of Article 15(c) QD in EU Member States

Target group: case officers and policy-makers

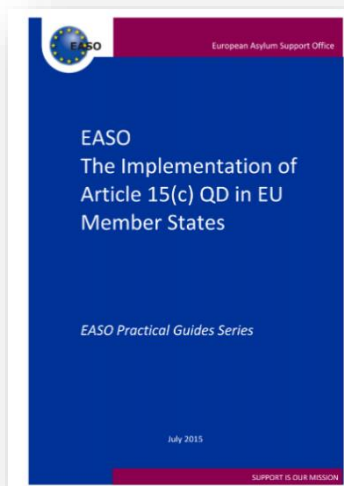
This Guide builds on the work done by EASO in the context of the Quality Matrix mapping and in practical cooperation activities focusing on specific countries of origin. An additional information-gathering exercise was conducted in the last quarter of 2014 to update and complement this information.

Part I presents an **analysis of trends in Member States' policies and practice** in applying Article 15(c) QD.

It looks into the following core elements:

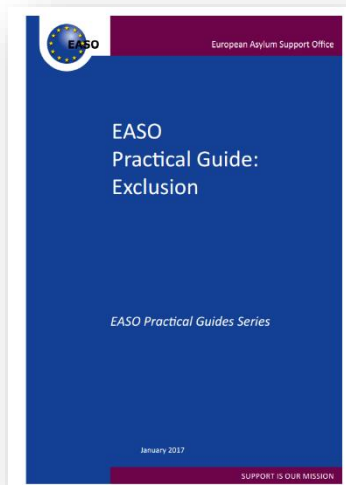
- ▶ Real risk of suffering serious harm
- ▶ Internal or international armed conflict
- ▶ Indiscriminate violence
- ▶ Civilian's life or person
- ▶ Serious and individual threat
- ▶ Nexus ('by reason of')
- ▶ Applicable standard of proof

Part II looks into the application of this provision with regard to **specific countries of origin**, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and Syria.



EXAMINATION OF THE APPLICATION

EASO Practical Guide: Exclusion



Target group: registration officers and others who may be in a position to detect potential exclusion cases, specialised and non-specialised case officers handling potential exclusion cases

EASO has developed a Practical Guide to assist in the detection of potential exclusion cases and in their examination. The Guide focuses on exclusion grounds under Article 12(2) and Article 17 QD and covers the following aspects:

- ▶ What is exclusion?
- ▶ Detection of potential exclusion cases
- ▶ Referral and procedural guarantees
- ▶ Interview with a focus on exclusion: preparation and conducting the interview
- ▶ Evidence assessment
- ▶ Legal analysis: qualification of excludable acts and individual responsibility
- ▶ Drafting the decision elements related to exclusion
- ▶ Referral for investigation and/or prosecution

This tool consists of checklists, brief guidance and references to relevant legislation and case law. It also envisages dedicated space for capturing national approaches.

<https://www.easo.europa.eu/practical-tools>

EXAMINATION OF THE APPLICATION

To be published in 2017:

EASO Practical Guide: Qualification for international protection

Target group: case officers and decision-makers examining applications for international protection

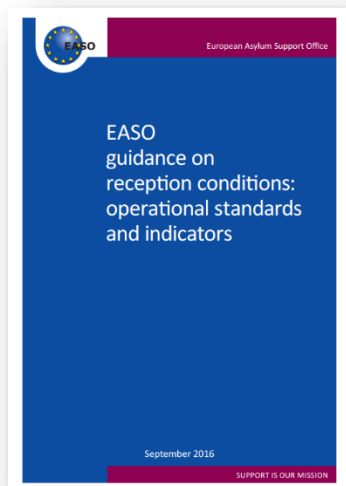
EASO is currently developing a practical guide to assist case officers and decision-makers in the examination of applications for international protection and the application of the eligibility criteria for refugee status and subsidiary protection status.

This practical tool will include checklists, guidance and references to legislation and case law and guide the case officer in assessing whether the individual applicant qualifies for international protection.

<https://www.easo.europa.eu/practical-tools>

RECEPTION

EASO guidance on reception conditions: operational standards and indicators



Target group: reception officers and policy-makers

The EASO Guidance on reception conditions: operational standards and indicators reflects existing and commonly agreed standards, as well as good practices across EU Member States. The Guidance was developed as one of the pilot activities in the framework of the EASO Network of Reception Authorities.

In addition to Member States' experts, the development involved the active participation of the European Commission, FRA and UNHCR and a consultation with interested members of the EASO Consultative Forum. It was adopted by the EASO Management Board in September 2016.

The Guidance focuses on the following aspects:

- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Food
- ▶ Clothing and other non-food items
- ▶ Daily expenses allowance
- ▶ Health care
- ▶ Provision of information and counselling
- ▶ Identification, assessment and response to special needs
- ▶ Staff training

<https://www.easo.europa.eu/practical-tools>

RECEPTION

To be published in 2017:

EASO guidance on contingency planning

Target group: reception officers and policy-makers

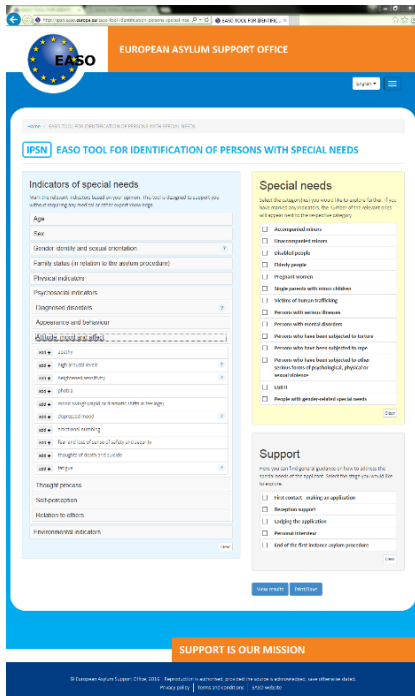
EASO is currently developing guidance for contingency planning.

The development of a contingency plan has the aim to contribute to the overall objective to provide access to reception facilities for applicants for international protection at all times. It helps Member States in ensuring they are prepared in case of mass influx or unexpected events, which could have a major impact on their reception systems.

<https://www.easo.europa.eu/practical-tools>

VULNERABLE GROUPS

EASO Tool for Identification of Persons with Special Needs (IPSN)



Target group: officials and other actors in contact with applicants for international protection

The IPSN Tool is an interactive online solution which allows the user to **identify potential special needs in the context of the asylum procedure and reception.**

It supports the identification of **14 different categories:** accompanied and unaccompanied minors, disabled people, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, victims of human trafficking, persons with serious illnesses, persons with mental disorders, persons who have been subjected to torture, to rape or to other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, LGBTI and people with gender-related special needs.

Furthermore, the tool suggests **special guarantees** focusing on 5 aspects:

- ▶ First contact – making an application
- ▶ Reception support
- ▶ Lodging the application
- ▶ Personal interview
- ▶ End of the first instance asylum procedure

Based on the selections made by the user, the tool generates a **report**, which can be further individualised with a reference number and relevant notes, before being saved and/or printed.

<https://ipsn.easo.europa.eu>

VULNERABLE GROUPS

EASO, Age assessment practice in Europe

This publication is currently being revised.

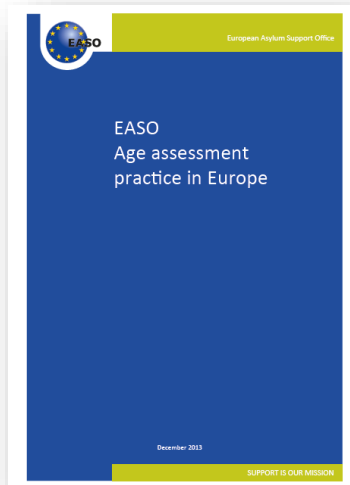
A new version will be published in 2017.

Target group: policy-makers and officials handling the cases of (unaccompanied) children

The EASO publication on age assessment practices in Europe provides an overview of the different methods and tools used for age assessment in Member States and beyond, and highlights the guarantees, which need to be put in place for this process.

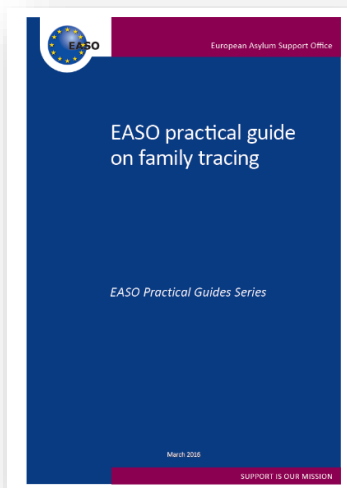
The publication further outlines the circumstances of age assessment and the context in which it takes place and analyses the different methods in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The tool is primarily targeted at policy-makers in Member States who have a role in establishing, reviewing or maintaining the standards with regard to age assessment at the national level.



VULNERABLE GROUPS

EASO practical guide on family tracing



Target group: policy-makers and practitioners working with unaccompanied children and involved in different stages of the family tracing process

The EASO Practical Guide on family tracing provides a set of guidance and reference materials to support EU+ States with regard to family tracing, as well as a mapping of current practices of family tracing in the EU+.

The guide is constructed by four interlinked pillars:

- ▶ Introduction to the topic by outlining the circumstances of family tracing
- ▶ A visual outline of the family tracing process, including applicable principles and guarantees
- ▶ Overview of current family tracing practices in the EU+
- ▶ Conclusions and recommendations promoting consistent standards and guarantees.

Reference materials included in the Guide cover: glossary of relevant terms, legal framework, list of relevant projects and initiatives, relevant publications, and a mapping of the practice of EU+ States.

<https://www.easo.europa.eu/practical-tools>

VULNERABLE GROUPS

To be published in 2017:

EASO Practical Guide on Best Interests Assessment

Target group: policy-makers and practitioners involved in assessing the best interests of the child and/or dealing with children

EASO is currently developing a practical guide for practitioners and policy-makers dealing with children in the asylum context, and in particular for those involved in the assessment of the best interests of the child.

The tool will provide guidance on conducting best interests assessment and the necessary safeguards in different stages of the asylum procedure and with regards to reception conditions. In addition to practical guidance, it will list available reference materials.

<https://www.easo.europa.eu/practical-tools>

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