

**Fourth EASO Consultative Forum Plenary
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Breakout Session 3: EASO's Quality Processes: Current activities and perspectives for the coming years

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1. Aim

- To provide participants with an insight into the EASO Quality Matrix process;
- To seek input from participants regarding possible ways in which civil society could contribute to the Quality Matrix process.

2. Background

Quality Matrix Concept

The Quality Matrix process is an initiative through which EASO aims to comprehensively map the practices of EU+ countries and to identify good examples and relevant quality tools, mechanisms and projects. The Quality Matrix is carried out in phases, covering the main aspects of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) from a procedural and a conceptual point of view, and focusing on ensuring a common system of high quality.

Quality Matrix Process

Each phase of the Quality Matrix is developed through four main steps:



The main deliverables of the Quality Matrix Process are:

- **Thematic meetings:** EU+ countries and UNHCR have an opportunity to meet and discuss good practices and current challenges, share expertise, information and practical tools.
- **Reports:** The Thematic Reports capture a comparative overview of the asylum systems in EU+

countries, good practices and discussions on solutions to current challenges.

- **List of Quality Projects and Initiatives:** EASO has developed a List of Quality Projects and Initiatives, structured in 14 different topics and including more than 100 projects relevant to quality. The list is based on information provided by UNHCR, the European Commission, and EU+ countries and, on ad hoc basis, on information provided by civil society actors, as well as on EASO's own research.¹
- **Quality Tools:** Building on the findings from the mapping phase, the Quality Matrix process focuses on the development of practical tools to support the implementation of a CEAS of high quality. Such quality tools are developed together with EU+ countries and with the assistance of a Reference Group composed of the European Commission, UNHCR, ECRE and on ad hoc basis other members of civil society. The first two quality tools are in their final stages of development and are taking the form of checklists and guidance on the **Personal Interview** and on **Evidence Assessment**. They will be publicly available in the beginning of 2015. An interactive tool on the **Identification of Persons with Special Needs** is also currently being developed.

Quality Matrix State of Play

Since the **Quality Matrix Kick-off Meeting**, which took place in November 2012, EASO has focused its efforts in systematically covering the core aspects of the CEAS:

- **Personal Interview:** Thematic Meeting in March 2013, report published in March 2014
- **Evidence Assessment:** Thematic Meeting in June 2013, report published in March 2014
- **Eligibility:** Thematic Meeting in September 2013, report published in March 2014
- **Exclusion:** Thematic Meeting in November 2013, report to be published in December 2014
- **Access to Procedure:** Thematic Meeting in March 2014, report to be published in January 2015
- **Identification of Persons with Special Needs:** Thematic Meeting in June 2014, report to be published in Q1 2015.
- **Special Procedures:** Thematic Meeting organised back-to-back with a European Commission Contact Committee on the APD in October 2014, report to be published in Q2 2015.

EASO also organises annual **Meetings of the National Contact Points on Quality**. These meetings allow for the timely evaluation of the Quality Matrix methodology and results and for planning EASO's future activities in this key area. In addition to such strategic discussions, these meetings focus on topics of particular relevance to national quality processes. The thematic focus of the last meeting, in December 2014, was on building, reviewing and improving national quality systems and on setting quality standards.

The topics tentatively identified for mapping under the Quality Matrix in 2015 tackle issues relevant to the **Dublin Regulation**, as well as **Appeals** and **End of Protection**. The Quality Matrix activities will further continue with a renewed focus on **development of practical quality tools** and an enhanced cooperation with the European Commission. To date, involvement of civil society in EASO's quality processes has been limited to the development of Quality Tools.

3. Expected outcomes

- To engage in a discussion regarding one of EASO's key areas of permanent support to EU+ countries.
- To identify possible ways for civil society to contribute to the Quality Matrix process.

4. Discussion points

- **The Quality Matrix Methodology:** What are the current strengths and challenges to the EASO Quality Matrix from a civil society point of view?
- **Possible Civil Society contribution to the Quality Matrix process:** What are the possible ways in which civil society actors can contribute to the Quality Matrix?

¹ The EASO Quality Projects and Initiatives List will be publicly available on the EASO website.