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As in previous years, COI units continued to focus on the most common countries of origin of asylum applicants in Europe, namely Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq. The EUAA also published detailed reports on Afghanistan804and Syria,805 the security situation in Syria,806 and Arab tribes and customary law in Iraq.807

EU+ countries also monitored developments in Latin America, as interest on the region increased. For example, Sweden published a report on Nicaragua808 and focused more on Latin America than in previous years due to higher arrivals from Colombia, Nicaragua and Peru. The EUAA published a report on Venezuela.809

In addition, COI research concentrated on Africa; some countries, such as Czechia and Finland, focused on the continent as a whole, while others on specific regions. Sweden’s work covered mainly the Horn of Africa, with a special focus on Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia. France conducted extensive research on the Sahel region and produced several notes on Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.

Due to their geographical location and the instrumentalisation of migration, Poland, and Lithuania focused on Belarus. With a high number of applicants from Central Asia and an absence of available information, their COI research naturally focused on countries of this region as well.

Following the outbreak of conflict in Gaza in October 2023, Sweden turned its attention to the Middle East, focusing on Israel, Palestine and neighbouring countries. Work in Czechia had concentrated on the region throughout 2023.

Many COI units conducted desk research, while others, such as Landinfo in Norway, conducted fact-finding missions with other COI units. Austria and Switzerland organised a joint fact-finding mission to Somalia and Somaliland. Other countries to conduct fact-finding missions included Denmark, Finland, Poland and Sweden. Danish authorities conducted one fact-finding mission to Türkiye, and three fact-finding missions to Ukraine. In addition, two COI reports were published in 2023 based on fact-finding missions conducted in Iraq and Lebanon at the end of 2022.

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, COI needs on the security situation in Russia and Ukraine increased significantly. This trend persisted in 2023, and national COI units produced focused outputs on the two countries.

Civil society organisations contributed to increasing and widening the scope of available information on specific countries of origin. Asylos focused on specific topics, such as incidents of violence by police or other state actors in El Salvador,[810] the treatment of United Democratic Forces members and individuals who refused civic service in Rwanda[811] and the situation of Banyamulenge (Tutsi or Banyarwanda) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.[812]

In addition, Asylos sought to address information gaps in COI, particularly on statelessness focused COI[813] (*see Section 3.12*) and COI on children and young people. A COI report on the situation of children and young people in Sudan and a Principles Document for conducting research on children and young people were published in early 2024, which was followed by an updated training handbook and a series of training webinars in the spring of 2024.[814]

icon presenting the focus of COI content

3.11.4.1. Medical Country of Origin Information (MedCOI)

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3.11.4.2. COI and the LGBTIQ community

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3.11.4.3. Jurisprudence on COI

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- [805] European Union Agency for Asylum. (October 2023). *Country of Origin Information. Syria - Country Focus*.
- [806] European Union Agency for Asylum. (October 2023). *Country of Origin Information. Syria - Security Situation*.
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