



EASO Practical guide on the use of Country of Origin Information by case officers for the examination of asylum applications



A new **EASO Practical Guide on the use of Country of Origin Information (COI)** by case officers for the examination of asylum applications was published at the end of December. The overall objective of this guidance is to support case officers to correctly use COI during the examination of an application for international protection. The guide contains what every case officer needs to know about COI: what is COI, what are its quality standards, where to find COI, how to formulate research questions, as well as guidance on how COI can best be integrated into the different steps of the asylum procedure.

The guide focuses on the use of COI by case officers in their day-to-day work and in particular the use of COI at different stages of the procedure - when preparing and conducting the personal interview, and when assessing the application for international protection. It is not meant to provide guidance for COI researchers, but does contain information on what a case officer needs to know about the work of a COI researcher. Though this guide provides guidance on the research, use and methodology of COI, it cannot replace the expertise of COI experts or a dedicated COI unit.

To support case officers in their daily work, guidance is provided on the use of COI (a) in order to investigate an applicant's identity and country of origin; (b) to be able to assess the credibility of the claim; and (c) to be able to assess the legitimacy of fear upon return. In order to better illustrate the use of COI in the process of the examination of an application for international protection, different examples based on four concrete asylum cases are used throughout the practical guide.

The guide is available on EASO's website under '[Asylum Support & Training: Practical Tools](#)'.

The guide was developed by experts from EU+ countries, with valuable input from the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD) and ARC

Foundation. Valuable input was also received from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on earlier versions of the guide. The finalised guide does not necessarily reflect the position of UNCHR. The process was facilitated and coordinated by EASO. Before its finalisation, a consultation on the guide was carried out with all EU+ countries.

This practical guide is an addition to the EASO Practical Guides Series.

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