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Refugee status

This chapter contains some general considerations for the examination of refugee status.

The analysis is conducted in accordance with **Article 9 QD/QR** and **Article 10 QD/QR** and the general EUAA guidance on the topic.

There are a few things to remember when reading the sections within this chapter.

Non-exhaustive list of commonly encountered profiles

The chapter provides analysis and guidance on the situation of profiles of applicants identified as commonly encountered in the caseload of EU Member States. The included profiles represent a non-exhaustive list and the fact that a certain profile is included in it or not is without prejudice to the determination of their protection needs. Furthermore, the order of listed profiles does not reflect any assessment of their risk of persecution.

While the conclusions regarding the profiles could provide general guidance, the protection needs of each applicant should be examined individually. Furthermore, the conclusions may refer to sub-profiles at a differentiated risk and may include factors which could increase or decrease the risk of persecution. These aspects are to be taken into account in light of all circumstances in the individual case.

Identifying the relevant profile

The individual applicant could fall under **more than one profile** included in the common analysis and guidance. The protection needs associated with all such circumstances should be fully examined.

In some cases, even if the applicant no longer belongs to a certain profile, they may still be targeted and have a well-founded fear of persecution related to their **past belonging to such a profile**. In the individual assessment, it may be relevant to take into account the time that has passed and whether the applicant had remained in the country of origin for a long period of time without encountering persecution.

Family members, merely due to their relation to an individual with a certain profile, may be at risk of persecution in such a manner that could constitute the basis for refugee status. This is not always explicitly mentioned within the conclusions regarding the respective profile but should be fully examined in the individual cases of family members fearing persecution due to their connection to an individual falling within the respective profile.

Assessment of risk and qualification

The considerations under each profile should be viewed without prejudice to the credibility assessment of the applicant's claims. The common analysis and guidance note deal solely with issues of risk analysis and qualification, assuming that the 'credibility of the profile' has been established.

While the country guidance document is not intended to inform the credibility assessment, the COI, which has been used as a basis to provide its general assessment and guidance, may be a helpful reference to examine credibility. In this regard, the reader should access the COI documents linked from the respective common analysis sections.

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For general guidance on qualification as a refugee, see the sections 'Refugee status: well founded fear of persecution', p. 16, and 'Refugee status: reasons for persecution', p. 22, in the 'EASO, *Practical Guide: Qualification for international protection*, April 2018'.

See also the 'EUAA, *Practical Guide on Political Opinion*, December 2022'; 'EUAA, *Practical Guide on Membership of a Particular Social Group: Second edition*, May 2025'; 'EUAA, *Practical Guide on applicants with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions and sex characteristics — Examination procedure: Examination procedure*, November 2024'; 'EUAA, *Practical Guide on Interviewing Applicants with Religion-based Asylum Claims*, November 2022'.

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For general guidance on evidence assessment and credibility analysis, see the 'EUAA, *Practical Guide on Evidence and Risk Assessment*, January 2024'; 'EASO, *Practical guide on the use of country of origin information by case officers: For the examination of asylum applications*, December 2020'.

Step-by-step approach

Country guidance documents follow a step-by-step approach with regard to the analysis whether the qualification criteria under refugee status are met.

Each profile has a similar outline, including the following features:

☐ **1. Last update**

This is an indication when the analysis and guidance were last reviewed and updated, similarly to all other sections in the document.

☐ 2. Definition of scope

Most profiles and some sub-profiles include a definition of scope. This indicates the type of individuals to whom the section applies, making note of potential limitations to the scope of the profile. This is meant to assist the reader in ascertaining whether the individual applicant whose claim they are examining would fall within the scope of the respective section.

☐ 3. COI references

This indicates the sections of the EUAA COI reports and COI query responses on which the analysis has been based. Links to the relevant COI products are also included for ease of reference, further highlighting that Country Guidance should not be referred to as source of COI.

☐ 4. Background of the profile

When necessary, some background information regarding the profile is added, setting the contextual basis for the analysis provided below.

☐ 5. Legal analysis

Step 1: Do the reported acts qualify as persecution?

This part provides examples of acts reported to be committed against individuals belonging to the profile as well as guidance on whether such acts would reach the level of persecution according to Article 9 QD/QR.

The acts may amount to persecution when due to their nature or repetitiveness, they reach the required threshold of severity (Article 9(1)(a) QD/QR).

The assessment may also refer to the potential accumulation of various measures, including violations of human rights, which is sufficiently severe as to affect an individual in a similar manner as mentioned in point (a) (Article 9(1)(b) QD/QR).

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

This part assesses the level of risk, namely how likely it is for applicants within the profile to have a well-founded fear of persecution. Further guidance is provided with regard to the circumstances which should be taken into account in the individual assessment and how such circumstances would impact the risk. Relevant COI is also included to substantiate the assessment.

In general, three main conclusions may be found in Country Guidance documents:

1. a well-founded fear of persecution would in general not be substantiated or would be substantiated only in exceptional cases;
2. risk-impacting circumstances pertaining to the individual applicant should be taken into account, some of which may place the applicant at particular risk;
3. a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated.

Note that an individual examination is required in all cases. For a better understanding of the different wording used in these conclusions, see Terminology notes.

Step 3. Is there a ground for persecution?

This part provides guidance on whether, in case of established well-founded fear of persecution, this would be for a reason mentioned in the provision of Article 10 QD/QR, e.g. race, religion, nationality, particular social group, political opinion (nexus). More than one ground may apply to a given case, cumulatively or alternatively. Whichever ground is the most relevant would depend on the individual circumstances of the applicants. Accordingly, different conclusions on nexus may be found in Country Guidance documents, reflecting the pertinence of any given ground, namely: in general *no nexus,* persecution *may be, is likely to be,* or *is highly likely to be,* for the respective reason(s).

As above, the conclusions are not of absolute nature and are not intended to automatically lead to the granting of refugee status or not. An individual examination is required.

If no well-founded fear of persecution connected to a ground is substantiated for the applicant, refugee status cannot be granted and the examination should proceed to the

assessment of subsidiary protection.

☐ 6. Potential exclusion considerations

For some profiles, or categories of individuals within them, exclusion considerations may be relevant. A reminder regarding exclusion considerations is hence included in sections identified as particularly relevant based on the available COI. These aim to alert and assist the reader by referring them to the dedicated chapter Exclusion.

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