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EASO publishes the updated Country of Origin Information (COI) Report Methodology and Writing and Referencing Guide for EASO COI reports



Today, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) published an updated version of the 2012 EASO COI Report Methodology. This methodology was developed for the purpose of producing and publishing different types of EASO COI reports. The use of this methodology is binding for the production of EASO COI reports.

EASO aims to cooperate with EU+ countries[1] in order to meet target users' needs and share the burden through joint efforts to produce COI. The EASO COI Report Methodology constitutes a code of conduct for participants in each phase of the COI production process.

The methodology explains the guiding principles for COI in the first chapter, which are: Neutrality and Objectivity, Relevance and Usability, Transparency and Publicity, Validity and Quality. After a chapter on the initiation and production process of EASO COI reports, the methodology focuses on researching and drafting COI. Here, quality standards for sources and information are explained and elaborated, as well as the selection and validation of sources. The third chapter discusses the phase of researching and presenting information, focusing on drafting methods such as summarising and synthesising, and on referencing sources. The final chapters discuss quality control, editing and proofreading, publication and follow up of a

COI product. Finally, annexes on review and a glossary of the used terms are presented.

The first version of this COI report methodology was published in June 2012. Since then, EASO has developed a portfolio of distinct types of COI reports, depending on specific user needs and available resources. As a result, EASO identified the need to clarify certain concepts and revise the methodology. A working group was formed by EASO composed of COI experts from seven EU countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Slovak Republic, Sweden), who discussed the key issues and provided input for the revision.

The new draft of the methodology was sent for comments to EASO's COI Strategic Network, UNHCR and civil society organisations specialised in producing COI. Finally, EASO organised a COI methodology conference in Brussels on 15-16 November 2017 with COI practitioners from the EU+ countries, international organisations, and civil society. At the conference, EASO facilitated discussions and sought feedback from participants on aspects of the new methodology. Taking into account the results of these consultations, the revised methodology was finalised and endorsed by the EASO Management Board on 29 May 2019.

The EASO COI Report Methodology can be downloaded from the EASO COI portal via the following link: https://coi.easo.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2019_EASO_COI_Report_Methodology.pdf.

Simultaneously and accompanying the EASO COI Report Methodology, the EASO COI Writing and Referencing Guide was published. The guide is aimed at COI researchers who (co-)draft EASO COI reports written in English. The guide is intended to be a clear, useable, and practical desk companion for researchers/drafters. The purpose of this guide is also to support a diverse community of EU+ COI drafters, harmonise approaches to EASO writing/referencing, and work consistently across EASO COI publications.

The Writing and Referencing Guide was created after researching best practices and elements of existing COI style guidelines from EASO, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Sweden, UNHCR, ACCORD, Canada, and others. A wide range of professional referencing and citation systems were also consulted. The European Commission English Style Guide and the EU Interinstitutional Style Guide were also used in the development of this Guide, among others.

In 2017 and 2018, a working group composed of COI experts from seven EU+ countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Slovak Republic, Sweden) discussed and provided input to the content of this Guide. It was reviewed for internal consistency by a COI expert from Estonia. The EASO COI team and management also provided feedback.

The Writing and Referencing Guide can be downloaded from the EASO COI portal via the following link: https://coi.easo.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2019_EASO_COI_Writing_and_Referencing_Guide.pdf.

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[1] EU Member States, Switzerland and Norway

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