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EASO publishes a Country of Origin Information (COI) report on Nigeria



Today, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) published a Country of Origin Information (COI) Report entitled 'Nigeria – Country Focus'. The report provides an overview of selected topics in Nigeria, relevant for the international protection status determination of Nigerian applicants.

This is the second COI report on Nigeria published by EASO. In October 2014, EASO published a COI report on Sex Trafficking of women[1].

In 2016, Nigeria ranked 5th in the top countries of origin in the EU+ countries [2] , with a total of 48,705 applicants. This is a 46 % increase compared to 2015. In April 2017, Nigeria was the third-ranked country of origin in Europe.

In this report EASO provides information focusing on 'selected topics' of particular relevance for international protection status determination (Refugee Status and Subsidiary Protection) for Nigerian applicants. It is not meant to be a general description of the human rights situation in the country, nor a comprehensive overview of all topics at stake in international protection status determination.

Input from EU+ countries suggests that a majority of Nigerian applicants for international protection originate from the southern part of the country, and a large part of them from Edo state, a relatively small state representing a similarly small fraction of the Nigerian population. Therefore, information related to the south of Nigeria and in particular Edo State, is given particular attention in this country focus report.

Key topics.

The first chapter of the report provides background information about the legal and administrative system, ethnic groups and political situation in Nigeria. This chapter also discusses the general human rights

situation, covering issues related to Boko Haram, vigilantism, ethnic-religious violence, corruption, and abuse of power by security forces. The second chapter presents the security situation in the country's six regions and thematic security issues such as conflicts between 'indigenes' and 'settlers' and between nomads and farmers. The third chapter covers the judiciary, sources of Nigerian legislation and the functioning of law enforcement. Chapter 4 is devoted to gender-related issues, such as the widespread domestic violence of which mainly women are victims, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) the prevalence of which is steadily decreasing, and child and forced marriages largely occurring in northern Nigeria. Trafficking of Human Beings (THB) is discussed only briefly as this topic is covered comprehensively in the abovementioned Sex Trafficking of Women report. Chapter 5 is dedicated to the situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT) persons, and their treatment by society and authorities, and discusses the impact of the recent legislation prohibiting same sex marriages. The sixth chapter gives an overview of the main religions in Nigeria, and highlights several types of violence and conflicts linked to religion. Finally, Chapter 7 focuses on human rights issues related to secret societies (such as the Ogboni), university cults (violence, recruitment and the possible consequences of refusing such a cult), the occurrence of ritual killings, and chieftaincy succession issues.

Background
This report was written in the framework of the EASO Operating Plan to Italy, Measure ITA 5: "Professional development activities and study visits" [3] . Two COI specialists from Norway and The Netherlands were deployed to an EASO Asylum Support Team, to support the Italian COI unit in drafting a report on selected topics in Nigeria. The report was written in accordance with the EASO COI Report Methodology. It was reviewed by COI experts from Denmark, Portugal, the Republic of Slovenia and Switzerland in order to ensure the highest quality. The drafting of this report was finalised on 8 May 2017.

EASO will continue to produce such reports on important countries of origin and update them regularly in order to raise and harmonise COI standards in the EU and to further support the practical implementation of the Common European Asylum System.

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Further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office by contacting Mr Jean-Pierre Schembri at: jean-pierre.schembri@easo.europa.eu

1 All reports are available via EASO's website: https://www.easo.europa.eu/information-analysis/country-origin-information/country-reports
2 EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland.
3 EASO, EASO Operating Plan to Italy, 22 December 2016.

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