

## Overview of operating query systems relevant to migration and asylum

### What is a query system?

A query system is a tool used to collect precise information on a topical issue in a relatively short timeframe. Query systems in the area of migration and asylum allow participating entities to formulate a question and receive replies on a variety of issues concerning policies, practice and legislation, as well as elicit information on statistical trends. This information is aimed to address the countries' immediate information needs in the above areas and obtain a comparative overview of the situation in the other countries that can serve as a point of reference. Information collected through queries may inform policies, practice, or legislative changes on the given subject matter, with audience ranging from senior officials and policy makers to thematic experts with an interest on the topic.

Currently, a number of query systems relevant to migration and asylum exist, managed by the **European Migration Network (EMN)**, **European Asylum Support Office (EASO)**, **General Directors' Immigration Services Conference (GDISC)** and **Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC)**.

### About the actors

The [European Asylum Support Office \(EASO\)](#) is a European Union agency, established in 2011, to assist Member States in the implementation of the Common European Asylum System and provide support to Member States, whose asylum systems are under pressure. Under its founding Regulation, among others, EASO acts as a centre of expertise on asylum; contributes to the development of the Common European Asylum; and provides evidence-based input for EU policy-making and legislation in all areas having a direct or indirect impact on asylum.

The [European Migration Network \(EMN\)](#) is an EU network of migration and asylum experts, established in 2008, who work together to gather objective, policy-relevant, comparable and up-to-date information and knowledge on emerging issues relating to asylum and migration in Europe. EMN produces inter alia reports, studies and policy briefs with analysis of policy and legislative development and implementation. The EMN is coordinated by the European Commission, which is assisted by service providers.

The [General Directors' Immigration Services Conference \(GDISC\)](#) is a network established in 2004 in order to facilitate practical and operational cooperation in the field of asylum and migration between the Immigration Services of the different member countries. The various forms of cooperation include exchanging experiences, developing best practices, informal meetings between the General Directors, advising EU institutions on operational asylum and migration issues and building up networks of experts.

The [Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees \(IGC\)](#), is an informal, non-decision making forum for intergovernmental information exchange and policy debate on issues of relevance to the management of international migratory flows. Created in 1985, the IGC currently brings together 17 participating states, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, and the EU.

### Why this overview?

There are substantial differences in the query systems operated by the four actors, with each system having its own relative strengths and added-value. Users can profit from the advantages offered by the four query systems in choosing which forum to use for their query. The aim of this overview is to provide experts in national administrations, who may be interested in getting insights from other states in regards to migration and asylum issues, with key information about each query system to consider when deciding to launch a query via a specific system to best suit their information needs

Please note that **EMN**, **EASO**, **GDISC** and **IGC** are looking into modalities of how to address possible duplication of query proposals and avoid repetitive requests directed at countries replying to a query. To this end, in case a similar query has been already answered, upon communication among the four organizations, a possibility will be explored to share with you an overview of already existing information. Based on this, you will have the option to either request a more up-to-date follow up query or, should the provided overview be sufficient, withdraw your request.

	<b>EASO query system</b> 	<b>EMN query system</b> 	<b>GDISC query system</b> 	<b>IGC query system</b> 
<b>Thematic scope</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal migration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legal migration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legal migration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legal migration
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International protection (including asylum and country of origin information)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International protection (including asylum)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International protection (including asylum and country of origin information)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International protection (including asylum and country of origin information)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship and statelessness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Citizenship and statelessness	<input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship and statelessness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Citizenship and statelessness
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Integration (but with a focus on content protection)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Integration	<input type="checkbox"/> Integration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Integration
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Borders and visas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Borders and visas	<input type="checkbox"/> Borders and visas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Borders and visas
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Irregular migration (but only asylum-related aspects of detention)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Irregular migration and people smuggling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Irregular migration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Irregular migration and people smuggling
	<input type="checkbox"/> Trafficking in human beings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trafficking in human beings	<input type="checkbox"/> Trafficking in human beings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trafficking in human beings

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Return and readmission (but only asylum-related aspects)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Return and readmission	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Return	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Return and readmission
	<input type="checkbox"/> International cooperation on migration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International cooperation on migration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International cooperation on migration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International cooperation on migration
<b>Contributing countries</b>	28 EU Member States + 4 EFTA Member States (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) = <b>32 countries</b>	28 EU Member States + 2 EFTA Member States (Switzerland and Norway; Switzerland only for queries launched within the EMN <a href="#">Return Expert Group</a> - REG) = <b>30 countries</b>	28 EU Member States + 3 EFTA Member States (Iceland, Switzerland and Norway) + 3 Western Balkans States (Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYROM and Kosovo <sup>1</sup> ) + Turkey = <b>35 countries</b>	12 EU Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal <sup>2</sup> , Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom) + 2 EFTA Member States (Norway, Switzerland) + 4 non-European States (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, USA and the Republic of Korea <sup>3</sup> ) = <b>17 countries</b>
<b>Standard response times</b> <i>(deadlines applied when launching a query; in addition, if justifiable, all systems operate urgent queries)</i>	2-4 weeks	4 weeks	2-4 weeks	2-4 weeks
<b>Dissemination policy</b>	Public (COI queries) or restricted to national asylum administrations. Restricted queries may be shared with	In principle, public <sup>4</sup> ; in limited cases (e.g. queries answered through EMN REG) restricted to EMN NCPs, EC, EU Agencies	Restricted to national asylum and migration administrations	Restricted to national asylum and migration administrations

<sup>1</sup> As an observer/guest status - it does not participate in queries.

<sup>2</sup> As an observer/guest status - it participates in queries.

<sup>3</sup> As an observer/guest status - it participates in queries.

<sup>4</sup> However individual MS may opt to have their response restricted to EMN NCPs only and not for wider dissemination.

	external stakeholders upon explicit approval of the respondents.	(Frontex and EASO) as well as national asylum and migration administrations		
<b>Format of query reports</b>	Depending on the type of query: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compilation of replies,</li> <li>- Report with the main findings from a query, or</li> </ul> High content-related summary report with the main findings from the query, including additional contextual information on data and situation in the country of origin.	Depending on the thematic scope: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compilation of replies<sup>5</sup> (both public and limited), or</li> <li>- Compilation of replies supplemented by a brief summary of the main findings from a query, or</li> <li>- <a href="#">EMN Inform</a> (results of information gathered and analysed from several queries).</li> </ul>	Compilation of replies	Compilation of replies
<b>Repository of queries and reports</b>	<a href="#">Restricted areas</a> on EASO website (MB, Thematic Networks), <a href="#">IDS</a> (restricted), public EASO <a href="#">COI Portal</a> (distinction contingent on query type)	Public <a href="#">EMN website</a> , <a href="#">restricted area</a> on EMN website (distinction contingent on query type)	<a href="#">Restricted area</a> on GDISC website	<a href="#">Restricted area</a> on IGC website (general and thematic areas)
<b>Specific features to consider when launching a query</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Specific focus and expertise in asylum/international protection field;</li> <li>- According to needs, summary reports supplemented by statistical and COI information;</li> <li>- Generally internal nature of query results.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Publicly available results of a query, unless respondents indicate otherwise. In the latter case, two compilations are created, one restricted and one public;</li> <li>- Wide thematic scope;</li> <li>- Automated compilations of replies available at any chosen time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Western Balkans' and Turkey's perspective on national legal frameworks and practices;</li> <li>- Wide thematic scope;</li> <li>- Comparably "informal" exchange in terms of queries on national practices in certain areas;</li> <li>- Restricted nature of query results.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-European (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, USA) perspective on national legal frameworks and practices;</li> <li>- Wide thematic scope;</li> <li>- Official information validated by IGC States only;</li> <li>- Restricted nature of query results.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact details</b> ( <i>Whom to contact in case you are interested in launching a</i>	<a href="mailto:ids@easo.europa.eu">ids@easo.europa.eu</a> (for policy queries and general issues), <a href="mailto:reception@easo.europa.eu">reception@easo.europa.eu</a> (for	<a href="#">EMN National Contact Point</a> in a respective country (for queries), or <a href="mailto:adolfo.sommarribas@uni.lu">adolfo.sommarribas@uni.lu</a> ,	<a href="#">GDISC National Contact Point</a> in a respective country (for queries), or <a href="mailto:gdisc@bamf.bund.de">gdisc@bamf.bund.de</a> (current host	<a href="mailto:admin@igc.ch">admin@igc.ch</a> (for queries and general issues)

<sup>5</sup> Compilation of replies by questions and by responding country.

<p><i>query through one of these networks/institutions?)</i></p>	<p>reception-related queries), <a href="mailto:exclusion@easo.europa.eu">exclusion@easo.europa.eu</a> (for exclusion-related queries), <a href="mailto:EASO-Dublin@easo.europa.eu">EASO-Dublin@easo.europa.eu</a> (for Dublin-related queries), or <a href="mailto:easo.coi.query@easo.europa.eu">easo.coi.query@easo.europa.eu</a> (for COI-related queries)</p>	<p><a href="mailto:carolyne.Tah@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk">carolyne.Tah@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk</a>, <a href="mailto:emn@icf.com">emn@icf.com</a> (for general issues)</p>	<p>of GDISC Secretariat 2017-2018; for queries and general issues)</p>	
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