

Creating a  
**European  
Asylum  
Curriculum**

An Initiative for Common  
Vocational Training in Europe



The General Directors'  
Immigration Services  
Conference (GDISC)



Proposed project  
funded by the Euro-  
pean Commission



EUROPEAN ASYLUM CURRICULUM



The Project Group for the EAC



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## A Common Training System for Europe

**THE EUROPEAN ASYLUM CURRICULUM (EAC) IS A EU MEMBER STATE initiative aimed at enhancing implementation of the common European asylum policy through practical cooperation. Under the motto "Knowledge and skills for protection in Europe" the four national authorities of Sweden, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic and Spain, in cooperation with the Odysseus Network, have joined forces start the development of a complete training system for government officials working with asylum and protection-related issues all over Europe.**

Based on the European Union legal Acquis on asylum and international law as well as incorporating quality training already available in the Member States, the training system is aimed at creating a common approach to building capacity and enhancing qualities/competences among European officials working in the field of asylum. The asylum systems of the European countries are undergoing major changes in order to harmonise laws and practices with each other. What was once an area of predominately national norms is now very much a common concern through the intro-

duction of a number of EU legal instruments on asylum. The harmonisation of these instruments into national law consequently requires a build-up of capacity in the officials and institutions that are set to apply them. Whether being a Member State that newly acceded to the Union, thus having had to absorb what is largely a new legal system or being an older Member State with the challenge of changing well-known habitual practices, the need for understanding the EU Acquis will be paramount for national systems working effectively. And even more harmonisation is on the horizon through the establishment of a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) by the year 2010, envisaged by the Council of ministers in the 2004 Hague Programme on Asylum.

It is in this light that the four national authorities have decided to invest resources in a European Asylum Curriculum. It is an initiative to enhance the effectiveness of national training in the context of EU harmonisation. Confronted with this shared challenge it is highly functional for the Member States to harmonise training at this point in time. A joint training initiative will also be instrumental towards integration of European asylum procedures in the future as it introduces practical cooperation, knowledge and consensus around core issues of this future common system. A European Asylum Curriculum will also be in the interest of the asylum seeker because greater consistency and higher quality in decision and policymaking will result in diminishing differences between the countries and the likelihood of a fair and efficient procedure growing.

### The training system

The European Asylum Curriculum focuses on the creation of a training system which will facilitate training in the Member States. The system will be based on the EU legislation in force and the underlying international norms. It will educate the targeted officers in the EU Acquis on asylum as

well as best practices of different national approaches. Furthermore it will reflect the developments of international law.

The EAC will contain training materials and extensive in-depth background information as well as trainers handbooks and interactive learning aids didactically tailored for the best possible outcome. It will focus on training case-workers, management officials and policy makers in asylum matters and will deploy an arrangement of progressive education through different levels of advancement. The EAC will also rely heavily on the system of training local trainers and will support adapting the training to national dissimilarities.

At present a number of countries have established well-functioning training systems in the field of asylum. Therefore the EAC will aim at incorporating all the land-winnings of existing training of the European asylum services in order to create a the best possible tool for training in Europe.

**Working under GDISC and together with other organisations**

The initiative is organised under the auspices the General Directors' Immigration Services Conference (GDISC), an organisation that represents the 32 General Directors of the European asylum services with the main aim of enhancing and enabling practical cooperation between Member State authorities in the field of immigration and asylum. The EAC, currently the largest GDISC-project, will be realised under proposed co-funding by the European Commission.

Advancing the knowledge and skills in European asylum services is key to the development of good practices and effective protection for refugees coming to our continent. The EAC will therefore work closely with the Odysseus Academic Network of university professors, researchers and scholars in order to gain expert knowledge in the theory of European refugee law. Furthermore the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) and the

International Association for Refugee Law Judges (IARLJ) as well as the European Commission are invited to participate in the creation of the learning system by the establishment of a Reference Group. This group will contribute with a broader perspective on the issues at hand.

**Implementing the EAC collectively**

In order to achieve the goals of the European Asylum Curriculum all Member States will be invited to input ideas, share expertise and implement the EAC, making it a common creation for the benefit of all. In June 2006 the European countries will be called to participate in the Working Conference "Toward a European Asylum Curriculum" in Madrid, Spain. At this conference a first proposal for the outline of the training system will be drawn up and important issues on content, learning methods and implementation can be discussed. In October 2006 a complete outline for the EAC will be presented to the General Directors at their annual GDISC-meeting in Prague together with a first introductory module on EU law and asylum.

In the years 2007 and 2008 it's our hope that Member States will work together to create the content of the EAC, using the outline finalised in 2006 as a blueprint. At this time a system for national adaptation and implementation will be developed and local trainers trained and facilitated to carry out the training in the Member States.

2006

**Establishing the Curriculum and the first Module**

Working out a detailed and multilaterally approved curriculum through the means of a referral procedure culminating in a conference with representatives of MS. The project will also produce a first module for the coming toolbox: "Introductory module to European Asylum Law"

2007

**Creating the training system**

A team of experts from the participating MS and the Odysseus Network will create the content and didactics of the EAC. The learning system will focus on different target groups (with an emphasis on case workers) and will have diverse levels of advancement

2008

**Implementing the EAC**

Local trainers will be selected and trained in using the EAC. Parts of the learning material will be translated to be used in national training and the EAC will assist the MS with implementation through different means (such as e-learning, ambulating experts, etc.)

## European Asylum Curriculum Concept Paper



The Dutch Immigration  
and Naturalisation  
Service



Ministry of  
Interior of the  
Czech Republic



The Spanish  
Ministry of Interior



Odysseus Network

The European Asylum Curriculum is a project initiated by the national authorities of Sweden, The Netherlands, The Czech Republic and Spain in co-operation with the Odysseus Academic Network. The project is realised under the auspices of the General Directors' Immigration Services Conference (GDISC) and with proposed co-funding from the European Commission.

### The EAC Project Group, from left:

Oskar Ekblad (project manager representing Sweden), Göran Larson (project group member representing Sweden), Erwin Mom (the Netherlands, financial administration), Louise Wahlström (Sweden, administrative co-ordination), Philippe DeBruycker (project group member representing the Odysseus Network), Krista Andersson (Sweden, financial administration), Rafael Garcia (project group member representing Spain), Eva Cervinkova (project group member representing Czech Republic) and Minke Vorstenbosch (project group member representing the Netherlands).



For further information log on to: [www.gdisc.org/eac](http://www.gdisc.org/eac)  
or contact:

Oskar Ekblad  
Tel: +46 40 22 57 19  
[oskar.ekblad@migrationsverket.se](mailto:oskar.ekblad@migrationsverket.se)

Göran Larsson  
Tel: +46 11 15 61 91  
[goran.larsson@migrationsverket.se](mailto:goran.larsson@migrationsverket.se)

Minke Vorstenbosch  
Tel: +31 70-3709375  
[mvorsten@ind.minjus.nl](mailto:mvorsten@ind.minjus.nl)

Eva Cervinkova  
Tel: +420 974 827 547  
[opuiozp@mvr.cz](mailto:opuiozp@mvr.cz)

Rafael Garcia  
Tel: +34 91537 21 03  
[rafagar@refugio.mir.es](mailto:rafagar@refugio.mir.es)

Philippe DeBruycker  
Tel. +32 2 650 38 90  
[debruyck@ulb.ac.be](mailto:debruyck@ulb.ac.be)

Jitske Janmaat/Gill Lawrenson (GDISC secretariat)  
Tel: +31 70-3703329 / 9302  
[jjanmaat@ind.minjus.nl](mailto:jjanmaat@ind.minjus.nl)



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