

## ► Profiling of asylum seekers

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**Study**  
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## **List of Abbreviations**

### **General**

CoA	Country of Asylum
CoO	Country of Origin
COI	Country of Origin Information
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IGC	Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
SGBV	Sex and Gender-based Violence
SRBs	Subject Related Briefings
UAMs	Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

### **Asylum and migration departments and databases**

AMS	Application Management System, New Zealand
AVES	Database of the Reception Centers (Asylsuchenden Verwaltung Empfangsstellen), Switzerland
AZR	Central Register of Foreigners (Ausländerzentralregister), Germany.
BAG	Federal Health Agency (Bundesamt für Gesundheit), Switzerland
BAMF	Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Germany
CBSA	Canada Border Service Agency
CGRS	Office of the Commissioner-General for Refugees and Stateless Persons, Ministry of Interior, Belgium
CIC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada
CTRA	Claim Type Recording Application, Canada
DUFrapp	Reporting tool of the Computer system for Immigration and Refugee cases (Datasytemet for utlendingsforvaltningen), Norway
FOSS	Field Operations Support System, Canada
OA	Office of Aliens, Ministry of Interior, Belgium
INZ	Immigration New Zealand
IRB	Immigration and Refugee Board, Canada
MARiS	Migration Asylum Re-integration System, Germany
NCMS	National Case Management System, Canada
RSB	Refugee Status Branch, New Zealand
STAR	System for Tracking Appellants and Refugees, Canada
UDB	Migration database (Utlendingsbase), Norway
UMA	Electronic case management system for immigration processes, Finland
Umarek	Register for reception centers, Finland
ZEMIS	Central Migration Information System, Switzerland

## Introduction

Profiling is an outstanding tool for strengthening the asylum process in all its facets. By asking the question who the asylum seekers are, profiling is immediately placed at the heart of refugee protection.

By looking out for relevant, precise and reliable information on the asylum seekers from the moment they submit their asylum claim, and by organizing this information in well-defined and easily accessible way, profiling puts the RSD procedure from the onset on the right track. By gaining an overview of the profiles within a certain caseload the RSD manager can start to plan the further asylum procedure. Based on the profiles Country of Origin Information (COI) can be searched prior to the interview, instead of conducting case driven COI research after the interview. For the most important profiles RSD guidelines can be drafted, guiding the attention of the COI researcher and the RSD officer to the questions at issue in the RSD. Follow up on the unity of jurisprudence within the office can be done more effectively if similar claims are grouped together by profile. The identification of specific needs, in the first place gathered for the organization of the reception and lodging of asylum seekers, will be not less important for the proper management of the RSD interview. Claims of vulnerable asylum seekers will be assigned to specially trained RSD officers. Further the identification of specific needs will enable the RSD officer to assess the fear for persecution with a good knowledge of the individual background of the asylum seeker.

Profiling is often a result of cooperation with other organization and can be a tool for strengthening partnerships. The capacity of sharing information will in itself put the asylum office in a stronger position when negotiating cooperation agreements with reception organizations, ngo's and other migration departments. Having updated, detailed and reliable information on asylum seekers at hand will make the office an indispensable partner for the press and the academic world and will reflect positively on the image of the office.

Next to the operational merits of profiling for the asylum procedure, profiling has in itself also a direct positive impact on the protection of asylum seeker, first of all by identifying persons with specific needs, as mentioned above, in a timely way and secondly by providing the departments that are responsible for shelter, integration and voluntary repatriation with sufficient information which enables them to design targeted assistance programs.

When making a comparison between the IGC countries we see that most countries have developed a database from which profiles of asylum seekers can be drawn. From the databases analyzed Norway, Switzerland and Canada possess the most complete databases which makes them the forerunners in the field of profiling. Specific needs, however, were in all examined databases underrepresented.

The strength of profiling is immediately linked to the capacity of the database operated by the office and the question to what extent this database is fully integrated in the daily work of the office. To achieve a good integration of the database certain principles have to be respected. The most important one is that users who put the data

into the database have easy access to the data and are able to export the data into flexible and customized reports. The ownership of the users over the database will provide the best basis for a complete and reliable database.

In the first part of this paper we will examine in which way profiling can be put to use to streamline the RSD process. We will look as well at the impact profiling can have on the broader protection environment of refugees in Belgium and to what extent it can impact the search for durable solutions (return or integration). Thirdly it will be explored in which way profiling can be an excellent tool for strengthening of the external communication of the office.

In the second part of this paper we will look more in detail into the practical and technical aspects of profiling through the use of a database. The starting point throughout the paper will be the database that is used by the Belgium Office of the Commissioner-General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS). The database of the CGRS will be compared with the database of five other industrialized countries; Australia, Canada, Finland, Norway and Switzerland. This comparison is based on a request for information on profiling of asylum seekers through the forum of the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC). The database analysis in the different countries was based on a spreadsheet, discussing all the fields which frequently occur in databases on asylum seekers.

In the third part a number of concrete recommendations for the improvement of the database of the CGRS are made. The quality of the profiling at the CGRS can be greatly improved by integrating the screening phase of the RSD procedure and a part of the RSD interview into the database (Recommendation 1 and 3), by rethinking the key word system to describe the nature of the asylum claim (Recommendation 2) and developing a module on specific needs (Recommendation 5) and lastly by strengthening the link with other databases on asylum seekers in Belgium. We hope that these recommendations can also be useful as a case study for other databases.

## **Profiling**

Profiling of asylum seekers is any description of a group of asylum seekers, who share common characteristics, that goes beyond the classic statistical data of nationality, sex, age and date of asylum-claims.

Profiling is mostly associated with the registration phase when most of the information is collected. In operations where profiling is introduced, the impact is most often highest on the registration procedures. Profiling will require an efficient registration procedure; old registration system will be rationalized, standard operation procedures will be introduced, control mechanisms will be established. Introducing profiling will have an overall positive effect on the quality of registration; more people in need of protection will be registered and their specific needs will be better known. However, profiling is not limited to registration. In the subsequent phase of the asylum procedure (RSD interview and evaluation) more information is gathered and corrections may be made to the individual data. The reasons of the claim will only become clear in this phase. Further (next to the characteristics of the asylum seeker and the reasons for the claim) profiling will also collect information on the RSD decisions; the type of decision, the reasons on which this decision is based and, if

applicable, information on other legal status the person may have obtain or information on the return to the home country.

Profiling of asylum seekers will make use of following groups of data;

- Basic bio data
- Data related to the Life in Country of Origin (CoO)
- Specific Needs (vulnerable groups)
- Data related to the Life in Country of Asylum (CoA)
- Formal aspects of the asylum-application
- Type of the asylum claim
- Type of decision taken on the refugee status or other legal status

Profiling usually goes hand in hand with the development or expansion of a database. One can in fact think of two different types of profiling. In the first type, RSD officers or managers, who have extensive experience with specific caseloads, are approached with the request to give more detailed descriptions on the groups of asylum seekers they are most familiar with (for example female asylum seekers from East Congo). The RSD officers/managers will use their personal notes and memories to draft profiles based on all the elements they judge relevant. The more meticulous RSD officer may go through the interview notes of each file one by one. Such profiles will be presented on one sheet of paper in a well-cared-for descriptive text.

The second type, and the focus of this paper, is the profiling which is carried out by the use of a database. When comparing the manual way of profiling with the electronic one, we will quickly find a number of disadvantages to the manual method:

- The manual method is time consuming for the RSD-officer or manager involved and for the person who is waiting for the information,
- The description may not be accurate (due to incomplete notes or memory),
- The description depends on the knowledge and interpretation of one person,
- The profile will be difficult to compare with profiles of other regions or CoO or even with the year before, because data may be collected and presented each time in a different way,
- Once the profile has been completed, the data are not dynamic. In order to highlight another aspect of the caseload, the same work has to be done all over again,
- When the experienced RSD officer who provides us with the profiles leaves the office, the knowledge will leave with him or her,

A database makes the key-data on every claim available in an intelligible way and at any point in time. Condition is that the data are entered in a correct and reliable way in the database. How this can be met and the principles that need to be followed will be discussed in detail in the second part of this paper.

The first objection that is often raised when discussing profiling through a database is that the data entry is in itself a cumbersome and time consuming process. Investing in profiling would go against what we have learned to know as 'lean procedures,' where redundant actions, actions that do not result directly in an increased output (that is protection) for the stakeholders, are gleaned out as much as possible. In this paper we will argue the contrary. We will show that profiling through an electronic database, when applied in a strategic and well thought-out way, is in fact an appropriate tool to



design 'lean procedures' for processing of asylum claims. Profiling attaches a handle to every asylum claim, which gives the RSD manager the possibility to streamline the procedure. We will argue at the same time that in many circumstances profiling also results directly in an increased protection of the refugees and asylum seekers. Protection starts when a person in need has been identified, when its specific needs are known to the authorities and when the information is recorded in such a way that follow-up and/or referral is possible.

# **I. Profiling as a tool for RSD management and refugee protection**

## ***1. Profiling in the context of Refugee and IDP camps***

While this paper deals with profiling of the asylum system in industrialized countries, it will be instructive to look shortly at the practice of profiling in the setting of refugee and internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in less developed countries.

When comparing refugee programs in less developed countries with those in the industrialized countries, two differences jump immediately to the eye. First, refugee and IDP programs in less developed countries are faced with a manifest shortage of financial and human resources. As a result governments and humanitarian agencies are most often not able to offer individually tailored assistance. A situation where every asylum seeker gets the assistance of a social worker who follows up on their specific needs on an individual basis is not possible. Less developed countries are instead compelled to organize the assistance at a group level. A good understanding of the profile of the group is for this purpose essential.

Secondly, regular governmental departments in less developed countries are often already overburdened to provide services to their own citizens. They are unable to extend their services to refugees or even to IDPs. Humanitarian agencies and specialized government agencies in the field of refugee and IDP protection therefore have to organize all the aspects of assistance themselves; education, health, water and sanitation, shelter, nutrition, income generation, community services... Refugee and IDP agencies can only build out a targeted assistance program in these fields when they have at their disposal a detailed description of the profile of the beneficiaries.

It should not come as surprise then that agencies working in developing countries, and most notably the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), invest highly in their profiling capacity. Next to the differences between the developing and industrialized world, there are however many more similarities which enable industrialized countries to learn from the profiling experience in less developed countries.

The Norwegian Refugee Council describes the core data on profiling as follows;

1. the number of refugees or IDPs,
2. disaggregated by age and
3. sex,
4. their present location,
5. the causes of displacement,
6. the patterns of displacement,
7. the protection concerns,
8. the key humanitarian needs and
9. potential solutions<sup>1</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (Edited by), Guidance on Profiling Internally Displaced Persons, April 2008, Geneva.

The rationale of profiling in refugee and IDP camps and settlements is;

1. advocacy,
2. strengthening of the protection environment,
3. design of targeted assistance programs and
4. search for durable solutions.

Humanitarian agencies see profiling first and foremost as a tool for advocacy and fund raising. An international humanitarian response is only possible when the world knows that there are refugees and IDPs in a certain part of the world, who they are and why they were displaced. Donors will not be willing to provide money unless they have reliable information on the number of beneficiaries and the exact scope of their needs. Profiling is therefore a means of survival for the refugee and IDP agencies. The situation in industrialized countries may be less pressing, but is essentially not different in the long term. To ensure funding of the refugee program it is not less important to gain the support and understanding of the public. Having reliable and detailed information on the asylum seekers and refugees offers a strong basis for the external communication of any asylum agency.

Secondly profiling aims at identifying the vulnerable groups among a refugee or IDP population. UNHCR maintains following categories of specific needs in its operations;

1. Child at risk,
2. Woman at risk,
3. Single parent,
4. Serious medical condition,
5. Specific legal / physical protection needs,
6. Sexual and gender based violence<sup>2</sup>,
7. Unaccompanied or separated child,
8. Older person at risk,
9. Disability,
10. Family unity,
11. Victims of torture,

The specific needs on which an operation needs to focus differ according to the origin of the refugee population and the local protection environment in the CoA, but profiling of vulnerable groups is as relevant to programs in industrialized countries as it is in less developed countries in order to identify cases that require close follow-up by social workers, other agencies, and the community.

Thirdly, although the nature of assistance programs in less developed countries may differ considerably from what we find in industrialized countries because of the multitude of domains they cover, profiling will also assist industrialized countries to design their integration and educational programs and to conduct specific actions around, for example, survivors of violence, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), victims of trauma or child soldiers.

The comparison stops where resettlement comes in as one of the most important aspects of profiling in the less developed world. To meet the requirement of resettlement countries, UNHCR will often engage in recording very detailed bio information (extended family, skills and occupation, knowledge of languages,...) Resettlement is one of the three durable solutions for refugees in less developed

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<sup>2</sup> UNHCR, Guidance on the Use of Standardized Specific Needs Codes, 2009, UNHCR Internal Document, IOM-FOM No. 030/2009. (Not published)

countries, next to return to the CoO when the circumstances are conducive, and local integration in the country of asylum.

## **2. Profiling of files prior to interview; the screening phase**

One of the core operational applications of profiling in the RSD process is undoubtedly the screening of the files of the asylum seekers in preparation of the RSD interview. During the screening a short profile of the asylum seeker is extracted from every file. This enables the RSD manager to plan the RSD interviews and to set up specific actions.

We will discuss the operational advantages of profiling prior to the interview in detail. Because the RSD procedure of Belgium is taken as a reference point, we will first shortly describe the initial part of the RSD procedure in Belgium. An example on the role of the screening phase in Country Actions is presented for Serbia and Macedonia. Under the recommendations, in the third part of this paper, a concrete proposal will be elaborated on how the screening phase can be incorporated in the database of the CGRS.

### **A. The screening phase within the RSD procedure at the CGRS**

Asylum seekers in Belgium have to lodge their asylum-claim with the Office of Aliens (OA), Ministry of Interior. The OA takes a digital photograph of the asylum seeker, takes the fingerprints in the Eurodac system and conducts a preliminary interview with the asylum seeker. During the preliminary interview the following data are collected;

1. Basic bio data,
2. Family members (parents, spouse, children, brothers and sisters and other family members living in an EU State),
3. Earlier asylum applications,
4. Residence permits and visa,
5. Travel route,
6. Short overview of asylum-claim (earlier imprisonments, condemnations, political activities, fear upon return, earlier facts of persecution),

Based on this information the OA verifies if Belgium is responsible for the asylum-claim in the context of the Dublin regulation. In case of a second request for asylum in Belgium, the OA also has the authority to verify if the asylum seeker has provided any new elements to support his second claim. If Belgium is responsible to treat the asylum-claim the OA will transfer the file to the CGRS.

At the CGRS the basic bio data are recorded in its database by the administrative unit. According to the nationality of the applicant the file will be sent to one of the five geographical sections (Congo, Africa, Middle East - Asia, Eastern Europe and the Balkans). Based on the information in the file the geographical sections will then screen the file to prepare the RSD interview. The screening is normally carried out by the head of the geographical section or his/her deputy. In this way the head of the section keeps an overview of all the files that arrive in the office. In one section the screening is carried out by the administrative support unit.

## **B. Operational benefits of profiling/screening prior to the interview**

This screening process is in itself a kind of profiling firstly by providing the RSD manager an overview on the files that are present in his section. It is one of the main tools for the management of the RSD process and to improve the quality and efficiency of the procedure. There are other concrete ways in which RSD managers and officers benefit from the profiling/screening at this stage, some of which are listed below.

### **A. Allocation of files to the appropriate RSD officer**

- **Nationality**  
Every RSD officer is specialized in a certain number of countries; the files are allocated according to the specialization.
- **Unaccompanied minors (UAMs)**  
UAMs are only interviewed by RSD officers who have volunteered for this and have received a specialized training.
- **Gender sensitive files**  
At the OA the asylum seekers with a gender sensitive asylum claim can indicate if they prefer to be interviewed at the CGRS by a man or a woman. In clear and grave cases such as rape or FGM, the file will always be allocated to a RSD officer of the same sex, even when the asylum seeker did not express a preference.
- **Complex profile or theme**  
Certain complex profiles and themes are allocated to RSD officers with more extensive experience. This is the case when the exclusion clauses need to be considered, but also for example for asylum seekers from East-Congo.
- **New RSD officers**  
As opposed to the previous point, care is given that new RSD officers receive profiles which are more straightforward and do not contain a complex theme.

### **B. Timely and relevant Country of Origin Information**

The screening gives a picture of the profile of all the files present in the office that have not yet been interviewed or for which no decision has been taken. This enables the research department to pro-actively gather information on certain profiles of asylum seekers prior to the interview.

When considering an asylum-claim, the research for COI takes up a large part of the time invested in the file. Often the request for research is only started up after the interview. Research carried out before the interview will considerably shorten the time spent on a file and it will help the RSD officer to steer the interview towards the most relevant facts.

Too often the Research Department is pressed to deliver COI information on a certain profile within a short time, while the files were already present in the office for a longer time

### **C. Planning of the interview**

For some countries where the rate of no shows for the RSD interview is relatively high, experienced RSD managers are able to pick up signs from the file which indicate to them that a certain asylum seeker may very well not show up for the

interview. These signs often involve the medical reasons that are invoked by the asylum seeker or sometimes the lawyer who intervenes. In these cases the RSD manager may decide to allocate only two hours to the interview instead of the usual four. If other interviews are planned on the same morning or afternoon, the manager can make sure that the second file does not have a complex profile, but invokes for example mainly economical reasons for his or her file.

#### **D. Country specific actions in case of mass influx or backlog**

The screening/profiling enables the RSD manager to plan country specific actions in case of a mass influx or when a backlog for a certain profile or country has built up. These country specific actions are needed to master the situation. In case the influx is a result of massive abuse of the asylum-procedure, a country specific action on RSD will be an important part of a broader set of measures which may include information campaigns in the CoO, specific information campaigns towards the asylum seekers who are already in the country and repatriation programs for those whose asylum-claims have been rejected (for a recent example of Belgian action refer to Box 1).

The action normally exists of a concentrated combination of the other tools offered by the screening/profiling phase.

- The case-load is screened and divided into different **profiles**.
- From this point **priority** can be given to certain profiles based on their size (number of files) or specific needs.
- For every profile **specific COI** is being collected, which serves as a basis for the interview.
- Based on the available COI, **check-lists** can be drafted to verify, for example, a person's origin or his/her membership of a certain political party. These check-lists offer the RSD officer a backbone for the interview and expedite the procedure. The RSD officer is normally not requested to exhaust the questions in the check-list, but s/he picks out the most relevant questions. The RSD officer will further complement the check-list with questions adapted to the individual background of the asylum seeker.
- For every profile the necessity of specific **RSD guidelines** is considered, which enables the RSD officer to focus after the free narrative on the most relevant aspects of the claim. Guidelines will also help the COI research to concentrate on the questions at issue.
- The availability of **specialized RSD officers, interpreters** and, in case the action concerns UAMs, the tutors can be planned in advance.

Next to a quick and efficient procedure, country specific actions will have some additional advantages, some of which are listed below:

- ✓ The treatment of similar profiles over a short period of time will enforce the **cohesion of the jurisprudence** among the RSD-officers.
- ✓ The relative short period of time in which an action is carried will break off the attempts of persons who try to **abuse the asylum-procedure** by making up asylum-claims that anticipate on the questions regularly asked during the interview and on the available COI.

The key to success for country specific actions is the establishing of the link between the profiles and concrete COI. The COI will stipulate for each profile to what extent protection can be expected to be available in the CoO. On the other hand, profile-oriented COI will show which aspects of a claim need to be confirmed in order to establish a well founded fear for persecution or a real risk of suffering serious harm. The link with the COI will further offer guidance on how to verify the credibility of the main aspects of the claim.

#### **Example of a Country Specific Action; Serbia and Macedonia**

In February 2010 Belgium was confronted with a mass influx of asylum seekers from Serbia and Macedonia. In February we recorded 401 asylum-claims from Macedonia. This is over the period of one month about the double of all the asylum-claims Belgium received from Macedonia in the whole year 2009 (201 asylum claims). From Serbia 330 asylum claims were filed in February 2010, while the monthly average in 2009 was only 42. The mass influx was a result of the removal of visa-requirements for these countries, combined with rumors that in Belgium every asylum seeker will receive automatically a house and an allowance of 800 euro<sup>3</sup>.

An action was set up and the files were divided into following profiles;

- |                                   |                            |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Prosecution                    | 9. Politics / elections    |
| 2. Socio-economic / Health        | 10. Vendetta               |
| 3. Militia UÇK-M                  | 11. Mixed marriage         |
| 4. Militia UÇPMB                  | 12. Psychological problems |
| 5. Minority                       | 13. Military service       |
| 6. Police (general)               | 14. Religious conversion   |
| 7. Alpha (police force Macedonia) | 15. General situation      |
| 8. Arrest 10 Albanians (Serbia)   |                            |

For every profile **questionnaires** and **RSD guidelines** were drafted. This enabled the RSD officers to interview on a focused way. Next to the RSD guidelines also examples of decisions (paragraphs) were made available for each profile to facilitate the editing of the decision.

Four of the fifteen profiles are profiles which are specific for one country; Militia UÇK-M, militia UÇPMB, the police force Alpha and the event of the arrest of 10 Albanians in Serbia. This gives us a clear indication that any system which describes asylum-claims through key-words should be flexible enough to make the use of **country specific key words** possible.

The planned duration of the interview was set at 1 hour 30 to 2 hours. Only for members of a minority and persons with psychological problems 4 hours were planned. In case a claim was more complicated than initially expected the asylum seeker was called up again on a later date to complete the interview. During the project it became clear that a distinction had to be made between **profiles for which the credibility had to be verified** and the profiles which could be assessed based on the available protection. Interviews for the first group took much longer than the second. Profiles for which the credibility had to be verified include minorities, vendetta, high level members of political parties or militia and persons with psychological problems.

To carry out the project the CGRS **increased its manpower** to conduct RSD, but without hiring new staff. Collaborators of the CGRS who had previously worked as RSD-officers, but who had taken up functions in the supporting departments (judicial department, training unit, coordination of interpreters,...) were mobilized to carry out the RSD interviews. Finding additional interpreters did not pose a problem thanks to the extensive experience of the CGRS in dealing with cases of the Balkans.

<sup>3</sup> Brussel Nieuws, [Albanezen komen massaal naar Brussel](http://www.brusselnieuws.be/artikels/stadsnieuws/albanezen-komen-massal-naar-brussel), 24 februari 2010, <http://www.brusselnieuws.be/artikels/stadsnieuws/albanezen-komen-massal-naar-brussel> (consulted on 30/07/2010).

### **3. RSD guidelines**

RSD guidelines connect profiles with specific COI. They don't do this by putting blindly next to each other a profile with corresponding COI, as this could be done as well without guidelines. More than that they determine which type of COI is relevant to carry out the RSD for a certain profile by analyzing the profiles and the COI in connection with the relevant laws and conventions on international protection. Profiles will tell you who asked for asylum and on what grounds. RSD guidelines will transform into legal and human rights categories and focus the attention of the RSD officer and COI researcher on the questions at issue to determine the RSD.

In the case of the Country action on Macedonia and Serbia for example the RSD guidelines made a distinction between profiles for which the credibility had to be checked and those for which this was not necessary. For the profiles where the credibility had to be checked, specific COI had to be made available; detailed information on minorities or the structure of political parties or militia's. For the other profiles information on the availability of state protection was more relevant.

Profiles will determine if a guideline will be written or not (it would be counterproductive to write guidelines on profiles that rarely occur) and to which guideline priority has to be given. COI reports that are structured along the different types of human rights violations are not as effective for an RSD officer as a guideline that is based on the profile of the asylum seekers who have actually left the CoO. To take just one example, the body of the recent guidelines on Eritrean asylum seekers of UNHCR consists of following headings;

- Draft evaders/deserters
- Political opponents and critics
  - Members of opposition political groups and dissidents
  - Journalists and other media professionals
  - Trade unionists and labour right activists
- Members of minority religious groups
- Women
- Homosexuals<sup>4</sup>

### **4. Case Law**

The case law of an RSD office can in general be deducted from the different RSD guidelines that operate within the office. However, these guidelines will not show you which decisions were actually taken or for example how many claims of a certain profile were rejected on credibility issues or well-foundedness of fear.

Figures that are often available are the number of times a certain type of decision has been taken for a certain CoO. This, again, will give you a general idea of the case law, but it will not help you to gain understanding in which circumstances a certain type of decision has been taken. This level of understanding will only be reached when the types of decision are linked to the individual profiles which occur in that country.

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<sup>4</sup> UNHCR, Eligibility guidelines for assessing the international protection needs of asylum seekers from Eritrea, April 2009



The comprehension of the decision process can be further refined by not only recording the legal grounds of a decision, but also the material grounds. By material grounds we understand here the concrete application of a legal ground, for example 'membership of political party is not credible' or 'possibility of internal flight alternative'. The categorization of decisions will be discussed more in detail in the second part of this paper.

Information that is detailed to this level will enable the RSD manager to watch over the unity of the application of case law across the different sections of the RSD system in a certain country. This information will also be particularly interesting when comparing it over the borders with other countries.

## **5. External communication**

An internal study on the depiction of the CGRS in the press showed that asylum agencies are frequently at risk to appear in a bad light<sup>5</sup>. Without wanting to generalize, news articles tend to be more interested in the anecdotic, the personal and sensational. Negative experiences of asylum seekers are spread out in articles without including the point of view of the asylum agency. Because the CGRS is committed to respecting the privacy of the asylum seekers, it is often not in a position to react to the articles even when the facts portrayed in the article are not correct. CGRS reasons, and rightly so, that not respecting the protection of individual information of asylum seekers would all in all do more harm to the image of the organization than one opinion of an asylum seeker or a journalist can be expected to do.

To protect itself from this weakness and to avoid being pushed always in a defensive position, the study showed that the CGRS should invest in a pro-active communication strategy. Next to strengthening of relations with the press and NGO's and taking more initiative to start new dialogue, having reliable, detailed and quickly available data on the asylum seekers is one of the cornerstones of a pro-active communication strategy. When the CGRS manages to provide quickly updated information on the profile of its asylum seekers, the reasons of the claims and their evolutions, journalists will know that they can turn to the CGRS when they need more information in the future. Only when this has been achieved can it be expected that a journalist will also contact the CGRS to verify a story when he has been approached by an individual asylum seeker or a lawyer who claims to be treated unjustly by the CGRS.

Recently Samira Bendadi, a journalist of the MO\*magazine, a Belgian magazine on global news approached the CGRS with the question what the proportion is of Christians among the asylum seekers from the Middle-East and how many of them are recognized as refugees. She asked the questions in the context of an article on the

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<sup>5</sup> Pascal De Maertelaere, Het CGVS in de nederlandstalige geschreven pers. Een analyse van de periode 1999-2008 en een actieplan voor een aanscherping van het persbeleid, het voorzien van evenwichtige informatie en het tot stand brengen van een waarheidsgetrouw beeld van het CGVS en haar activiteiten, CGRS, Brussels, 2008 (not published).

emigration of Christians from the Middle-East.<sup>6</sup> To answer the question properly the CGRS would need to have recorded the religion of all asylum seekers coming from a Middle Eastern country. From those who claimed to be Christian the percentage of which the religion was not found credible after assessment. And for those whose Christian religion was found plausible, the number of asylum-seekers who claimed asylum based on religious persecution. For countries of the Middle East it may even be interesting to record as well the specific key word 'religion; persecution after conversion'. All this information is in fact available in the office, but it sleeps inside the physical files. Systematic entry of the religion, key words on the nature of the claim and the type and grounds of the decision, would have made the information available to the RSD manager in minutes.

Such questions give an indication of the enormous amount of information of which an asylum agency disposes and that is of great interest to the investigative journalism and the academic world. The events which force people to leave their country are generally known in the media even before the asylum claim is made. However, it is not known how deep the impact is of a certain event on the population, which groups are the most affected and to what extent these events has an impact on migration. The need for information is surely not covered by a communication on the increase or decrease of the number of asylum seekers by country. Journalists are interested in profiles, around which they can write their story. Like in the example above these profiles are often not limited to one CoO, but concern a whole region of origin or even the total asylum seeker population.

## **6. Profile based COI**

The relation between profiling and COI has already been shortly discussed under the screening phase. This was to emphasize the importance of timely information on the profile of asylum seekers for an effective management of the research department.

In general, profiling enables the research department to carry out its research based on certain themes and subjects, instead of answering to individual questions on a certain asylum-claim. The research department of the CGRS, Cedoca, has changed over the last years its way of working in this direction. Previously COI researchers answered directly to questions of RSD officers on individual cases in order to help them to come to a decision. These individual questions have a double disadvantage. First, they are generally asked after the interview has taken place and thus prolonging the time spent on reaching an RSD decision. Secondly, because they are asked on an individual basis, the gathered information is dispersed over individual "answer documents" which often overlap each other and is difficult to conduct a search among the accumulated documents.

During the last years Cedoca has moved away from answer documents towards the editing 'Subject Related Briefings' (SRBs). The SRBs elaborate on topics which appear frequently in asylum-claims. Typically they concern a certain political party, or a description of the organization of security forces, etc. A special type of SRBs

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<sup>6</sup> Samira Bendadi, *Christenen in het Midden-Oosten, een dalende trend*, MO\*magazine, 30 juni 2010, [http://www.mo.be/index.php?id=348&tx\\_uwnews\\_pi2\[art\\_id\]=28969&cHash=573790b34c](http://www.mo.be/index.php?id=348&tx_uwnews_pi2[art_id]=28969&cHash=573790b34c) (consulted on 30/07/2010)

describes the general security situation in a CoO. These SRBs assist RSD officer to assess the risk of serious harm to a person as a consequence of indiscriminate violence in situations of international or internal armed conflict.

An effective management of SRBs requires;

- Timely information on the profile of asylum seekers,
- Differentiation of the profiles according to their size in order to prioritize the drafting of certain SRBs,
- Continuous information and updating on the profiles of the influx to enable the research department to know which SRBs need to be updated.

The type of information which is most needed in an SRB on a certain topic will differ from profile to profile. The profiles need therefore to be combined with RSD guidelines in order to determine which type of research is needed and to avoid research on facts which are not key to the RSD process. Examples of different types of SRBs are;

- Availability of state protection
- Geographical information on the region of origin
- Sociological or linguistic information on ethnic group or clan
- Details on the structure and activities of a certain (political) organization
- Legal aspects of nationality issues
- Legal information on the organization of judicial and security apparatus
- Legal and practical information on a certain occupation (e.g. journalism)
- Detailed descriptions of certain events
- General security situation in (certain parts of) the CoO
- Descriptions of certain places of detention
- Description of border-crossing procedures
- Information on the position of women
- Information on human rights abuses by certain groups (exclusion)
- Legal information on land tenure system
- Information on treatment of failed asylum seekers upon return
- Description and prevalence of harmful traditional practices

In an internal study on the optimization of the interaction between researchers and RSD officers at the CGRS, it was recommended to present available COI in accordance with the profiles of the asylum seekers<sup>7</sup>. At this moment the COI database uses a folder structure which is identical for all CoO. Main categories are for example 'Political Parties', 'Human Rights', 'Religion', which are further divided into sub-categories and sub-sub-categories. To make the connection between the RSD work and the COI database better it was proposed to define the most relevant profiles for every CoO and to link the COI documents to one or more of these profiles. In the same line the COI reports of the Dutch Government ('Ambtsberichten' by the 'Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst') always contain a heading 'position of specific groups' next to the discussion of the human rights situation. Here the report gathers

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<sup>7</sup> Peter Wenger, COI en gebruiker: onderzoek en optimalisatie van de interactie tussen research en gebruikers, CGRS, August 2008, p 33 (not published).

the information on certain groups/profiles that are frequently encountered in the Dutch asylum system.

## **7. Reception of asylum seekers**

The coordinating body for the reception of asylum seekers in Belgium is the Federal department Fedasil. It works together with the Belgian Red Cross, several ngo's and the social departments of municipalities to organize the reception. They are daily in contact with the OA and the CGRS. Fedasil and the CGRS both maintain their own databases parallel to each other. Fedasil could benefit from profiling information that is available at the CGRS to provide adequate support to asylum seekers. Also the CGRS could benefit from an increased sharing of information between the organizations. We will shortly discuss the importance of profiling for the work of Fedasil

### **A. Assignment of asylum seekers to reception centers upon arrival**

Fedasil has a satellite office within the premises of the OA where asylum seekers first arrive to submit their asylum claim. The satellite office is called the Dispatching, and its role is to facilitate the assignment of asylum seekers to a reception center.

Every reception center has its own characteristics and may not always be the best place for a certain type of asylum seeker. The main criteria, according to which reception centers are classified, are;

- The linguistic area of the center (French or Flemish community) in accordance with the language in which the asylum procedure treated (French or Dutch),
- Accessibility of medical care, vicinity of a hospital
- Availability of psychological care,
- Available room types (dormitory or individual rooms; families with 1 to 10 children<sup>8</sup>, couples, single men, single women),
- Specialized assistance to UAMs,
- Availability of 'OKAN' classes in primary schools in the vicinity of the center ('OKAN' classes are 'reception classes for foreign speaking newcomers'),
- Accessibility for persons in a wheelchair,
- Accessibility for persons with limited mobility,
- Capacity of assistance with domestic tasks,
- Possibility of provision of hot meals.

When looking for the most appropriate reception center Fedasil first takes into account vulnerable groups or groups with specific needs.

- Single women,
- Possible victims of human trafficking,
- Persons in need of medical care,
- Families with children (and number of children who are of school age).

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<sup>8</sup> It has been observed that the average family size of asylum seekers has decreased over the last years. Reception centers have already responded by dividing bigger rooms into smaller rooms. (Interview with Alex Meyers, Dispatching Fedasil, 23 July 2010.)

Other criteria that Fedasil takes into account are:

- Sufficient diversity of nationalities in each reception center,
- Existing network of asylum seekers in a certain part of the country (family members),
- Individual requests of asylum seekers (for example intention to continue higher studies),
- Ad hoc questions of different reception centers.

In 2009-2010 Belgium faced a crisis in the reception of asylum seekers. The combination of a recent change of the Law on the Reception of Asylum seekers and an increase of the number of asylum seekers has led to an acute shortage in the availability of places in the reception centers. Next to the vulnerable groups and families with children, priority was given to asylum seekers who are fleeing from conflict areas (and which are characterized by a high recognition rate). In general however, when there is no emergency situation, Fedasil is not in favor of differentiating between asylum seekers based on the recognition rate of their CoO.

To attribute asylum seekers to the reception centers, the Dispatching has access to the database of the OA. Next to the basic bio data it contains a brief information on the medical situation of the asylum seeker and a comment field in which for example remarks on possible victims of human trafficking or links between different files are noted down.

## **B. Evaluation of specific needs**

Within 30 days upon arrival at the reception center a social worker will (by law) evaluate the specific needs of the asylum seeker in detail (medical care, psychological care, social assistance and shelter). The evaluation reports may undoubtedly contain valuable information which can help an RSD officer to take into account the individual background of the asylum seeker when assessing the claim. However, such information is never shared with the CGRS. The reception centers maintain fully neutral towards the asylum procedure. They will for example emphasize to the asylum seekers that the reception center does not have any contact with the CGRS<sup>9</sup>. There is a fear that information that is shared with the CGRS may be used for other purposes than initially intended. The social workers of the reception centers will however contact the CGRS when they are of the opinion that an RSD interview can not take place because of psychological problems of the asylum seeker.

## **C. Database**

The Red Cross, which runs 26 reception centers for asylum seekers in Belgium, has developed Adabase, a database for the management of the reception of asylum seekers, in 2004. Adabase is also used in the reception centers directly managed by Fedasil. Adabase contains following categories of data;

- a. Personal data (see Annex 1 for a detailed overview)
- b. Asylum procedure (manages the calendar and appointments of the asylum seeker)

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<sup>9</sup> Fedasil, Uitwisselingsdagen Opvangwet, Eindrapport, §5.11.3 (to be published)

- c. Lodging
- d. Education (type of education and grade and follow-up on expenses)
- e. Family
- f. Authorizations (application of household rules of the center)
- g. Payments
- h. Allowances
- i. Sanctions/Transfer
- j. Picture

Adabase also helps with the administrative management of the reception center through the print-out of predefined listings (arrivals list, presence list, allowance list,...). Next to the above mentioned information on specific needs, especially the information on education in the CoA is an interesting complement to the database of the CGRS

## **D. Education**

One of the main tools for integration of migrants in a hosting society is education, be it language, occupational training,... . At the same time finding a good education is an important motivation for young asylum seekers to flee onwards from their region of origin to more developed countries. Reception centers invest a lot of time in offering courses to the asylum seekers and referring others to appropriate schools or institutes.

Profiling information on asylum seekers can offer a solid basis to the planning of educational programs in reception centers. Relevant variables are in this context;

- Knowledge of the languages in which a course can be practically offered in the country of asylum. In Belgium these are Dutch, French and English.
- Knowledge of other languages (this will show which language education is most needed).
- Literacy rate in the mother tongue. Asylum seekers who do not know the Latin alphabet are too quickly regarded as illiterates. Insight in the literacy rate in the mother tongue can help to reorient the courses to this population in a different way.
- Educational level in CoA.

## **E. Voluntary return**

Fedasil is also responsible for the coordination of the voluntary return program, together with IOM. In 2009, 2.659 persons made use of the voluntary return program, 30% of which were asylum seekers<sup>10</sup>. Fedasil is in need of more detailed information on the profile of those asylum seekers who do opt for voluntary return. This would help them to understand their target group better and adjust the program accordingly. Data mining could assist in finding correlations between certain profiles of asylum seekers and the voluntary return.

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<sup>10</sup> Fedasil, Jaarverslag 2009, Brussels, May 2010, p. 19.

## **8. Identification of specific needs**

Identifying vulnerable groups is the aspect of profiling which has the most direct impact on the protection of asylum seekers. Adequate intervention and follow-up can only start once the specific needs have been identified. Interventions can only be planned once the responsible office has a clear overview of the scope and the nature of the problems. Understanding the specific needs will at the same time contribute to a better informed and more comprehensive RSD decision. Below we will look at some of the most important vulnerable groups in the RSD procedure.

### **A. Unaccompanied minors**

Drastic and meaningful improvement of the cooperation on registration, centralization, analysis and circulation of information on UAMs was the first recommendation that was put forward by the Task Force on Minors Traveling Alone in its recent report to the Secretary of State for Migration and Asylum<sup>11</sup>. The lack of sharing information on UAMs among the different actors in the field has as consequence that the situation of children who are potentially at risk is not followed up and timely intervention is not achieved. The Task Force puts forward a comprehensive registration system as a major tool for the protection of UAMs, especially in case of disappearances. The registration has to be carried out meticulously, as soon as possible after the child has been encountered, and should include biometrics such as picture and fingerprints. In the report it is recommended that existing registration systems should be integrated, but no further suggestions are given on how this should be done.

The CGRS is probably not the most appropriate organization to take up a leading role in setting up such a registration system. However, the CGRS can have great benefits from such a registration system, as it can help the office to gain insights on the individual background and circumstances of the travel before the RSD interview takes place.

Many unaccompanied and separated minors may be enrolled in the asylum procedure undetected, when adult asylum seekers present them as their children. Because the OA is not entitled to demand documents from asylum seekers as a prerequisite for their enrolment, the OA enrolls the children upon declaration of their parents. An improved registration system could however help to detect these unaccompanied children better. This could be done in different ways:

- hold registration interviews with children who are old enough to express themselves (the accompanying adult can be present in the room),
- in case of doubt postpone the enrolment for further investigation,
- explain to every child that he can ask for a separate RSD interview if he or she wishes,
- consider to take fingerprints for children starting from 7 years old,

The Working Group on Family composition of UAMs and other minors without legal status of the National Commission for the Rights of the Child, recommended last year

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<sup>11</sup> Task Force Alleenreizende Minderjarigen, Op weg naar een effectieve bescherming van alleenreizende minderjarigen, Eindrapport, Aangeboden aan de Staatssecretaris voor Migratie- en Asielbeleid ter attentie van de Leden van de Belgische Regering, June 2010.

to create at the OA a separate file for every accompanied minor, instead of adding them to the file of their parents. The files of the different family members can be linked to each other. The Working Group hopes that this will lead to a more meticulous registration and actualization of the files of the minors<sup>12</sup>. The system of separate files will force the administration to look into the situation of every minor before taking a decision on the legal status. A system of separate files can also facilitate the issuance of individual identity documents or asylum seeker attestations to children. At this moment the names of the children are written on the asylum seeker attestation of the mother. The pictures of the children are not printed on the document. Asylum seekers have the possibility to ask for a small identity card for children with the administration of their municipality. However, unless the parents take initiative this identity document is not issued.

In a recent questionnaire Save the Children expressed the need of following (anonymous) information on UAMs<sup>13</sup>;

- the total number of separated children attempting to enter the country,
- the number of those children admitted,
- the number of requests for asylum or other forms of protection,
- suspected cases of trafficking,\*
- children affected by armed conflict,\*
- assignment of a guardian,
- assignment of legal representation,
- legal and migration status,\*
- living arrangements,
- enrolment in school or vocational training,
- disappearances,\*
- family reunification,\*
- return to country of origin,
- transfers within the EU (including Dublin II transfers) and transfer to a third country.

I marked with an asterisk the types of information to which the CGRS can give a direct contribution.

## **B. Victims of human trafficking**

Many asylum seekers left their CoO with the help of human smugglers and may still be in the hands of a network of human trafficking when they ask for asylum in the CoA. The registration and RSD interview for an asylum office is one of the few occasions where these facts may come to light. An RSD officer will be attentive to signs which indicate that a person is possibly a victim of human trafficking;

- a fraudulent asylum claim based on a stereotype story (possibly provided by the trafficker),
- presentation of certain fraudulent documents
- involvement of lawyers who have already been named in connection with the defense of human traffickers,
- addresses in CoA where victims of trafficking have resided before,

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<sup>12</sup> Nationale Commissie voor de Rechten van het Kind, WG Gegevensverzameling inzake NBM en andere minderjarige vreemdelingen zonder stabiel verblijfstatuut, 2009 (not published).

<sup>13</sup> Save the Children, Questionnaire on Unaccompanied Minors in the migration process, In preparation for the European Commission's Expert Meeting, Brussels 17th November 2009 (not published).



- regions or districts of origin in CoO where traffickers are active,  
An asylum seeker may also talk directly to the RSD officer or to the interpreter when s/he feels that there is room for this subject.

To ensure the follow up of persons who are potentially victim of human trafficking, a database is a valuable tool, where can be recorded all persons;

- who are potentially victim of human trafficking, based on a list of indicators,
- who claimed during the interview to be victim of trafficking,
- who have applied for the protection status of victims of human trafficking,

### **C. Victims of Sexual and Gender-based violence**

Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) is any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to persons on the basis of their sex or gender, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life. An overview of the more detailed definition and the sub-categories of SGBV from UNHCR is given in Annex 2.

SGBV is not only an important motive for introducing an asylum claim. Also in the CoA asylum seekers risk to become victims of SGBV. To calculate the occurrence of FGM and the risk for FGM in reception centers Belgium, Fedasil (the Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum seekers) made an overview of all the women in the reception centers who originate from a country where FGM is being practiced<sup>14</sup>. Based on the percentage of women who are a victim of FGM in those countries, Fedasil calculated how many women in the reception centers can be reasonably expected to have undergone FGM. The study further looked into the age structure and the family composition. Most remarkably they found that girls between 0 and 6 years compose a relative high percentage of this group. With regards to the family composition the study showed that 65% were living alone or with one child. Close to 11% are UAMs (girls). These results give a clear indication as to where sensitization and prevention campaigns should put the emphasis.

The study only took into account the country of origin. Because the risk of FGM often depends as well on the ethnic group, religion and/or region of origin (for example in Ivory Coast), the accuracy of the results of the study could be increased when the data on these different characteristics were also available to Fedasil.

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<sup>14</sup> Fedasil, Dienst Voorbereiding Opvangbeleid, Studie, Vrouwen die besneden zijn of die een risico op besnijdenis lopen in de opvangstructuren in België, maart 2009 (niet gepubliceerd).

## II Database conception

### 1. *International comparison*

In order to increase the quality and efficiency of the asylum process in Belgium, the CGRS is currently looking into ways to improve the use of the database to draw profiles on different groups of asylum seekers. In June 2010 the CGRS has launched a request for information through the IGC network<sup>15</sup>. States that are part of the IGC were asked to complete a table through which their current database could be analysed (see Annex 3). The aim was to have each country reflect on the possibilities and limitations of their database for profiling of asylum seekers. Next to this table a number of open questions were asked about data confidentiality, quality control, reporting and the connection between databases of different departments (see Annex 4). The results are reflected below and will be presented at the Asylum and Refugees Working Group in Copenhagen in October 2010. Australia, Belgium, Canada, Finland, Norway and Switzerland completed the database analysis table and the complementary questions, Germany, New-Zealand and Sweden responded to the complementary questions only.

#### **Belgium**

All asylum seekers are registered by the OA in the 'Waiting Register' ('Wachtregister' or 'Registre d'Attente'), which is a part of the National Register. It contains the basic bio data (Name, Place of birth, Date of birth, Sex, Nationality, Address, Place and Date of decease, Occupation, Marital status and Family composition) and the administrative situation of the asylum seeker during the procedure. The OA enters information in the Waiting Register, through their database Evibel. Evibel contains a full electronic version of the file; all documents and letters are scanned into the database. Pictures are taken of all asylum seekers, including accompanied minors. Fingerprints are stored in the Eurodac system for all persons of 14 years old and above.

The CGRS is the main instance for RSD in Belgium. The whole RSD procedure is managed by its nameless database, which was developed in 2002. When opening a new file in the database a limited number of core data (name, sex, date of birth, national number) are automatically imported from the Waiting Register, operated by the OA. When the CGRS takes an RSD decision in a case, the relevant codes are automatically sent to the Waiting Register to be updated.

The Commission of Aliens Litigation, the appeal board for refugee and aliens affaire, is currently developing its own database.

#### **Canada**

The backbone of the data on migrants is formed by the Field Operations Support System (FOSS). Both the Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Canada Border Service Agency (CBSA) enter data into FOSS when they receive a refugee protection claim. CIC and CBSA review if a case is admissible and send the eligible

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<sup>15</sup> See IGC website; [https://secure.igc.ch/web/jcms/d\\_165602/profiling-asylum-seekers](https://secure.igc.ch/web/jcms/d_165602/profiling-asylum-seekers) (consulted on 27/07/2010).

cases on to the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB). FOSS contains the personal background information of asylum seekers and information with regards to the admissibility of the claim. FOSS also reflects information on the status of the claimant beyond the refugee status determination; that is the grant of a permanent residence permit or the departure from Canada in cases that such an event is confirmed by the CBSA.

The CBSA maintains its own database, the National Case Management System (NCMS), in order to fulfill its duties of administering legislation that governs the admissibility of people, detaining those people who may pose a threat to Canada and removing people who are inadmissible to Canada. The NCMS pulls data from the FOSS, but this exchange only goes in one direction. No data are sent from the NCMS to the FOSS.

The IRB has developed the System for Tracking Appellants and Refugees (STAR), a database which is also connected to the FOSS. It is used to manage and track refugee claims at the IRB. To record information on the type of claim, the IRB has built out a separate Claim Type Recording Application (CTRA). Although no direct link exists with other databases, data can be correlated with information found in other databases.

## **Finland**

The Register of Aliens is a register of persons which is maintained and used

- for the processing, decision-making and control of matters relating to the entry into and departure from Finland and residence and work in the country
- for ensuring the security of the state and for carrying out a basic security investigation and an extensive security investigation as referred to in the Act on Security Investigations (177/2002 )
- for the processing and decision-making of matters related to the acquisition, retention and loss of Finnish citizenship and the definition of the citizenship status. The data in the Register of Aliens may also be used for the compilation of statistics.

The register contains six sub-registers, the main controllers of which are the Finnish Immigration Service and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The register is also maintained and used by the police, The Frontier Guard, the Customs, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Employment and Economic Development Centres, the Employment and Economic Development Offices, the Prison Administration Authority and the Ombudsman for Minorities.

The Act on the Register of Aliens (1270/1997) defines the function of the Register of Aliens.

UMA, the upcoming electronic case management system for immigration processes, will replace the Register of Aliens as soon as it is completed. The processing of residence permit, asylum and citizenship matters will transfer to the new UMA electronic system. The increased efficiency of the new system is expected to shorten the processing times for all types of applications.

The Register of Accommodation (Marek) is a register of persons which is maintained and used in every reception centre in Finland and the Finnish Immigration Service for processing services which the reception centre is offering for asylum seekers accommodated in the reception centre and private accommodation (legislation grounds: Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum seekers 493/1997).

These services are registration, social services and different kinds of consultation. The register contains a national central register and reception centres own sub -registers. All information stored in the reception centres sub –registers is transferred in the central register once every week. There are no interfaces to any other system. Data transfer between authorities is done by Excel -sheets (current accommodation information of asylum seekers from the central register to the Register of Aliens, and on the other hand current decisions made by the Finnish Immigration Service for reception centres’ customers to the Register of Accommodation are transferred once a week. Actual updating is made manually). Data transfer between reception centres and the central register is done by encrypted files via e-mail. After decryption, these files are read to another sub –register automatically.

The new system for reception centres (named Umarek) is specified and executed (between spring 2008- spring 2010) and estimation for deployment is at the beginning of year 2011 alongside when UMA’s second phase is going to be released. It is going to replace Marek and it contains functionalities mentioned above but also special functionalities for healthcare, detention unit and human trafficking victim’s services. Technically Umarek is going to be part of UMA but logically it is a separate system which is separated with user rights from the UMA system. Eventually UMA and Umarek have the same customers but the authorities (police, reception centres and Finnish Immigration Service) have different roles in the asylum process. Umarek also has its own legislation base in a new law, which is to be issued in the beginning of year 2011.

## **Germany**

- (1) The name of the database containing asylum seekers is “Central Register of Foreigners” (Ausländerzentralregister, AZR).
- (2) The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) is the keeper of the Central Register for Foreigners. It represents the Register towards others, is responsible for data administration, processing, administration and providing information. The Federal Office for Administration is responsible for the technical maintenance of the register and it processes and uses data from the register by order of the BAMF.
- (3) The aims of the register are to identify foreigners and to support the administrative authorities in performing tasks under the law on foreigners and on asylum. It also has a supporting function as a tool of domestic security and is used in planning policy on foreigners, as well as to ascertain figures on foreigners that are relevant to management. Reliable data are indispensable to steer and plan immigration, migration and integration. On a regular basis the register provides anonymous data for statistical purposes. The data of the register is also used to gain knowledge on scientific questions in the field of migration.
- (4) The Central Register of Foreigners is based on personal data. It consists of a general database and a separate database for visa. All foreigners who are not

temporally staying in Germany or did not during the past ten years, have an entry in the register (§ 2 AZR-G). Asylum seekers are part of the general database. The database consists of general personal data (“Grundpersonalien” such as name, surname, gender date -, location – and name of birth, citizenship) and extended personal data (“weitere Personalien” e.g. Aliaspersona, marital status, information concerning the passport etc. ), the name of the board which transmitted the data and their reference number, the residence permit, the residence status to name only a few (§ 3 AZR-G).

- (5) The Central Register of Foreigners is the main database as described above.
- (6) A second database operated by BAMF in MARiS. MARiS is a workflow and document management system. As opposed to the AZR, in which all foreigners are recorded, MARiS only contains the data of asylum seekers. MARiS contains the personal data of asylum seekers in the ‘national’ and ‘international’ aspects of the procedure. All records related to the procedure are saved in MARiS, as well as the final decisions. There is a so-called ‘XML-interface’ to transmit specific data that are relevant to the AZR from MARiS to AZR. On top of this here is a search function, based on the AZR file number, which makes a ‘connection’ between the two systems. This link is explicitly authorized by § 10, (4) of the AZR-law.

### **Norway**

The migration database UDB holds all data about asylum seekers. For reporting and statistical information the DUFrapp database (Datasytemet for utlendingsforvaltningen) is used. Data is replicated from UDB through Oracle materialized views.

### **New Zealand**

The Refugee Status Branch (RSB) uses a database system that is used across Immigration New Zealand (INZ), the Application Management System (AMS). This database captures the movements in and out of everyone who travels into New Zealand, as well as every type of visa or permit application that is lodged with INZ. This means that a person offshore can apply for a visa to travel to New Zealand, be declined and never enter New Zealand, but still be on the AMS system. The system recently begun to capture photos of asylum seekers and over time will capture photos of all those who make an application or any type of visa for entry into New Zealand.

AMS captures: clients details (name, date of birth, country of birth, citizenship, travel documents held, addresses), warnings and alerts, applications made and decisions, client files, family, visas and permits held.

The RSB also has its own internal database which is managed through Microsoft Access. This database captures all of the post that are sent to the branch, all interpreter bookings for interviews, refugee claims that have been lodged with the branch and refugee decisions that have been made. This database is used as well as the AMS system noted above so that RSB can produce reports on specific and detailed fields.

### **Sweden**

The Swedish Migration Board is responsible for the Central Aliens Register which contains information on asylum seekers. This database also contains data on Dublin

requests, naturalizations, visa, removals, other permits in general (family reunification, work, study etc).

### **Switzerland**

Zemis is the central database in Switzerland. It contains information on all foreign persons including asylum seekers. Each canton is connected to Zemis, as well as border guards, embassies, federal police, airport police etc.

There are other databases that are not especially made to store data on asylum seekers but that may contain information on asylum seekers e.g. the tracing database of the Federal Office for Police (RIPOL), or the electronic visa issuing system of the Federal Office for Migration (EVA). Both systems are linked with Zemis.

AVES is the database of the reception centers. The first registration of asylum seekers in Switzerland is usually made in AVES. The majority of the personal data later recorded in Zemis is initially recorded in AVES. There is the possibility to send data from AVES to Zemis (basically one directional interface). The Federal office for migration is responsible for AVES and only federal staff in the reception centers has access to it. The first interview (Befragung zur Person) is made with AVES.

Further there is the database of BAG, the Federal Health Agency, in which information about the border health measures are stored. Precise information on this database was not made available.

## **2. General principles**

Profiling of asylum seekers will only be possible when the database of an office is used to its fullest extent during the asylum procedure. No profiling can be expected from a database which has incomplete and unreliable data. That is why we will in this section look into some of the main principles which have to be kept in mind in order to integrate a database fully in the office. Further we will focus on those aspects of the database which are essential to extract profiling once the data have been entered.

### **A. Reporting – direct accessibility of data to the user**

One of the most important principles to make a database work is that the user who enters the data in the database, should be able to access these data and to create reports which can be individually adapted to the needs of the user. When the person who enters the data is not able to retrieve these data on a later stage in a custom tailored report, the motivation for the data entry will go down with as a result data that are of low quality or incomplete.

An example of a report which is frequently needed during the screening phase is an overview of all the files that have arrived in the office but for which a date for the interview has not yet been planned. At this moment RSD managers at the CGRS update for this purpose their own excel-lists and create in this way small parallel databases. (The practice of screening at CGRS is explained more in detail under the third recommendation in part III of this paper.)

The proGres database of UNHCR has a very straightforward system through which users can easily manipulate and sort the data. It makes use of an extensive **advanced search function**. The user can search in practically every field of the database by scrolling through the different categories and selecting the fields which are needed for the search. It is possible to search for fields which correspond to certain values, but also to fields which do not contain a certain value ‘is different from’. Maybe even more important than the elaborate search possibilities, is the result screen, where the user can select which type of information will be displayed in the result list. In the example above one can easily imagine that one RSD manager wants to see the district level of the Address of the CoO systematically displayed, while another manager is more in need of the religion or ethnicity.

proGres offers two possibilities for **storing the search results**. The first one is a regular folder, which can be renamed by the user and into which the user can drag and drop all or a certain number of files of the search results. When conducting a search later the user can further add or remove files from this folder. The second option is a dynamic folder in which not the files themselves are stored, but the search criteria as defined by the user. When over time new files are added to the database which respond to the criteria of the search, that file will automatically be added to the file. Likewise, when changes are made to files in the folder which brings them outside of the criteria of the search results, it will be automatically removed from the folder. Both folder types also have the option to be shared with other users, so two or more persons can consult or update one folder at the same time.

These options make the database very flexible for different operational uses. The search results can also be easily be placed into an excel document for further editing and sharing with partners.

## **B. Correspondence between the database and the workflow**

The database has to reflect the workflow of an RSD file in the office. When we take the CGRS as example the core structure of the database would need to consist of following phases (administrative support modules are not incorporated here);

### **1. Registration**

This phase contains the bio data of the asylum seeker. For an overview of data that can be found in this phase see the first recommendation at the end of this paper. It is advisable that this registration screen<sup>16</sup> gives immediate access to the module on specific needs, unless it is decided that specific needs should only be recorded by the RSD manager, in which case the module only has to be available in the screening phase.

### **2. Screening phase / preparation of the interview.**

This phase is not yet reflected in the database. A detailed description of how this phase should be built up is given as a third recommendation at the end of this paper. The main components of the window are key registration data, the specific needs module, the key word system to describe the claim, a comment field with the summary of the claim and a module for the practical preparation of the interview.

### **3. Interview**

At the CGRS the interview notes are typed in a word processing program, which is then uploaded into the database. In the first recommendation at the end of this paper it is proposed to make use of the database for the part of the interview where the bio data of the asylum seeker are verified and completed.

### **4. Evaluation**

Here the material facts of the asylum claim are evaluated and considerations on cessation and exclusion are reflected. It is the appropriate phase to include the key word system to describe the nature of the claim (which is at this moment in the database of the CGRS added to the decision screen). The key word system, which is already filled in during the screening phase (if our third proposal is followed), will be further completed and corrected here by the RSD officer with the information he/she gained from the RSD interview. The same goes for the module on specific needs which has to be updated after the interview.

### **5. Decision**

Next to the summary of the claim and the motives of the decision, this phase will indicate the legal and material grounds of the decision. It will further indicate clauses connected to asylum seekers with specific needs.

### **6. The appeal procedure**

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<sup>16</sup> In the database of the CGRS, like in many other databases, a distinction is made between registration data entered at the individual level and at the file level. In this paper we will refer mostly to the individual level when we talk about the registration screen. On the file level more formal data related to the lodging of the asylum claim are recorded.



The judicial support unit defends the decisions of the CGRS during the appeal procedure in front of the Council for Aliens Litigation. The defense mainly consists of a written plea.

In every phase the user ideally will find all the fields that he/she needs to be complete on one screen. When a field is not presented within the logical order of the treatment of the case, not only time will be lost during data entry, but chances are that the field will not be filled in at all. An example of an ill placed field in the CGRS database is the field 'third country of residence' in the registration screen. It seems to follow logically the fields of nationality and country of usual residence for stateless persons. However, at the moment of registration it is not clear if a third country should be considered as a transit country or a third country of residence where international protection was already offered. This will be assessed in the evaluation or the decision phase. An asylum claim may for example be rejected because the asylum seeker has already been recognized as a refugee in a third country, where he/she does not fear persecution or risks refoulement.

### **C. Presentation of the fields**

When entering data on a large scale into a database, small details about the way the data are presented will have a great impact on the speed of data entry and the risk of mistakes.

- When data are copied from standardized registration forms, the order of the fields in the database needs to be the same as the order of the fields on the form to avoid needless jumping forward and backwards in the form.
- The data entry clerk has to be able to move from one field to another without the use of a mouse.
- Further without the use of the mouse the data entry clerk has to be able to select entries from a drop-down menu by typing the first letters (and not only the first letter) of the entry or by using the arrows. When the correct entry is highlighted it has to be possible to select the field through the 'enter' button, again without clicking with the mouse. With every movement from the keyboard to the mouse the data entry clerk will lose speed and concentration.
- Entries that are never be used in a certain situations need to be hidden from the drop-down menu. A concrete example of this is the country specific key words as they are used in the Canadian CTRA database (see paragraph 3. E. Data related to the nature of the Asylum-claim). When a key word is not relevant to a certain nationality it will simply not appear in the drop-down list.
- Avoid lengthy drop-downs. The only exceptions are drop-downs of proper names. Because for proper names synonyms are rare entries can still be found easily when stored in an alphabetical order. An alternative for a lengthy drop-down menu is presented under recommendation 2. By dividing the entries (key words on the nature of asylum claims) into categories and sub-categories, the drop-down menu is considerably shortened.
- To avoid mistakes drop-downs can be ordered as well according to the frequency of use. For example, in the database of the CGRS, the decision type 'Refusal of refugee status and refusal of subsidiary protection' is next to 'Refusal of refugee status and exclusion of subsidiary protection'. When we look at the table of frequency of use of these types of decisions we see that during the last two and a half years the first type has been selected 16.413

times and the latter 38 times<sup>17</sup>. It would therefore be advisable to list the five most occurring types of decisions at the top of the drop-down menu and to let the other decision types follow in alphabetical order. For the complete frequency list of types of decisions see Annex 5.

#### **D. Type and mode of field**

The most common types of fields in a database are; Free-text field, Drop-down menu, Tick box, Number and Date fields. Free-text fields are made as good as useless for profiling purposes by the different spellings of the same word or the use of different words for the same meaning. The other types of fields can be readily used for profiling purposes.

A field can further be obligatory or optional. Only obligatory fields will give an exhaustive picture of the caseload. However, too many obligatory fields will slow down the data entry of profiles for which certain fields may not be relevant. In other situations it is preferable to enter first the core registration data quickly (for example when on location) and to complete later the other data. This also may be made impossible when too many fields are obligatory. Optional fields can still be relevant for profiling, provided that there is a good system of quality control (see further) or when explicit zero-values are part of the drop-down menu (see next point).

#### **E. Importance of an explicit zero-value.**

By explicit zero-value is meant a special entry in a drop-down menu that needs to be filled in when the field is not applicable instead of leaving the field blank. An example would be 'No identity documents' for the field 'Identity documents'.

Explicit zero-values are especially important for drop-down menus in optional fields. By using explicit zero-values a clear distinction can be made between the situation where the question was not asked at all and where the question was asked but the answer was negative. In other words, without an explicit-zero value a blank field can mean both that the question was never asked or that the answer was negative.

Sometimes additional value can be captured by making differentiations within the zero-values. As is the case in the Swiss database the explicit zero-value 'No education' for example can be split up in 'Illiterate' (not able to read) and 'Informal education'. The entry illiterate is even of such an importance to understand the individual background of the asylum seeker, that it would be advisable to select 'illiterate' also for persons who went one or two years to formal or informal education but who despite this education can still not read. Another important example how a zero value can be split-out is Occupation, as 'No occupation' can have many different meanings (see the discussion on the field Occupation under the next section).

#### **F. Principal Applicant or individual level**

The standard for statistics on asylum seekers is the individual level. Children who accompany their parents are counted as asylum seekers (unless this is contrary to their own legal status). When the principal applicant meets the criteria of the Refugee

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<sup>17</sup> Of these 38 times a number have indeed been entered by mistake.

Convention, the accompanying family members (at minimum his spouse and minor children) will receive the refugee status based on the principle of family unity. Because they receive the refugee status, and not another migration status based on family unity, it seems indeed only logical that they should be counted as refugees<sup>18</sup>.

Australia and Switzerland record all the information on the individual level in their database. Finland only enters the data of the principal applicant. The other countries make a distinction between core data, which are filled in for every individual, and other data which are only completed for the principal applicant. The basic bio data and specific needs are normally recorded at the individual level, while information attached to the formal side of submitting the asylum claim, information on the nature of the claim and the type of decision are mostly recorded for the principal applicant only. Information on the life in the CoA is sometimes recorded at the individual level and sometimes on the level of the principal applicant.

In most systems all persons above 18 years old and all UAMs are considered as principal applicants. In the database of UNHCR the data entry clerk has to choose the principal applicant of the family. However the option is given to indicate two principal applicants in every family to avoid a bias towards one of the sexes as the head of household.

In databases where data entry on dependant family members is reduced to the minimum, profiling may only be carried out in a meaningful way for the principal applicant. The value of profiling will in these cases be limited for the organizations who take care of persons with specific needs, as the most vulnerable groups

## **G. Definitions of the fields**

The database of the CGRS does not possess a manual in which a definition is given for all the fields in the database. Although for most fields this does not pose a problem, there are a number of fields that are for this reason simply not used (the fields 'Patronymic', 'Country of stay', 'Event links'). Other fields are used, but because different interpretations are possible, no meaningful profiling information can be deducted from these fields. So can the decision type 'Recognition of refugee status (family reunion)' be interpreted in three different ways:

- the decision for a spouse and/or children who arrived together with the principal applicant in the CoA and who have no fear of their own,
- the decision for a spouse and/or children who arrived in Belgium after the principal applicant,
- the children born in the CoA,
- or all of the three groups above together.

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<sup>18</sup> In Belgium recognized refugees can ask for family reunion with family members who remained behind in the CoO. The application has to be made with the Belgian embassy in the CoO. When the visa is granted, the family members will receive in Belgium a migration status based on family reunion. If the family members also want to be recognized as refugees, they have to apply separately for asylum. In practice these family members are often also recognized as refugees based on family unity.

Because profiling is always immediately linked to the definitions of the fields, the definitions on frequent occurring fields in databases as they occur in the directives of the EU and in guidelines of the UN have been included for easy reference in Annex 6.

## H. Time of data-entry

The available information on an asylum claim cumulates during the decision phase. The information is at that point undoubtedly the most complete and the most reliable. It may therefore seem logical to enter all profile-related information during this phase. However, the sooner a piece of information is entered in the database, the more useful it will be for the overall operational process. We can see at least four benefits from data entry early in the procedure.

- The advantages of the screening phase for the whole RSD process, as discussed above.
- To take immediate action for the protection of vulnerable groups such as UAMs, victims of human trafficking, chronically ill.
- To describe trends and evolutions in asylum-claims requires that you record profiling information within short delay after the time of arrival.
- For different reasons an RSD decision in a case may be postponed for months or even longer (verifying documents, need for specific COI, illness of the asylum seeker, unclear situation in the CoO...). Profiling information on these pending cases will then be missing until a decision has been taken.

## I. Quality control

Even when all the training and guidelines are provided to the users of a database, without a proper quality control the quality of the data can be so low that no valid profiling information can be extracted from the database. Users who frequently use reporting tools will automatically correct themselves when they are confronted with repeated mistakes. The risk on low quality is however high with users and data entry clerks who never use reporting tools, if no feed-back is given to them in another way. In the IGC request for information on profiling of asylum seekers the question was asked which measures were taken by the different countries in the field of quality control. Below are the summaries of the answers received:

### Australia

Australia runs on a weekly basis **queries that are designed to discover anomalies** in the data entry. When for example data is missing within a field, the staff will get in contact with the State and Territory office in question to rectify the errors. This process also helps to identify training requirements.

### Belgium

Quality control mainly happens by a **verification process** of colleagues in the different steps of the procedure. The registration data entered by the central administrative unit is later verified by administrative collaborators of the geographical sections. The data that are subsequently entered by the RSD officer is finally verified by his or her supervisor.

Further there is an extensive **set of rules built in the database**, which prevents the user from entering conflicting data.

### **Canada**

To guarantee the quality the database of the CBSA makes use of the **Validation on Data Integrity (VODI) application**. VODI identifies data exceptions for 17 immigration enforcement process. Users can access the report results of VODI to correct data errors. Problems are analyzed and data integrity teams determine the most effective solution, either through user training, data correction, or the application of new business rules and/or system edits.

All officers and staff of the CIC who have access to FOSS for data entry are trained in the areas of system data entry, access to personal information and safeguarding personal data. Each authorized staff is provided with a username and password. Data entered activities in FOSS may be monitored/ tracked for data quality purposes.

### **Finland**

Information concerning an individual applicant is registered in several stages, including information registered by the police or border guards, the registry office of the Finnish Immigration Service, the decision maker and the superior of the decision maker in the Finnish Immigration Service. Thus the registered information is **examined and checked by several authorities** one after the other.

### **Germany**

The aim of quality assurance in the Federal Office is to present the asylum procedure in a correct way. Controlling of important index data enables to draw conclusions on the quality of data. Therefore unit 500 – operating controlling – offers several instruments concerning quality assurance in the asylum procedure:

1. The data fed into the workflow system MARiS is done by a **permanent sample audit**. This is considered as very important, because otherwise in cases of wrong input of data generated by MARiS the statistical interpretation system IDE (see above) will be distort as well as wrong information of the foreign authorities. The results are corrected and the responsables are informed.
2. **Evaluating data** is done in respect on consistency, completeness and compatibility with existing guidelines and work instructions.
3. Evaluation reports are the basis for findings, like **adjusting the workflow system**, the guidelines and the need of **training**.

### **Norway**

All checks on data entry are done by the **application interface**. We evaluate the need for also having input controls at the database level.

### **New Zealand**

The RSB has a system where data is also captured on an excel spreadsheet to **cross check** against the Microsoft Access database. Also another area of INZ produces data from the AMS system for our branch to cross check each month. We also have a thorough quality assurance process where all decisions are 100 percent **second-person checked** before being sent out. Data capture is also checked at this stage.

## **Sweden**

Statistics are based on operative data used on a daily basis for monitoring the operation. First level of quality control is the operational units. Second level is **spot checks** undertaken by the operators of the statistical database and the business intelligence application.

## **Switzerland**

Rules on data entry for ZEMIS are in the stage of development (responsible is a special working group). The data quality is controlled continuously, **checklist** are used. Basically data quality shall be assured on three levels: training, technical measures and rules.

## **J. Data protection**

A second topic addressed through the IGC request for information on profiling of asylum seekers is the question if there were any legal limitations on the storage of particular sensitive data, such as religion, ethnicity or political opinion. Laws on data protection can influence the shape of a database and can put clear limitations on the scope of profiling that can be carried out.

The European Directive on Data Protection prohibits the processing of sensitive data, unless justified by grounds of important public interest and specific safeguards are provided to protect the fundamental rights and the privacy of individuals<sup>19</sup>. Below is an overview of the responses received.

### **Australia**

Australian law does not prohibit the processing of sensitive data where that data relates to a claim for a protection visa. This is because it is necessary to consider facts in the decision to grant or not to grant a protection visa. For example, if a person was to claim that they have a well founded fear of persecution on account of their sexual preferences, then Australia would most likely consider that as part of a Refugee Convention Article 1A Particular Social Group (PSG) claim.

### **Belgium**

The Belgian law on the Protection of the Personal Privacy with regards to the Processing of Personal Data<sup>20</sup> has converted the European Directive on Data Protection. The database of the CGRS contains the possibility of recording ethnicity and religion of the asylum seekers. Further information is at this moment not available as the database of the CGRS is still pending a review by the Belgian Privacy Commission.

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<sup>19</sup> European Union, Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, Official Journal L 281 , 23/11/1995 P. 0031 – 0050.

<sup>20</sup> Belgisch Staatsblad, Wet tot bescherming van de persoonlijke levenssfeer ten opzichte van de verwerking van persoonsgegevens, 08/12/1992, 18 March 1993, [http://www.privacycommission.be/nl/static/pdf/wetgeving/wet\\_privacy\\_08\\_12\\_1992.pdf](http://www.privacycommission.be/nl/static/pdf/wetgeving/wet_privacy_08_12_1992.pdf), Consolidated on 01/08/2007. (Consulted on 08/08/2010.)

## **Canada**

Canada did not comment on this topic. The database analysis of Canada shows that religion and ethnicity are not systematically recorded among the basic bio data<sup>21</sup>. This information is only captured when the asylum claim is based on religious or ethnical persecution.

## **Finland**

The Personal Data Act (523/1999), in which the EU data protection directive has been implemented, states the following;

*Section 11 — Prohibition to process sensitive data*

The processing of sensitive data is prohibited. Personal data are deemed to be sensitive, if they relate to or are intended to relate to: (1) race or ethnic origin; (2) the social, political or religious affiliation or trade-union membership of a person; (3) a criminal act, punishment or other criminal sanction; (4) the state of health, illness or handicap of a person or the treatment or other comparable measures directed at the person; (5) the sexual preferences or sex life of a person; or (6) the social welfare needs of a person or the benefits, support or other social welfare assistance received by the person.

The Personal Data Act does give a possibility to record certain sensitive information if it is stated in other legislation (such as the amendment 618/2008 to the Act on the Register of Aliens). In reality however, ethnic origin is not systematically registered in the Register of Aliens. Also various information concerning the application itself, grounds for the application, grounds and duration of residency and travel in Finland, information concerning employer, nature of work, taxation of employment, information concerning work permit, the outcome of the application process, the complaint procedure, information on the people who welcomed the person in Finland and people residing in the same address can be registered.

## **Germany**

Data on ethnical origin, political opinion, religious or philosophical convictions, trade-union membership, health or sexual life can in accordance with the Law on the Asylum Procedure, § 7, (1), be collected to the extent this is necessary in the individual case. There is no legal ban on recording these data in the database MARiS.

## **Norway**

In Norway does exist a prohibition on processing sensitive data on asylum seekers. The Norwegian database on asylum seekers, UDB, has a field for ethnicity, which is only filled in when judged necessary, but does not contain a field for religion. Information on the nature of the asylum claim (such as political opinion or sexual orientation) are not recorded in UDB.

## **New Zealand**

Personal information concerning asylum seekers and refugees is subject to section 129T of the Immigration Act 1987 of New Zealand, which prevents publication of such details that might identify them. It also restricts sharing of such information unless for the particular purpose of a Government agency and for assisting refugee determination.

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<sup>21</sup> The FOSS database does have an ethnicity field, but the options are limited to Caucasian, Negroid, Oriental and Other.

The database on asylum seekers does not capture this sensitive information in specific fields but it does capture the details of the claim (in a few words) once it has been through a quality assurance process, which may highlight any particular reasons a person was granted refugee status.

### **Sweden**

The Swedish Data Act, 1998:204, prohibits the use of sensitive data as racial origin, political opinion, religion or other beliefs, as well as personal data concerning health and sexual life. It is possible to use this kind of personal data after consent from the asylum seekers if it is necessary to make a decision.

### **Switzerland**

Data on ethnical group and religion are collected in the database ZEMIS. The regulation on ZEMIS does not foresee the possibility to collect data on political opinions, health or sexual life.



### 3. Description of the fields in a database on asylum seekers

In this section we will discuss all the fields that may occur in a database on asylum seekers. The fields are divided in different categories;

- A. Basic Bio Data
- B. Specific Needs
- C. Life in Country of Asylum
- D. Data related to Submitting of Asylum Claim
- E. Nature of the Asylum-claim
- F. Type of Decision

The table below shows all countries which replied to the IGC questionnaire on profiling of asylum seekers to the right of the field. When the field occurs in the database of that country, the box will be colored purple. The results for Canada that are presented here are a combination of the FOSS, STAR and CTRA databases, which are interconnected. The results of the database of the Canada Border Service Agency, the NCMS, are referred to in the comments.

#### A. Basic Bio Data and Life in CoO

Table 1 - Basic Bio Data and Life in CoO

Countries that completed the database analysis:	AU	BE	CA	FI	NO	CH
Name and First Name						
Alias						
Sex						
Date of Birth						
Place of Birth						
Country of Birth						
Marital Status						
Nationality						
2 <sup>nd</sup> (3 <sup>rd</sup> ,...) Nationality						
Country of Former Habitual Residence						
Last Address in Country of Origin (CoO)						
Type of demographic setting of Last Address in CoO						
Date of death						
Educational level						
Occupation/Industry in CoO						
Activity at time of flight						
Ethnicity						
Religion						
Mother tongue						
Knowledge other languages						
Literacy						
Family members in CoO						
Third Country of Residence						
Name of parents						

**Name and First Name;** in all countries at least the (Family) Name is an obligatory field. Where available the name is written as mentioned on identity or travel documents. The **Alias** can be presented by an optional field or sometimes by a link. In Belgium a link, labeled as 'alias' can be created between two files, in case one person

has submitted two asylum claims under a different name. **Sex and Date of Birth** are obligatory fields in all countries.

The **Country of Birth** is being completed systematically by all countries also where the field is not 'obligatory'. In Canada the **Place of Birth** is recorded by the CIC and CBSA, but not by the Immigration and Refugee Board. There is disagreement on how the Country of Birth should be defined. While an EU regulation<sup>22</sup> (see Annex 6 for an overview of definitions) stipulates that the country of birth should be interpreted as the country of residence of the mother at time of birth, Canada systematically records the actual country of birth, regardless of the country of residence of the mother. When the Place and Country of Birth are recorded together, as is the case with all participating countries, it would indeed be counter-intuitive to follow the EU regulation. When for example a family from Khartoum gives birth to a baby in Cairo for medical reasons, the place and country of birth would be recorded as Cairo, Sudan. To follow the EU regulations one would need to cut the link between place and country of birth, or to introduce a third field 'Country of Birth by residence of the mother'. Both solutions seem highly impractical. The UN Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration<sup>23</sup> also do not refer to the country of residence of the mother when defining the Country of Birth. On the contrary, the recommendations point out that the actual country of birth is useful information because it means that the person has lived at least a part of his/her life in that country. Although the EU regulation can be understood in its attempt to rule out random data (e.g. a baby born during a holiday abroad), it may be advisable to reconsider the definition of Country of Birth because of the practical implications and because of the added value which is attached to the actual country of birth.

The above mentioned EU regulation and the UN recommendation do agree that the country of birth should be defined according to the current boundaries and not the boundaries at time of birth. In most countries persons can derive legal rights from their place of birth, even (and especially) when the boundaries have changed over time. Despite these recommendations some countries still define the country of birth in accordance with the boundaries at the time of birth. When reference is made to the current boundaries, it will also be possible to make use of the ISO 3166-1 list (see Nationality) for the drop-down menu.

Regarding **Marital Status**, the Swiss database gives the option to enter next to the basic (legal) categories additional information the following: separated, traditional marriage, religious marriage, concubinage. This type of information can especially help to understand the background of gender-linked case. It would be interesting to include polygamist marriage in the additional information. This type of information can also help to understand the scope of the problems refugees may face when trying to reunite their family after they have obtained a status in the CoA.

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<sup>22</sup> Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection; Art.2, 1(e).

<sup>23</sup> Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/58/Rev.1, United Nations, 1998, §146.

**Nationality and 2<sup>nd</sup> (3<sup>rd</sup>,...) Nationality.** For the drop-down list on nationalities, it is recommended to use the ISO 3166-1<sup>24</sup> list, as is for example the case with the Swiss database. Also the Eurostat Citizenship codes are built on this ISO list. Despite the importance of 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> nationality for the determination of the refugee status, two of the six databases do not offer the possibility to record them. For statistical purposes within the EU, citizenships are classified according to the most recent citizenship<sup>25</sup>.

**Last Address in CoO and Type of Demographic Setting.** In Canada (FOSS) the addresses over the last 10 years are systematically recorded. In this way it will be avoided that a transit address is recorded as the last address. The 'last' address should indeed be understood as the last place of residence, and should not include transit addresses. An asylum seeker will normally invoke a fear for persecution at his place of residence, even when the actual persecution has taken place in another part of the country. When assessing if a return to the CoO is possible, the region where the asylum seeker had his residence will be considered first. Only when that is not the case, an internal flight alternative will be considered.

The main difficulty consists of how to record the address in the country of origin. It would be very demanding for the system administrator to have all the administrative division and sub-divisions of all the countries in the world in the database and to keep them constantly updated whenever a reform of the local government is made. This information is however often crucial for an effective screening phase and goal-oriented COI research. At least for top-20 countries of origin and for the countries where there are serious regional differences in the overall security situation, effort needs to be made to put a practical system into place. For some countries the provincial level may be sufficient, for others it may be needed to go down to the district or even village level. For example in the case of the Roma in the Balkans, COI had to be developed on the village level to assess the degree of discrimination and the possibilities of protection.

The type of Demographic Setting indicates whether an asylum seeker used to live in city, a town, in isolated dwellings, in a camp-setting or in temporary shelters as a nomad. Switzerland includes this type of information in the description of the address in the CoO. This is similar to the system UNHCR uses in their proGres database. Further only Finland collects this type of information as well. Nevertheless, this field offers valuable information in different perspectives such as the following:

- Together with the level of education and occupation, the demographic setting gives a good indication as to the level of knowledge that can be expected from an asylum seeker. Access to media is highly influenced by the demographic setting. What people find important also differs according to the demographic settings. For example politics in rural areas may be more interested in the direct access to land, seeds and fertilizers rather than the general political program or ideology of a party or the outcome of an international conference.

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<sup>24</sup> International Organization of Standardization, English Country Names and Code Elements, [http://www.iso.org/iso/english\\_country\\_names\\_and\\_code\\_elements](http://www.iso.org/iso/english_country_names_and_code_elements) (consulted on 06/08/2010)

<sup>25</sup> Eurostat, Technical guidelines to the new asylum templates, as on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2008 (not published).

- The occurrence of traditional harmful practices and FGM and more importantly the possibility to find effective protection can largely differ in a rural area from an urban area.

#### **Example of Ivory Coast**

While FGM in Ivory Coast is practiced in most ethnic groups, it is particularly common among the rural population in the Northern and Western part of the country. Next to the demographic setting the prevalence of FGM in Ivory Coast is influenced by the religion and level of education of the parents.<sup>26</sup>

- The type of demographic setting in the CoO will also impact the success of integration in the CoA. Refugees with an urban background may not be able to integrate easily in a rural setting.

The **Date of death** is at the same time a registration element and a reason for the closure of the file. It is preferable to register the Date of death as a type of ‘decision’ (closure of file) as this will give the best guarantees that the information is entered in a correct way, based on set procedures. This may however create problems for registration systems where children are added on to the file of their parents and no individual decisions can be entered in the database on the children (see the paragraph on UAMs above). The database will then show an anomaly when one of the children dies.

Information on the **Education and Occupation** in the CoO gives a deeper insight on the social background of the asylum seekers. It can help us to understand which social classes are most affected by certain forms of persecution. With respect to the integration of asylum seekers, the COI on Education and Occupation is crucial to ascertaining the level of human capital characterizing international migration.

The UN Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration proposes two ways on gathering information on **Education**; 1) the number of years of schooling completed and 2) the highest level of schooling completed<sup>27</sup>. However, school systems can differ considerably from country to country. The confusion especially exists on the definitions of primary, lower, and higher secondary education. The proGres database of UNHCR uses for the primary and secondary education the number of the grades 1 to 12 and completes the drop-down with other types of schooling;

- No education
- Informal education (only for those who did not attend formal education)
- Grade 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
- Technical or Vocational school
- University-level
- Post-university level

<sup>26</sup> Directie Consulaire Zaken en Migratiebeleid, Afdeling Asiel, Hervestiging en Terugkeer, Algemeen ambtsbericht Ivoorkust, december 2009, Den Haag,

<sup>27</sup> United Nations, Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/58/Rev.1, 1998, §148.

It has been noted that the question on the highest level of education reached gives more complete and exact information than the question on highest degree or diploma reached.

The Swiss have included as well 'illiterate' under Educational Level, which enable them to draw conclusions on the literacy rate of certain groups of asylum seekers (see below).

Although the last professional experience tends to be the most important one, the **Occupation** recorded should be the main occupation and not necessarily the last one. It is interesting to complete the information on occupation or industry with the activity at the time of flight. While the main occupation or industry gives information on the general background of a person, the activity at the time of flight will clarify the circumstances in which a person has decided to leave his or her country. Of the six countries only Switzerland and Canada record the activity at the time of flight. Canada records the work history of the last ten years. Occupation is recorded by almost all countries, but only Australia and Norway make use of a drop-down menu. UNHCR makes use of the International Standard Classification of Occupations of the ILO (ISCO-08)<sup>28</sup>. Because this list is very detailed, most UNHCR operations will make a pragmatic selection of occupations which will be identified during a certain registration exercise, depending on the local context.

When the activity at time of flight is not recorded separately from occupation, care should be given to include in the list of occupations meaningful zero-values for those who do not work (these are not included in the ISCO-08); unemployed (seeking for work), military service, performing household duties, student, children not attending school, not fit to work, retired,... 'Student' is for some countries in itself an important profile to describe the nature of the asylum claim.

**Ethnicity**, and to a lesser extent **Religion**, are fields which are often related directly with the reasons of flight and the availability of national protection. While Ethnicity is incorporated in all databases, mostly through a drop-down menu, Canada and Norway do not include the Religion field. Canada only records religion when the claim is related to the religion. The drop-down menus of Switzerland, Belgium and Finland only correspond for about 30 religions of the 60 religions. To facilitate the work of data entry, the ethnicities are in the Belgium database linked to the countries in which they occur. When a nationality has been selected, the drop-down of the ethnicity field will be limited to the ethnicities of that country.

**Mother tongue and knowledge of other languages** is crucial information on different fronts. It is necessary for the RSD procedure to plan the presence of the interpreter at the interview (the chosen or preferred language). The knowledge of languages is, in absence of identity documents, in itself a strong indication of the region of origin of the asylum seeker. And thirdly the knowledge of languages will highly influence the integration process of the refugee in the CoA. It is not necessary to distinguish for each language the level of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, as is the practice in the context of job applications. Moreover, it has been observed that when the four competencies are asked the respondents tend to indicate

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<sup>28</sup> International Labour Organisation, Resolution Concerning Updating the International Standard Classification of Occupations, ISCO-08, 6 December 2007, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/docs/resol08.pdf> (consulted on 08/08/2010)

the same level of knowledge for the four competencies<sup>29</sup>. It is however helpful to make a basic distinction on the general competency between mother tongue, good and basic.

This type of information can best be gathered on the individual level, and not only from the principal applicants. The knowledge of languages of children is not seldom different (read 'more elaborate') from the knowledge of the parents because for example the parents resided in different regions before the birth of the child, the child has a different educational level, or the child simply catches up more quickly with a new language. Especially for the planning of educational programs the information needs to be collected on an individual level; educational programs for children differ largely from the programs for adults and often differ as well according to the sex of the target group.

It is also not needed to reflect changes in the knowledge of languages during the stay in the CoA. For operational purposes the knowledge at time of arrival is the most relevant, and also for the planning of educational and integration programs the time of arrival will be taken as the starting point.

The **Literacy Rate** should be recorded for the 'literacy rate in the mother tongue' and not the literacy in the Latin alphabet to avoid misrepresentation of the back-ground for the asylum seeker. As mentioned above, a good solution is to include 'illiterate' in the the drop-down on the educational level.

Canada includes as well information on the **Parents** of the asylum seeker. Experience shows that in cases where the reference number is lost, certainty about the correspondence of a certain file to a certain person can quickly be obtained through the mother's name.

The Belgian database includes the field on the **Third Country of Residence**. This field is directly relevant for the RSD. Although the Belgian Asylum Law does not know the notions of 'First Country of Asylum' or 'Safe Third Country', an asylum-claim can be rejected when a person has been granted international protection in a third country or has a residence permit in that third country that gives him/her access to rights similar to the citizens of that country. This field would however be better placed among the data related to the RSD decision, rather than the Registration data (see comments under Work-flow).

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<sup>29</sup> Devleeshouwer P., Herman B., *Evaluation du profil de qualification et d'expérience professionnelle des demandeurs d'asile dans l'optique de leur proposer des formations adaptées à leurs besoins*, Sous la direction de Monsieur le Professeur Andrea Rea, GERME, Université Libre de Bruxelles (niet gepubliceerd).

## B. Specific Needs (Vulnerable groups)

Table 2 - Specific Needs

Countries that completed the database analysis:	AU	BE	CA	FI	NO	CH
Unaccompanied minors (UAMs)						
Separated minors						
(Possible) Victim of human trafficking						
Older person unable to care for self						
Disability (physical/mental)						
Chronic illness						
Mental illness						
Pregnant woman						

It is remarkable how all the six examined databases pass over this important set of information. Given the fact that every RSD decision needs to take into account the individual background of every asylum seeker, special attention to vulnerabilities does not seem to be out of place in a database that manages asylum-cases. This is especially the case for asylum seekers with mental problems or who suffer from a post-traumatic stress disorder.

Information on specific needs should be collected as soon as possible if not immediately after the lodging of the asylum claim. As discussed above, this will enable the department responsible for the reception and shelter of asylum-seekers, to refer asylum seekers to the most appropriate reception centers, avoiding needless transfers between centers later on.

This information will further help the RSD manager to plan the appropriate time and place of the RSD interview. Interviewing women shortly before or after they give birth will be avoided. Interview rooms need to be accessible for disabled persons and child-friendly interview rooms need to be reserved for UAMs. Chronic illnesses and mental illnesses may be some reasons why an RSD interview has to be postponed for a longer time. As a general rule, chronic and mental illnesses should only be recorded in a database when a medical attestation from a doctor has been provided.

The information on specific needs will also illuminate possible underlying motives for asylum seekers to leave their country. In Belgium it has been observed that for certain countries like Angola and Guinea, the need for medical treatment abroad is the main underlying factor for a large number of fraudulent asylum-claims.

Finally, the information on specific needs is vital for the organization of the repatriation in case an asylum-request has been rejected. Repatriation may have to be postponed because of specific needs, or may in other cases not be possible at all and lead to an alternative permit of stay in the CoA based on humanitarian grounds.

UAMs are recorded electronically by almost all the participating countries. The field is also a requirement for reporting of statistics to Eurostat. There is however some confusion on the definition of UAMs. UNHCR makes the following distinction between UAMs and Separate Children;

**UAMs:** Person below the age of 18 who has been separated from both parents and other relatives and is not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so.

**Separated Child:** Person below the age of 18 who is separated from both parents and his/her legal or customary primary caregiver, but not necessarily from other relatives. This may, therefore, include boys and girls accompanied by other adult family members<sup>30</sup>.

In the Qualification Directive of the EU this distinction is not being made. The EU definition of UAMs is in fact closer to the UNHCR definition of Separated Children.

‘**Unaccompanied minors**’ means third-country nationals or stateless persons below the age of 18, who arrive on the territory of the Member States unaccompanied by an adult responsible for them whether by law or custom, and for as long as they are not effectively taken into the care of such a person; it includes minors who are left unaccompanied after they have entered the territory of the Member States<sup>31</sup>.

Because the distinction between ‘customary primary caregiver’ and ‘other relatives’ accompanying the minor is not always clear, CGRS recently simplified the recording of UAMs and does not any longer make a distinction between children who are and who are not accompanied by ‘other relatives’. This is in line with the EU Directive.

UNHCR distinguishes 79 categories and sub-categories of specific needs. During a registration exercise, only specific needs that can be assessed easily and that do not require any specialized knowledge are entered in the proGres database by the registration clerks. The other specific needs are completed after referral to a specialized unit or organization (child protection, hospital,...). Within the category of ‘Child at risk’, examples of the first group are ‘Child parent’ and ‘Child spouse’, examples of the latter group are ‘Child at risk of not attending school’ and ‘Child in conflict the law’.

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<sup>30</sup> UNHCR, Guidance on the Use of Standardized Specific Needs Codes, 2009, UNHCR Internal Document, IOM-FOM No. 030/2009. (Not published)

<sup>31</sup> EU, Council Directive 2004/83/EC of 29 April 2004, Article 2 (i)



## C. Life in Country of Asylum

Table 3 - Life in Country of Asylum

Countries that completed the database analysis:	AU	BE	CA	FI	NO	CH
Last Address in CoA						
Imprisoned in CoA						
Family members in CoA						
Education in CoA						
Occupation in CoA						
Type of assistance received in CoA						
Membership in organizations						

The **last address in the CoA** is an obligatory field in Belgium, Canada and Finland. In Belgium the OA enters the address in the Waiting Register in a fully coded system. All the streets of every town and city in Belgium are encoded in the system. The risk on data entry of wrong or inexistent address is in this way seriously reduced. The CGRS does not have a similar system in its database, but will always consult the Waiting Register to know the last address of an asylum seeker.

**Imprisonment in CoA** is reflected in the Belgian database, because the prison is one of the places where a person can submit an asylum claim. This field also assists the office in making the necessary practical arrangements in preparation of the interview of the asylum seeker. In Canada Imprisonment in CoA is recorded only in the database of the Canada Border Services Agency, in line with their duties.

**Family members in CoA** are in the Belgium CGRS database only indicated when they have submitted an asylum claim. A link is created between the two files. The link is described by the type of family relation that exists between the two persons.

In the FOSS database of Canada the field **Membership in organizations** is included. This field also captures membership of a political party or a particular religious group in the CoA, if any.

## D. Data related to Submitting of Asylum Claim

Table 4 - Data related to submitting of asylum claim

Countries that completed the database analysis:	AU	BE	CA	FI	NO	CH
Date of Flight CoO						
Date of Arrival CoA						
Date of Asylum claim CoA						
Itinerary from CoO to CoA						
Intended country of destination						
Legal / illegal travel						
Means of contact smuggler						
Means of transportation						
Date departure from CoA						
Asylum applications in third countries						
Multiple asylum claims in present CoA						
Place submitting asylum claim in CoA						
Identity and travel documents						
Other documents						
Links to other asylum claims (non-family members) with shared persecution events						

On the **Itinerary from CoO to CoA** Australia only captures the flight numbers. Further only two more countries record the itinerary. In Belgium the itinerary is recorded during the registration interview, however the itineraries are no longer systematically analyzed, because the statements of asylum seekers on their itineraries are in most cases too vague to establish the reality of the itinerary. Asylum seekers may falsify their statements on their travel route to hide a long residency in a third country, an asylum claim in a third country, legal departure from the CoO or to protect the smuggler. For these reasons it was judged that the office where an asylum claim is lodged is not in the best position to collect reliable information on the travel route.

**Legal or illegal travel** is recorded by Australia and Switzerland. As Switzerland rightly remarked, this field should be split up in legal/illegal departure from the CoO and legal/illegal arrival in the CoA. Switzerland only records the latter. In Belgium legal arrival can be deduced from the Register of Aliens, but this information is not directly accessible by the CGRS, only by the OA.

**Asylum claims in third countries** are only recorded in Finland. In Belgium only asylum claims in other EU countries are recorded for the application of the Dublin II Directive. This information is held by the OA.

When comparing the six databases it is remarkable that Belgium does not record the existence of **identity documents** in the database, since from this field one can estimate the overall credibility of of the registration data whether they are based merely on declaration or on actual legal documents. The database of the OA in Belgium (Evibel) does have the possibility of recording identity documents, but this field is never used.

## E. Nature of the Asylum-claim

Table 5 - Nature of the Asylum-claim

Countries that completed the database analysis:	AU	BE	CA	FI	NO	CH
Political party membership						
Religion (for as far as relevant to asylum claim)						
Ethnicity (for as far as relevant to asylum claim)						
Clan						
Social group						
International conflict						
Internal conflict / generalized violence						
Capital punishment						
Torture						
Inhuman and degrading treatment						
Desertion/ Draft evasion						
Press / Freedom expression						
Gender - Female genital manipulation						
Gender - Sexual orientation						
Gender- Forced marriage						
Gender- Sexual and Gender based violence						
Insurgent						
Trade union						
Child soldier						
Slavery						
Harmful traditional practices						
Other motives, no nexus						
Medical motives						
Legal prosecution / criminal law						
Human trafficking						
Property conflict						
Refugee in loco / sur place						
'Republikflucht'						
Trauma						
Polygamist marriage						
NGO-worker						
Vendetta						
Mafia						
Victim/Witness of common crime						
State employee/Police/Military						

When describing the profile of an asylum claim a number of principles should be considered in order to avoid confusion and misinterpretation.

1. The gathered information on the asylum-claim will describe the reasons of flight as **invoked** by the asylum seeker and **not** only
  - the reasons why a person has actually been granted the refugee status,
  - the reasons for which the person can legitimately be granted the refugee status (thus also mafia, economic reasons,...),
  - the reasons which, after examination, the person have been found credible
2. The description does not only reflect the characteristics a person really possesses but also the characteristics that are **attributed (imputed)** upon a person by the actors of persecution (e.g. supporter of a rebel movement).

3. In the same line the profile will describe what the asylum seeker **fears** and not only what has actually happened. When for example a woman fled her country because she fears to become a victim of sexual violence, this will be described under ‘sexual violence’.

4. The profile will describe the **main motives** why a person fled his or her country and not secondary motives invoked by the asylum seeker or underlying motives which may be suspected by the asylum officers

From the six countries who presented an analysis of their database, only Belgium and Canada try to capture in their database information related to the nature the asylum claim. They do this by placing the asylum-claims in certain categories or by attributing keywords to every claim. The system of keywords seems preferable because it allows the user to attribute more than one keyword to a claim.

Canada has developed an elaborate keyword or ‘claim type’ system. The claim types are divided into those that apply to all countries and others that are only linked to specific countries. The country specific claim types will only be visible to the user when working on the file of an asylum seeker of that country. This division gives the possibility to assign more accurate keywords, specific to a certain CoO, without overburdening the keyword dropdown list for other countries where this claim type is not relevant. For example the claim types ‘honor killings’ or ‘dress code’ will only appear for countries where this problem or practice occurs. The Canadian system further divides the claim types in categories and sub-categories. This gives a logical structure to the different claim types and makes it easier for the user to find quickly the right keyword. For an overview of the generic part of the Canadian claim type system see annex 7. The Belgian system of key-words will be discussed more in detailed under the second recommendation in part III of this paper.

## F. Type of Decision

Table 6 - Type of Decision; 1st Instance and Final decision

Countries that completed the database analysis:		AU	BE	CA	FI	NO	CH
<b>1st instance decision;</b> 1951 Conv./ Subs. Prot./ Human. status	Type of decision						
	Legal grounds for recognition						
	Material grounds for recognition						
	Legal grounds rejection accelerated/admissibility procedure						
	Legal grounds for rejection,						
	Material grounds for rejection						
	Application withdrawn						
	Otherwise closed						
	Exclusion						
	Cessation						
<b>Final decision;</b> 1951 Conv./ Subs. Prot./ Human. status	Type of decision						
	Legal grounds for recognition						
	Material grounds for recognition						
	Legal grounds rejection accelerated/admissibility procedure						
	Legal grounds for rejection						
	Material grounds for rejection						
	Application withdrawn						
	Otherwise closed						
	Exclusion						
	Cessation						

The fields that capture the first instance and final decision are relatively similar in all the participating countries, except for Finland, where only the type of decision is recorded and an electronic copy of the decision is attached to the database to know the legal grounds of the decision.

Only Norway records the **material grounds for rejection**. The drop-down menu that is used for this purpose was not shared by Norway. The table below gives an overview of the material grounds for rejection, used at the CGRS. They can be transformed in a drop-down menu to be integrated in the database. For every decision more grounds can apply at the same time.

Table 7 - Material grounds for rejection

<b>1. Fraudulent asylum claim</b>
1.1 Contradictions within statements
1.2 Incoherent, Vague, Improbable, Not convincing
1.3 Implausible nationality
1.3 Implausible ethnicity
1.4 Implausible religion
1.5 Implausible region of origin
1.6 Implausible recent origin
1.7 Implausible membership
1.8 Contradictions with COI or documents
1.9 Concealment of request for asylum in third country
1.10 Identity fraude
1.11 Withholding essential information
<b>2. No nexus</b>
<b>3. Unfounded</b>

3.1 Insufficiently serious
3.2 Protection
3.3 Gravity of the fear (behaviour asylum seeker)
3.3.1. Long waiting time before the flight out of CoO
3.3.2. Long waiting time before claiming asylum in CoA
3.3.3. Lack of cooperation in asylum procedure
3.3.4. Voluntary return
3.3.5. Other (contact embassy,...)
3.4 Internal flight alternative
3.5 No current fear
<b>5. No new elements (multiple asylum claim)</b>
<b>6. Subordinate decision (following decision of spouse/parent)</b>
<b>7. Medical problems (referral to humanitarian procedure)</b>
<b>8. International protection in third country</b>

Implausible nationality, implausible ethnicity, implausible religion and implausible region of origin are taken up as separate rejection grounds because they concern bio data that are recorded in the Registration phase. When reviewing the different types of decisions that are taken for different profiles, the exercise will be much more meaningful when a distinction can be made between the asylum seekers for whom the profile (e.g. a certain region of origin) was found credible and those for whom it was not. When communicating for example the types of decisions that were taken for Afghan asylum seekers to the press, it will be important for the public opinion if a distinction can be made between the asylum seekers who were found to be Afghans and the others who were not.

In case of a positive decision either under the 1951 Convention or for Subsidiary Protection, it will be sufficient to specify which of the different aspects of the refugee definition or the definition on subsidiary protection is applicable, complemented with the decisions based on family unity. A breakdown of the different aspects of the definitions is provided in the table below. In Belgium the practice is to make a distinction between family members who claimed for asylum together with the principal applicant (derivative status) and family members who arrive in the CoA after the principal applicant or who were born in the CoA (family unity)

**Table 8 - Specific (legal) grounds for recognition**

<b>1. Refugee status under the 1951 Convention</b>
1.1 Political Opinion
1.2 Ethnical persecution
1.3 Nationality
1.4 Religious persecution
1.5 Particular Social Group
<b>2. Subsidiary protection</b>
1.1 Death penalty of execution
1.2 Torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
1.3 indiscriminate violence
1.3.1 International armed conflict
1.3.2 Internal armed conflict
<b>3. Derivative Status</b>
<b>4. Family Unity</b>

Australia and Canada, two countries with a large **resettlement** program, do not register their resettlement caseload in the database for asylum seekers. Belgium, who conducted a pilot project on resettlement in 2009, did register the resettled families in

the database of the CGRS under an ad hoc arrangement. A specified and well distinct series of file numbers were reserved for this case-load.

Especially the databases of Norway and Switzerland are well equipped to record other legal status of the asylum seeker or refugee. This will make it possible to map the route of the asylum seeker from his arrival in the CoA until he obtains a permanent residence permit or leaves the country.

**Table 9 - Type of decision - Other decisions**

Countries that completed the database analysis:		AU	BE	CA	FI	NO	CH
<b>Dublin Regulation</b>	<b>Requests for taking back or taking charge</b>						
	<b>Requested Country</b>						
	<b>Provisions on which requests are based</b>						
	<b>Decision taken in response to request</b>						
	<b>Transfer as result of request</b>						
	<b>Request for information received</b>						
<b>Resettlement</b>							
<b>Other legal status</b>	<b>Temporary protection</b>						
	<b>Humanitarian status</b>						
	<b>Rejection without order to leave the territory</b>						
	<b>Naturalisation</b>						
	<b>Family Reunification</b>						
	<b>Student</b>						
	<b>Regularisation</b>						
<b>Decisions with order to leave the territory</b>							
<b>Revocation of International Protection</b>							
<b>Cancellation of International Protection</b>							

#### **4. Data mining**

Profiling aims at having clear, detailed, reliable and well-defined information on for big groups of information.

- A. Bio data
- B. Specific needs
- C. Nature of the claim
- D. Type and grounds of decision

Being able to make the link between the reasons invoked for asylum and the precise reasons why the claim has been rejected or accepted, will already greatly increase our understanding of the RSD process.

Data mining will help to find correlations between the different groups of data which we may have suspected but never saw confirmed. In simple terms data mining will search for relations between two (or more) elements from the four main data groups. For example the data 'female sex' from bio data is compared with the data 'rejection' from type of decision. If the average percentage of women being rejected is only slightly different from the total number of asylum seekers being rejected (men and women), then there has no correlation been established between being a woman and receiving a negative decision. When however only women of a certain CoO or religion are taken into account, you may suddenly do find a strong positive or negative correlation with rejection decisions.

A correlation does not show necessarily a causal link between the two data. When for example it has been established that young women receive more often a negative decision than older women, it does not mean necessarily that they received negative decisions because they were young, or to be more precise that the fact they are young had a significant impact on the decision to come out negative. Further research may for example establish that young women originate more often from the Balkan region, while older women fled more frequently from for example regions of conflict. This example shows that data mining in itself is no miracle solution to gain deeper insight in the asylum caseload, but it is a strong tool to support or refute theories and suspicions which would otherwise remain merely hypothetical.

Once the data are gathered in a reliable way and to a sufficient detail, it will in any case be interesting to look for correlations between certain the registration data, the nature of the claim and the type of decision.

Data mining can for example be used to gain understanding in the growing phenomenon of multiple asylum requests.<sup>32</sup> Correlations may come to light between a certain type of claim during the first request for asylum and the multiple claims, or between multiple claims and a certain age group of a certain CoO.

Fedasil is also interested in possible connection between certain profiles and the persons who opt for voluntary return. A better insight in the common characteristics

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<sup>32</sup> In 2002 6% of the asylum claims concerned multiple asylum requests, while in 2007 this number had gone up to 25%, see CGRS, Jaarverslag 2009, p. 7



of who departs will give Fedasil an indication on how to further develop a voluntary repatriation program.

### III. Recommendations database CGRS

#### **1. RSD interview; verification of basic bio-data directly in the database**

During the RSD interview, registration data that were collected during a preliminary interview at the OA are systematically verified. Corrections and additions are noted down in the interview report through a word processor. As a consequence this information can only be retrieved by opening and reading the interview report. Also within the interview report it is often difficult to find back the information because every RSD officer organizes his/her interview report in a different way and does not always ask the same information.

The verification and completion of the bio-data can however also be done directly in the database. During the RSD interview the RSD officer opens the registration screen and corrects or completes the data contained in the table below. These are all the data that should in principal be collected by the OA. The data can be entered into the database by the administrative support unit. During the RSD interview the data will only be verified and where needed completed and/or corrected. The registration data will be printed out during the interview through a template. This template will be signed by the asylum seeker. One copy is added to the interview report and another copy is given to the asylum seeker. This way of working has following advantages;

- ✓ **Time saving:** The RSD officer does not need to retype basic registration data during the interview.
- ✓ **Reliability of data:** The review of the registration data by the RSD officer will enhance the reliability and completeness of the data in the database.
- ✓ **Surveyability:** The registration data are always presented in the same order as a first part of the interview report. This will facilitate the work of the RSD officer, when writing a decision, of the supervisor and of the appeal board when verifying or reviewing the case.
- ✓ **Privacy:**
  - The asylum seeker will know which registration data are saved in his personal file in the database and he/she will have to possibility to make corrections.
  - Pending the advice of the Privacy Commission, a clause can be added to the template by which the asylum seeker gives his/her consent to the storage of the data and, if applicable, to the modalities of data sharing.
- ✓ **Incorporation of existing procedures:** The address in the CoA will be confirmed in the same template in line with the existing practice. The presence of the lawyer and the duration of the interview, which is currently recorded after the interview, can only be incorporated here when the template is printed out at the end of the interview, which may not be the best option.

**Remark.** Name, Place of birth, Date of birth, Sex, Nationality and Marital status are data that are entered by the OA in the Waiting Register. These data are normally not changed unless the asylum seeker provides documentary evidence. Moreover these corrections can only be carried out by the OA. These fields should therefore not be changed during the RSD interview. However a comment field can be integrated in the

registration screen of the database of the CGRS to note down the requested corrections to these six basic-bio data at the CGRS. Whenever a comment is added here the database can automatically add the initials of the users and the date of data entry to the comment field. To make changes to these fields the asylum seeker needs to go personally to the OA with the supporting documents. Once the OA has made the changes, they will inform the CGRS and at that point the corrections will be entered into the database.

**Table 10 – Proposed Registration screen**

No	Field	Mode	Comment
1	First name	Correction field	
2	Family name	Correction field	
3	Alias	Optional	
4	Sex	Correction field	
5	Date of birth	Correction field	
6	Place of birth	Correction field	
7	Country of birth	Correction field	
8	Marital status	Correction field	
9	Nationality	Correction field	
10	2nd Nationality (3rd,...)	Optional	
11	Country of Former Habitual Residence	Optional	
12	Last Address in Country of Origin	Obligatory	Country specific
13	Ethnicity	Obligatory	Country specific
14	Religion	Optional	
15	Language during interview	Obligatory	Currently saved at file level
16	Mother tongue	Obligatory	
17	Knowledge other languages	Optional	
18	Links (family unit)	Optional	
19	Links (other files)	Optional	
20	Address CoA	Obligatory	
21	Presence of lawyer/tutor at the interview	Optional	See comment in text
22	Time and duration of interview	Optional	See comment in text
23	Educational level	Optional	
24	Occupation in CoO	Optional	
25	Father	Optional	Date of birth, Place/Country of residence, Occupation
26	Mother	Optional	Date of birth, Place/Country of residence, Occupation
27	Children	Optional	Date of birth, Place/Country of residence, Occupation
28	Brothers and sisters	Optional	Date of birth, Place/Country of residence, Occupation
29	Other family	Optional	Date of birth, Place/Country of residence, Occupation
30	Specific needs	Optional	
31	Date of asylum claim	Obligatory	Currently saved at file level
32	Date of Flight CoO	Optional	
33	Date of Arrival CoA	Optional	
34	Asylum applications in third countries	Optional	
35	Identity and travel documents	Optional	
36	Other documents	Optional	
37	Residence permit and visa	Optional	

Table 11 shows the fields that are proposed for the registration screen. The fields marked in blue do not exist in the database of the CGRS at this moment. The field

numbers marked in red are the selected registration data which should be displayed in the window for the screening phase carried out by the RSD manager (see recommendation 2).

## **2. Key words on the nature of asylum-claims**

The database of the CGRS maintains a list of key words mainly to describe the nature of the asylum claim. Despite the fact that the list was well intended when it was designed, it does show a number of shortcomings which limits its use.

- Over time the list has been expanded with entries that describe other aspects of the RSD procedure; registration data, specific needs, evaluation elements and motives of decisions. The mixture of different types of key words sometimes confuses the user.
- The key words are retained in one drop-down with 56 entries. While the order of the key words is not random, it remains difficult to find the appropriate key word in the long drop-down list.
- The key word drop-down menu is only accessible in the decision phase and not during the screening phase when it is most needed.
- For a large number of key words there are no definitions available. It is for example unclear if 'Ethnicity – Chechnya' should be selected for all Chechens or only for those who claim a fear for ethnical persecution.
- The list applies to all countries. When a section wants a country specific key word (which is not often requested), this key word will be added to the list and will be visible for all countries. This does not only make the list longer but also increases the chances of mistakes in data entry or misinterpretation of the key words.
- A positive element is undoubtedly that it is obligatory to fill in at least one key word. However, despite the list being relatively long, one of the options of the drop-down list is 'none of the key words applies'. A random check of files for which this key word was filled is (5 to 10% of the files), quickly learned that for these cases other key words would have been appropriate, but that 'none of the key words applies' was selected in the hope to gain time.
- Next to every key word there is a free text field where the user can specify the key word. The free text is however not often used as it does not enable you to do afterwards searches in this field. The field is further impractical as it is limited to a maximum of 8 characters.

The principles which need to be considered when describing an asylum-claim through key words have been discussed above (E. Data related to the nature of the Asylum-claim). Here we will make a number of practical suggestions, partially based on the example given by the Canadian Claim Type Recording Application.

- ✓ Divide keywords in two levels of Category and Sub-Categories, to increase the internal logic of the key-word system and to avoid lengthy drop-down menus which are difficult to manipulate by the user.
- ✓ Allow the sub-categories, and to a lesser extent the categories, of the key-words to be country specific, so that these key words will only appear in the files of the nationalities to which the key word was attributed.
- ✓ Write out short definitions of every key word and avoid possible overlaps between different key words. These definitions should be available in a help

function or description field. For UNHCR's definition and categorization of SGBV see Annex 3.

- ✓ Move key words that do not describe the nature of the asylum claim to the appropriate sections of the database (registration, evaluation,...)
- ✓ Write out a simple procedure that needs to be followed when a request is made to add a new key word, involving the head of sections, the operational coordinator, the relevant COI researcher, the IT department and finally a communication to all users.

In the following table a new structure of the key word system has been thought out. The numbers in between brackets refer to the numbers of the key words in the current system to facilitate the drafting of a correspondence table between the old and the new system in case of a transposition. In the last column it is indicated if a key word should be marked as Country Specific. This is surely the case for a key word as 'One child policy,' 'Forced sterilization', which so far has only been used 10 times in the database.

The table needs to be completed with country specific key words, which have to be identified by the different geographical sections, with the assistance of the RSD researcher. Head of sections should ensure that country specific key words have an added value and avoid an excess of key words for every single event.

In addition it has to be considered to add for some of the key the circumstance where the key word does not actually apply to the person but is imputed. This circumstance will have a major impact on the way the person needs to be interviewed. The most important key words for which a second key word with the qualification 'imputed' should be added are 'Political opinion', 'Insurgent' and 'Sexual orientation.'

**Table 11 - Key words on nature of claim**

No	Category	Sub-category	Country Specific
1	Political Opinion	Political Opposition (members/supporters) (18)	
		Press, Journalists (17)	
		Trade union (20)	
		Insurgents (perceived) (19)	
		Victim of rebel movement (other than indiscriminate violence)	
		Human rights activists, ngo-workers (11)	
		Cultural, intellectual, political elite	
		Academic Freedom	
		Environmental activists	
		Conflict with morals and norms	
2	Ethnicity (05)		
3	Nationality (09)		
4	Religion (10)		
5	Particular Social Group	Children – Child abuse	
		Children – Child labour	
		Children – Child prostitution	
		Children – Child soldiers (21)	
		Children – Street children	
		Gender – Domestic violence (27)	
		Gender – Female genital manipulation (25)	
		Gender – Forced marriage (26)	
		Gender - Honour crimes (24)	
		Gender - Sexual and gender based violence (other than 23 to 27) (28)	
		Gender - Sexual orientation and identity (23)	
		Slavery (22)	
		Social ostracism	
		Other social groups (30)	
One child policy, Forced sterilization (29)	√		
6	Death penalty or execution (31)		
7	Torture (32)		
8	Inhuman or degrading treatment (33)		
9	Indiscriminate violence	Internal armed conflict (12)	
		International armed conflict (35)	
10	Important events	Coup d'état (14)	
		Demonstration, Strike (16)	
		Elections (15)	
11	Traditional practices	Forced succession	√
		Human sacrifice	√
		Witchcraft, Voodoo, Occult powers	√
		Secret societies and cults	√
		Other	√
12	Clan (06)		√
13	Desertion, Draft evasion (13)		
14	Genocide, Ethnical cleansing (07)		
15	Mixed marriage (08)		
16	Property conflict, Land dispute (47)		
17	Republikflucht (51)		
18	Subjective fear (53)		
19	Vendetta (34)		√
20	Witness in court (lack of witness protection)		
21	State employee/ Police / Professional		

	soldier		
22	Human trafficking, (48)	Forced prostitution / pornography	
		Other trafficking	
23	Sur place (49)		
24	Other reasons - No nexus	Economical motives (38)	
		Family motives, family reunion (39)	
		Medical treatment (40)	
		Other No nexus (tourism, adventure) (41)	
		Prosecution (37)	
		Victim of Common crime	
		Victim of Organized crime, Mafia (36)	

Following key words can be removed from the present system.

(01.) Ethnicity – Chechnya
(02.) Ethnicity – Tibetan
(03.) Ethnicity – Kurd
(04.) Ethnicity – Roma

The ethnicity itself should be recorded in the registration screen, while ethnical persecution can be, depending on the case, the invoked reason for the asylum claim.

(42.) Exclusion clause
(43.) Cessation clause

These two fields can be added to the evaluation screen where they can be marked whenever one or the other is being assessed.

(52.) Trauma – PTSD – Other psychological problems
(54.) Victims of Human Trafficking
(44.) Unaccompanied minors (OA)
(45.) Unaccompanied minors (CGRS)

These key words can be incorporated in a module of specific needs. This module should be easily accessible at any stage of the procedure

The part of the key word (54.) which indicated the fact that a file had been assessed by the Cel Public Security, can be replaced by an event link of files. Alternatively the Cel Public Security could make use of a folder system, similar to the one used in the proGres database of UNHCR (see above) to manage its files

(46.) Internal Flight Alternative
(50.) Family Unity

These two fields can be taken up in the specific legal/material grounds of the decision.



### **3. Incorporation of the screening phase in the database**

We have discussed the importance of the screening phase for the RSD process. Here we want to describe how on a practical level the screening phase can be incorporated in the database. We will however first describe the present practice at the CGRS more in detail.

Despite the importance of the screening phase, this phase lacks sufficient resources at the CGRS. Within the geographical sections there is no specific function to carry out the screening process. In some sections the screening is being carried out by the head of section or by his or her deputy, in other sections the more experienced administrative collaborators take up this task, and in one section it has even been abandoned. As a result the screening process is often reduced to its minimum and its possible benefits are not fully explored.

Even more striking is the fact that in the extensive database, through which the RSD process of the CGRS is managed, the screening phase has not been given a proper place in the procedure. Between the registration phase and the recording of the interview the database only offers the most essential options needed for the administrative preparation of the interview. One of the consequences of the omission of the screening phase in the work-flow of the database is, for example, that the two fields in the registration phase that would have a big impact on the profiling of asylum seekers, religion and ethnicity, are usually not filled in. These fields are now contained in the screens which are completed by the administrative unit. From the perspective of the administrative preparation of the interview, these fields are indeed irrelevant.

The database at the CGRS only allows for profiling information to be filled in at the decision phase, which is too late to achieve the above mentioned operational benefits. In an attempt to overcome this gap in the database, most head of sections have developed Excel-tables through which they carry out the screening process. These tables are in fact small parallel databases. Below is an overview of the fields that are contained in the tables for some of the most important countries/regions;

**Table 12 - Screening fields used by RSD managers**

CONGO/ GUINEE	AFGHANISTAN	BALKAN	IRAQ	ARMENIA
File No.	File No.	File No.	File No.	File No.
Name	Name	Name	Name	
Linked files	Linked files	Linked files	Linked files	
UAM	UAM	UAM		Psycho/Medical problems
Date screening		Date Asylum Claim		Date screening
	Date interview	Date interview		
		Name interviewer		
		Language of interview		
Region of Origin	Region of Origin		Region of Origin	
	Ethnicity		Ethnicity	Ethnicity
	Religion		Religion	Religion
	Political party		Political party	
Documents	Documents			
Profile Key words		Profile Key words	Profile Key words	Profile Key words
Summary claim	Summary claim		Summary claim	Summary claim
Comments				
Lawyer	Location file			

The following points came to light:

- Almost all sections describe in a shortened sentence the summary of the claim. Only the Balkan section does not do this, but the absence of the summary is compensated by an elaborated and well defined profile key word system.
- When noting down summaries of the claims the RSD managers also look for underlying motives of the claim. A recurrent underlying motive is for example the need of medical care abroad
- Recording of linked files is an important aspect of the preparation of the interview. In some countries, like Rwanda, 25 % of the cases are linked with other files. For the Rwandan caseload the OA has been asked to complete a more extensive family composition table in order to trace links between files. Based on the family names RSD managers even search pro-actively for links between files that may have been missed out by the OA. Extensive family compositions are also filled in for Congo and Somalia.
- A head of section made the suggestion to give priority to cases which are 'manifestly fraudulent' or 'clearly very good'. These are however preliminary appraisals which are too subjective to be included as a profiling category
- Finally it has to be noted that in most sections the table is kept update with the type of decision that has been taken

Interesting country specific profiles are;

- Witnesses for court case in Belgium (Rwanda).
- Students. Although student is in fact an 'Activity at time of flight' under the registration information, in some countries students do form a social group with a heightened risk for persecution.

- Local politics. This key word is used in the section for Eastern Europe. Local politics requires a different approach when assessing the possibility of protection and an internal flight alternative.

Based on the above findings, it is recommended that a screen especially used for the screening phase be developed and inserted into the database. The screen will consist of fields that already occur elsewhere in the database. It is technically possible to present the same field on different places in the database, because the database is only the interface which gives us access to the underlying tables, the backbone of the database. The screening window should consist of following fields;

- ✓ selected fields from the registration screen, (these are the fields marked in red in the table of the Registration phase under recommendation 1),

N°	Field	N°	Field
1	First name	12	Last Address in Country of Origin (CoO)
2	Family name	13	Ethnicity
3	Alias	14	Religion
4	Sex	15	Language during interview
5	Date of birth	16	Mother tongue
6	Place of birth	18	Links (family unit)
7	Country of birth	19	Links (other files)
8	Marital status	31	Date of asylum claim
9	Nationality	34	Asylum applications in third countries
10	2nd Nationality (3rd,...)	35	Identity and travel documents
11	Country of Former Habitual Residence	36	Other documents

- ✓ the specific needs,
- ✓ the key word system as described under recommendation 2,
- ✓ a comment field where a brief summary of the claim can be entered,

Unlike the key word system in the evaluation screen, the key words should not be a obligatory field in the screening window. This will allow RSD managers to skip a part of the screening for countries where the total number of asylum seekers are too small to work based on profiles.

When RSD officers have access to all the data entered during the screening phase and can generate reports of all the files for which no interview has been planned yet, they will get more involved in the screening process. It will give them the possibility to look out for profiles with which they have experience or have recently found relevant information and propose to the RSD manager to group them together on the planning.

#### ***4. Strengthen the link with the waiting register***

The CGRS is the leading organisation on asylum matters in Belgium. It should therefore have the capacity to centralize all information on asylum seekers starting from the day they arrive in Belgium until they gain a permanent residence permit or the Belgian citizenship or until they permanently leave the country, return voluntarily to their CoO or are repatriated.

Information on other types of stay permits and the enrolment of an asylum seekers in the register of aliens on other grounds than a refugee recognition, have an immediate impact on the asylum procedure. The CGRS can argue that it needs access to certain data of the register of aliens to assess the need of international protection in a full and efficient way.

For this purpose in a first step the link between the database and the waiting register should be strengthened instead of building out the database of the CGRS completely parallel to the waiting register.

The current practice at the CGRS of importing the data from the waiting register when creating a new file ensures a correct link between the files in the two databases. The extension of the access to the waiting register for the CGRS should at least incorporate IT 202, the reasons of the permits of stay of aliens, which reflect the following information

1. Family reunion, cohabitation and adoption;
2. Asylum and diverse protection;
3. Regularisation;
4. Employee;
5. Other reasons;
6. Student;
7. Long term resident;
8. Alien who enjoys a special status.

#### ***5. The development of a specific needs module in the database.***

This module can best developed by the specialists in the office on gender, unaccompanied minors, human trafficking and asylum seekers with psychological problems. This paper is only a starting point for the development of such a module.

## Annexes

### Annex 1 – Adatabase (Red Cross and Fedasil, Belgium)

Overview of the Personal Data maintained by Adatabase

Field	Obligatory or Optional field	Type of field
<b>1. Basic Bio data</b>		
Nr. Badge	Obligatory	Number field
Family group	Obligatory	Free text field
Name	Obligatory	Free text field
First name	Obligatory	Free text field
Public Security number	Obligatory	Number field
CGRS number	Optional	Free text field
Register of State number	Obligatory	Number field
Date of birth	Obligatory	Datum field
Date of birth 00/00/??	Optional	Check box
Place of birth	Optional	Free text field
Nationality	Obligatory	Drop-down
Ethnicity	Optional	Drop-down
Type of arrival	Obligatory	Drop-down
Centre	Obligatory	Drop-down
Type inhabitant (Asylum seeker, Illegal with children, UAMS)	Obligatory	Drop-down
No Show	Optional	Check box
Date arrival centre	Obligatory	Datum field
Date arrival Belgium	Optional	Datum field
Family relation	Obligatory	Drop-down
Sex	Obligatory	Drop-down
Eating habits	Optional	Free text field
Roomnumber	Optional	Free text field
Number closet	Optional	Free text field
Occupation	Optional	Free text field
<b>2. Address after departure from the center</b>		
<b>3. Telecommunication (Telephone, Mobile phone, E-mail, Fax)</b>		
<b>4. Knowledge of languages (Mother tongue, Language procedure, Known languages)</b>		
<b>5. Remarks</b>		
<b>6. Transfers; history of reception centers</b>		
<b>7. Return to the center (in case of return without starting up a new procedure)</b>		
<b>8. Responsible persons (Social worker, Assistant, School assistant)</b>		

## Annex 2 – SGBV, UNHCR categories

### Extract of the UNHCR Guidance on the Use of Standardized Specific Needs Codes<sup>33</sup>

#### Definition on SGBV

Any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to persons on the basis of their sex or gender, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life.

It encompasses, but is not limited to:

- A. physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;
- B. physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;
- C. physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.

#### Sub-categories of SGBV

**1. Victim/ survivor of SGBV in country of asylum**

Person who is, or has been, exposed to sexual and gender-based violence in the country of asylum, including domestic violence.

**2. Victim/ survivor of SGBV during flight**

Person who is, or has been, exposed to sexual and gender-based violence during flight, including domestic violence.

**3. Victim/ survivor of SGBV in country of origin**

Person who is, or has been, exposed to sexual and gender-based violence in the country of origin, including domestic violence.

**4. Female genital mutilation**

Woman or girl who is at risk of or has been subjected to female genital mutilation, a practice involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons, and has a resulting protection concern. FGM is classified into four types:

- (i) partial or total removal of the clitoris and/or the prepuce (clitoridectomy);
- (ii) partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora, with or without excision of the labia majora (excision);
- (iii) narrowing of the vaginal orifice with creation of a covering seal by cutting and appositioning the labia minora and/or the labia majora, with or without excision of the clitoris (infibulation); and
- (iv) all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, for example: pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterization. The practice is also called “female genital cutting” and “female genital mutilation/cutting”, but UNHCR has adopted the use of the term “female genital mutilation”.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> UNHCR, *Guidance on the Use of Standardized Specific Needs Codes*, 2009, UNHCR Internal Document, IOM-FOM No. 030/2009. (Not published)

<sup>34</sup> OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNECA, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIFEM, WHO, *Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation. An Interagency Statement*, February 2008, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/47c6aa6e2.html>. The Statement summarizes, in its introduction, as follows: “The term ‘female genital mutilation’ (also called ‘female genital cutting’ and ‘female genital mutilation/cutting’) refers to all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.”

**5. Harmful traditional practices**

Person who is at risk of, or is a victim/ survivor of a harmful traditional practice. Every social grouping has specific traditional practices and beliefs, some of which are beneficial to all members while others are harmful to a specific group, such as women. Such harmful traditional practices include for instance, female genital mutilation, early marriage, dowry price, widow inheritance, female force feeding, witch hunting, female infanticide, son preference and its implications for the girl child. Depending on the circumstances, certain forms of male circumcision, scarring or tattooing fall also under this category.

**6. Threat of honour killing/violence**

Person who is under threat of an honour crime. An honour crime is justified or explained (or mitigated) by the perpetrator of that crime on the grounds that it was committed as a consequence of the need to defend or protect the honour of the family. The mere perception that a woman has acted in a manner to bring “dishonour” to the family is sufficient to trigger an attack. Persons under threat of an honour crime include those refusing to adhere to social norms in a given society or to accept an arranged marriage, persons having pre- or extramarital affairs, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals, or persons who otherwise are seen to transgress social and cultural rules.

**7. Forced/ early marriage**

Person, often a woman or girl, who is, or has been expected, obliged, or under pressure to marry against her/his will.

Note: It is also not uncommon that gay men and lesbian women are pressured or forced into heterosexual marriages.

**8. Survival sex**

Person who is, or has been, engaged in sex in order to obtain money or other forms of material assistance to meet basic needs of self or other family members. This includes women and girls who are compelled to engage in transactional sex on a temporary or short-term basis to meet basic needs, but who do not seek to engage in this on a long(er)-term basis. The latter group may often be the most hidden and thus difficult to identify.

Use this code also for survivors of sexual exploitation by humanitarian workers.

### Annex 3 – IGC Questionnaire; Table for database analysis



Country:											
Name of database:											
Name organisation:											
Profiling Asylum-seekers Database analysis		For fields in blue provide drop-down list on the next work-sheet ('Drop-down menus') if applicable		Explain (overwriting existing comments) specifications of the field as used by your office, especially when they differ from standard EU or UN definitions (see worksheet 'Definitions')		G EXS: Existing field in database NEX: None existing field in database		H PA: For principal applicant only IND: For all individual family members		I DAT: Date NUM: Number	
						J OBL: Obligatory OPT: Optional		K NEV: Never WJA: When judged applicable SPE: For specific groups ALW: Always		L Explanation on 'Frequency of use'; why the field is 'never' or for which 'specific groups' it is being used.	
		Field		Specifications of Definition of Field		(None) Existing		Level		Type field	
								Mode field		Frequency of use	
										Explanation Frequency of use	
										Comment	
A. Basic bio data and life in Country of Origin (CoO)	A1	First name									
	A2	Family name									
	A3	Alias									
	A4 <sup>T</sup>	Sex									
	A5 <sup>T</sup>	Date of birth									
	A6	Place of birth									
	A7	Country of birth		<i>Specify country boundaries as defined at time of birth or as of now.</i>							
	A8	Marital status*									



	A9 <sup>†</sup>	Nationality*	<i>Including stateless</i>							
	A10	2nd Nationality (3rd Nationality, ...)								
	A11	Country of Former Habitual Residence	<i>Specify if only used for stateless pers. or for all asylum-seekers if different from country of nationality</i>							
	A12	Last Address in CoO								
	A13	Type of demographic setting of Last Address in CoO	<i>E.g. city, town, village, isolated, nomadic,...</i>							
	A14	Date of death								
	A15	Educational level								
	A16	Occupation / Industry in CoO*								
	A17	Activity at time of flight*	<i>E.g. study, paid work, unemployed,.</i>							
	A18	Ethnicity*								
	A19	Religion*								
	A20	Mother tongue*	<i>Mother tongue / Usual language</i>							
	A21	Knowledge other languages								
	A22	Literacy								
	A23	Family members in CoO								
	A24	<i>Others</i>								
	A25	<i>Others</i>								
B. Persons with specific needs	B1 <sup>†</sup>	Unaccompanied minors								
	B2	Separated minors								
	B3	(Possible) Victim of human trafficking								
	B4	Older person unable to care for self								
	B5	Disability (physical/mental)								
	B6	Chronic illness								
	B7	Mental illness								
	B8	Pregnant woman								
	B9	<i>Others</i>								
	B10	<i>Others</i>								
	B11	<i>Others</i>								

<b>C. Life in Country of Asylum (CoA)</b>	<b>C1</b>	<b>Last Address in CoA</b>								
	<b>C2</b>	<b>Imprisoned in CoA</b>								
	<b>C3</b>	<b>Family members in CoA</b>	<i>Other than dependants which have been registered in the same case</i>							
	<b>C4</b>	<b>Education in CoA</b>								
	<b>C5</b>	<b>Occupation in CoA</b>								
	<b>C6</b>	<b>Type of assistance received in CoA*</b>	<i>E.g. specific assistance programs</i>							
	<b>C7</b>	<i>Others</i>								
	<b>C8</b>	<i>Others</i>								
	<b>C9</b>	<i>Others</i>								
<b>D. Data related to submitting of asylum claim</b>	<b>D1</b>	<b>Date of Flight CoO</b>								
	<b>D2</b>	<b>Date of Arrival CoA</b>								
	<b>D3<sup>†</sup></b>	<b>Date of Asylum claim CoA</b>								
	<b>D4</b>	<b>Itinerary from CoO to CoA</b>								
	<b>D5</b>	<b>Intended country of destination</b>								
	<b>D6</b>	<b>Legal / illegal travel</b>								
	<b>D7</b>	<b>Means of contact smuggler*</b>	<i>E.g. advertisement, agency, personal contact,...</i>							
	<b>D8</b>	<b>Means of transportation</b>								
	<b>D9</b>	<b>Date departure from CoA</b>	<i>Implemented / escorted / supervised departures different from F25</i>							
	<b>D10</b>	<b>Asylum applications in third countries</b>	<i>Specify here if only applied for Schengen or EU countries</i>							
	<b>D11</b>	<b>Multiple asylum claims in present CoA</b>								
	<b>D12</b>	<b>Place submitting asylum claim in CoA</b>								
	<b>D13</b>	<b>Identity and travel documents*</b>								
	<b>D14</b>	<b>Other documents*</b>								
	<b>D15</b>	<i>Others</i>								

E. Data related to the nature of the Asylum Claim	E1	Links to other asylum claims (non-family members) with shared persecution events									
	E2	Political party membership									
	E3	Religion (for as far as relevant to asylum claim)									
	E4	Ethnicity (for as far as relevant to asylum claim)									
	E5	Clan									
	E6	Social group*									
	E7	International conflict									
	E8	Internal conflict / generalized violence									
	E9	Capital punishment									
	E10	Torture									
	E11	Inhuman and degrading treatment									
	E12	Desertion/ Draft evasion									
	E13	Press / Freedom expression									
	E14	Gender	Female genital manipulation*								
	E15		Sexual orientation								
	E16		Forced marriage								
	E17		Sexual and Gender based violence*								
	E18	Insurgent									
	E19	Trade union									
	E20	Child soldier									
	E21	Slavery									
	E22	Harmful traditional practices*									
	E23	Other motives	<i>E.g. job opportunity, study, marriage, family visit, economic need,...</i>								
	E24	Medical motives*									
	E25	Legal prosecution / criminal law									
	E26	Human trafficking									
	E27	Property conflict									
	E28	Refugee in loco / sur place									
	E29	'Republikflucht'									
	E30	Trauma									
	E31	Polygamist marriage									
	E32	<i>Others</i>	<i>E.g. Genocide,</i>								

	<b>E33</b>	<i>Others</i>	<i>Mixed marriage, NGO, Coup d'état, Elections, Demonstration, Birth control, Vendetta, Ostracism, Mafia,...</i>								
	<b>E34</b>	<i>Others</i>									
	<b>E35</b>	<i>Others</i>									
	<b>E36</b>	<i>Others</i>									
<b>F. Data related to the Decision on International Protection</b>	<b>F1<sup>†</sup></b>	<b>1st instance decision; - 1951 Convention or subsidiary protection</b>	<b>Type of decision*</b>	<i>Recognition or rejection refugee status or subsidiary protection</i>							
	<b>F2</b>		<b>Legal grounds for recognition*</b>								
	<b>F3</b>		<b>Specifications of grounds for recognition (other than legal grounds)*</b>	<i>E.g. Human rights violations, Discrimination, Internal flight alternative,...</i>							
	<b>F4<sup>†</sup></b>		<b>Legal grounds rejection accelerated/admissibility procedure*</b>	<i>E.g. Manifestly unfounded, safe third country, safe CoO</i>							
	<b>F5</b>		<b>Legal grounds for rejection*</b>								
	<b>F6</b>		<b>Specifications of grounds for rejection (other than legal grounds)*</b>	<i>E.g. Refusal cooperation, Not credible, Internal flight alternative...</i>							
	<b>F7<sup>†</sup></b>		<b>Application withdrawn*</b>								
	<b>F8</b>		<b>Otherwise closed*</b>	<i>E.g. Application abandoned, departure, other status, death,...</i>							
	<b>F9</b>		<b>Exclusion*</b>	<i>Legal grounds for exclusion</i>							
	<b>F10</b>		<b>Cessation*</b>	<i>Legal grounds for cessation</i>							

F11 <sup>†</sup>	Final decision; - 1951 Convention or subsidiary protection	Type of decision	Recognition or rejection refugee status or subsidiary protection								
F12		Legal grounds for recognition									
F13		Specifications of grounds for recognition (other than legal grounds)	E.g. Human rights violations, Discrimination, Internal flight alternative,...								
F14 <sup>†</sup>		Legal grounds rejection accelerated/admissibility procedure	E.g. Manifestly unfounded, safe third country, safe CoO								
F15		Legal grounds for rejection									
F16		Specifications of grounds for rejection (other than legal grounds)	E.g. Refusal cooperation, Not credible, Internal flight alternative...								
F17 <sup>†</sup>		Application withdrawn									
F18		Otherwise closed	E.g. Application abandoned, departure, other status, death,...								
F19		Exclusion	Legal grounds for exclusion								
F20		Cessation	Legal grounds for cessation								
F21 <sup>†</sup>	Dublin Regulation	Requests for taking back or taking charge									
F22 <sup>†</sup>		Requested Country									
F23 <sup>†</sup>		Provisions on which requests are based									
F24 <sup>†</sup>		Decision taken in response to request	Take charge or take back accepted or rejected								
F25 <sup>†</sup>		Transfer as result of request									
F26 <sup>†</sup>		Request for information received									

F27 <sup>†</sup>	Resettlement								
F28	Temporary protection								
F29 <sup>†</sup>	Humanitarian status*	<i>Autorisation to remain on the territory for reasons not due to a need for international protection but on a discretionary basis on compassionate or humanitarian grounds.</i>							
F30	Rejection without order to leave the territory*								
F31	Naturalisation								
F32	Family Reunification								
F33	Student								
F34	Regularisation								
F35	<i>Others</i>								
F36	<i>Others</i>								
F37	<i>Others</i>								
F38 <sup>†</sup>	Decisions with order to leave the territory								
F39	Revocation of International Protection								
F40	Cancellation of International Protection								
F41	<i>Others</i>								
F42	<i>Others</i>								
<b>Notes (optional)</b>									

<b>Instructions</b>	
<b>General</b>	This table analyses the database on asylum-seekers in your country. This table should only refer to one database. If different databases are used for the different phases of the asylum procedure (registration, admissibility phase, 1st instance,...), choose the main database of the institution which is responsible for the refugee status determination. Indicate the name of the database above. Other databases and the links between them can be shortly described in the complementary questionnaire. For specific fields which do not exist in the main database (NEX), but which are incorporated in another database, please insert a reference to the other database in the comment field (Column M).
<b>Fields indicated with ** and drop-down menus</b>	The fields marked in blue are in databases often entered through drop-down menus. In this case please copy the drop-down menus into the second sheet 'Drop-down menus' of this workbook (see tabs at the bottom of the sheet). If your office uses drop-down menus as well for other fields than the ones marked in blue, you can add them in the 'Drop-down menus'-sheet under 'others' (replace 'others' by the proper name of the field). You may want to ask the assistance of your IT manager to provide you with an overview of all drop-down lists of your database in Excel format. Alternatively you can work with screen-shots and send them separate attachments. Translation is not needed.
<b>General</b>	Some fields mentioned separately in the table may form part of a drop-down menu of another field in your database. For example 'gender' may be reflected in the drop-down menu of 'social group'. Mark in this case that the field exists (EXS) and make in the comment field (Column M) a reference to the drop-down menu of the field where it is incorporated. The drop-down menu itself should be copied to the 'Drop-down menus'-sheet.
<b>Fields indicated with †</b>	The fields are required data under the Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection.
<b>Column F</b>	Indicate if the definitions of the fields differ from the definitions set forth by the EU regulations or UN recommendations on this topic. Go for definitions to the sheet 'Definitions' through the tabs at the bottom of the page.
<b>Column G</b>	Mark if the field exists (EXS) or does not exist (NEX) in your database.
<b>Column H</b>	Indicate if the data are collected for every member of the family individually (IND) or only for the principal applicant (PA) (1st or 2nd principal applicant).
<b>Column I</b>	Describe the technical characteristics of the field in the database; Free-text field (TEX), Drop-down menu (DRD), Number (NUM) or date (DAT). The option 'Agreed value list' (AGR) stands for free-text fields which are only being filled with entries from shared and defined lists that are agreed upon by all users.
<b>Column J</b>	Mark if the field is obligatory (OBL) or not (optional, OPT). Obligatory means that the system will give an error message of block if this specific field is not filled in.
<b>Column K</b>	Describe the way (frequency) the field is being filled in by the users. - 'Never' (NEV) means that the fields exist in the database, but that it is not actually used. - 'When judged applicable' (WJA); the field is optional (mode) and is only being filled in when judged applicable by the individual user. These fields typically do not have an explicit zero-value (e.g. 'no education', 'unknown' nationality,...), but are left blank when not judged applicable. These fields are normally too unreliable to draw statistics. - 'For specific groups' (SPE) indicates fields which are always used but only for a certain, well-defined group of asylum-seekers (e.g. unaccompanied minors, applicants from certain countries of origin or other). The definition of the group should be different from 'when this field is applicable'. - 'Always' (ALW) is for fields which are consistently always filled in. This this can be achieved by making the field obligatory (mode) or by maintaining a good quality control system on the data entry. These fields normally contain an explicit zero value (e.g. 'no education' has to be filled in when the applicant did not go to school instead of leaving the field blank).
<b>Column L</b>	With reference to column K, explain why this field is never (NEV) used although it has been provided for in the database / why the field is only filled in when judged applicable by the user or for which specific groups (SPE) the field is used.
<b>Column M</b>	This column is open to any remark concerning the specific field. (e.g. more values possible, specific quality control measures on data entry, references to other databases, availability of standardized transposition of the most common Arabic names,...).
<b>Notes</b>	For more elaborate comments you can add an explanatory note at the bottom of the table.

## Annex 4 – IGC Questionnaire; Complementary questions

<p><b>1.1. Sum up the different databases in your country which contain data on asylum seekers. Give for every database the name, the responsible institution, the function of the database (place in procedure) and short description. Indicate as well if there is link with the main database (existing automatic link, possibility of univocal link through a common denominator, no link possible).</b></p>
<p><b>1.2. Does the law in your country prohibits your office to process certain sensitive data on asylum-seekers such as racial origin, political opinions or religious or other beliefs, as well as personal data concerning health or sexual life? Please specify.</b></p>
<p><b>1.3. Did your country produce during recent years profiling reports on asylum-seekers from certain countries or origin or around a certain theme (e.g. unaccompanied minors, gender, exclusion...)? These reports can be based on data from an electronic database or on other ways of data collection (samples,...). In which circumstances does your country decide to produce a profiling report? What is the methodology used? Please send in an attachment examples of the most important profiling reports your country produced.</b></p>
<p><b>1.4. Attach by email a sample of the statistics which are published by your office on a regular (preferably monthly) basis.</b></p>



<p><b>1.5. Does your country use templates for the assessment of asylum applications? (These templates contain typically segments for the summary of the claim, credibility assessment, inclusion and exclusion assessment.) Possibly different templates are used for the (internal) evaluation and the formal motivation of the decision. Please attach blank copies of these templates. If your country does not use any templates, explain why not.</b></p>
<p> </p>
<p><b>1.6. How do you guarantee the quality and reliability of the data-entry? Which quality control measures on data entry are applied in your office?</b></p>
<p> </p>
<p><b>1.7. General remarks on profiling and data entry?</b></p>
<p> </p>

For support please contact Jeroen Jans, Belgian Office of the Commissioner general for Refugees and Stateless persons, [jeroen.jans@ibz.fgov.be](mailto:jeroen.jans@ibz.fgov.be) , tel: +32/2/205.52.58.

## Annex 5 – Types of RSD decision (legal grounds), Belgium

The table below gives an overview of the types of RSD decision that can be taken by the CGRS with their Dutch appellation. The numbers on the right indicate the number of times a certain type of decision has been taken between 01/01/2008 and 30/06/2010.

Weigering van de vluchtelingenstatus en weigering van de subsidiaire bescherming status	16413
Erkenning van de hoedanigheid van vluchteling	4669
Toekenning van de subsidiaire beschermingsstatus	1136
Technische weigering	1021
Weigering van inoverwegingname van een asielaanvraag (E.U. onderdaan)	776
Afstand van asielaanvraag	410
Erkenning van de hoedanigheid van vluchteling (familiehereniging)	234
Afstand van asielaanvraag (vertrek IOM)	158
Asielaanvraag zonder voorwerp (artikel 55 Vreemdelingenwet)	96
Erkenning van de hoedanigheid van vluchteling (contingent)	68
Intrekking van de vluchtelingenstatus (fraude)	59
Uitsluiting van de vluchtelingenstatus en uitsluiting van de subsidiaire beschermingsstatus	43
Weigering van de vluchtelingenstatus en uitsluiting van de subsidiaire beschermingsstatus	38
Asielaanvraag zonder voorwerp (Belgische nationaliteit)	36
Asielaanvraag zonder voorwerp (overlijden)	23
Intrekking van de subsidiaire beschermingsstatus (fraude)	13
Uitsluiting van de vluchtelingenstatus en weigering van de subsidiaire beschermingsstatus	10
Weigering van de vluchtelingenstatus en weigering van de subsidiaire beschermingsstatus met toepassing van art. 52 Vr.	6
Opheffing van de vluchtelingenstatus	5
Asielaanvraag zonder voorwerp (administratieve reden)	4
Weigering van de bevestiging van de vluchtelingenstatus	1
Intrekking van de subsidiaire beschermingsstatus (moest uitgesloten zijn)	1
Intrekking van de vluchtelingenstatus (moest uitgesloten zijn)	1

## Annex 6 – Definitions on frequent occurring fields in database (EU directives and UN guidelines)

	Field	Definition
1	Country of birth	<p>Regulation (EC) No 862/2007, Art.2, 1(e);  "country of birth" means the country of residence (in its current borders, if the information is available) of the mother at the time of the birth or, in default, the country (in its current borders, if the information is available) in which the birth took place</p> <p>UN Recommendations Migration, 1998, §146;  Country of birth: Country of birth is the country where a person was born. (...) To facilitate the collection of the data and its coding, it is recommended that information on country of birth be obtained in accordance with the national boundaries existing at the time of data collection. Problems are likely to arise, however, when neither the migrant nor the person collecting the information knows precisely how boundaries have changed. If there is doubt, the name of the country of birth as it existed at the time of birth should be recorded and adjustments should be made at the time of data entry.</p>
2	Marital status	<p>UN Recommendation Migration, 1998 , § 147.  Marital status: Information on marital status should be gathered from all migrants aged 15 years or over. The categories distinguished should be, at a minimum: never-married; married; separated or divorced; and widowed.</p>
3	Nationality	<p>Regulation (EC) No 862/2007, Art.2, 1(d);  "citizenship" means the particular legal bond between an individual and his or her State, acquired by birth or naturalisation, whether by declaration, choice, marriage or other means according to national legislation</p>
4	Country of Former Habitual Residence	<p>Regulation (EC) No 862/2007, Art.2, 1(a);  "usual residence" means the place at which a person normally spends the daily period of rest, regardless of temporary absences for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage or, in default, the place of legal or registered residence</p> <p>UN Recommendation Migration, 1998 , § 144;  Previous country of usual residence: This is the the country where the migrant lived during the year preceding his or her arrival in the receiving country.</p>
5	Last Address Country of Origin (CoO)	<p>Qualification Directive 2004/83/EC;  'country of origin' means the country or countries of nationality or, for stateless persons, of former habitual residence.</p>
6	Educational level	<p>UN Recommendation, Censuses, 2008, § 2.216  Educational attainment is defined as the highest grade completed within the most advanced level attended in the educational system of the country where the education was received. Some countries may also find it useful to present data on educational attainment in terms of highest grade attended. If required, data on educational attainment can take into account education and training received in all types of organized educational institutions and programmes, particularly those measurable in terms of grade and level of education or their equivalent, such as programmes in adult education, even if the education and training were provided outside of the regular school and university system. For international purposes, a "grade" is a stage of instruction usually covered in the course of a school year. Information on educational attainment should preferably be collected for all persons 5 years of age and over.</p>

7	<b>Activity at time of flight</b> <i>E.g. study, paid work, unemployed,...</i>	<p>UN Recommendation, Censuses, 2008, § 2.209  School attendance is defined as regular attendance at any regular accredited educational institution or programme, public or private, for organized learning at any level of education at the time of the census or, if the census is taken during the vacation period, at the end of the school year or during the last school year. According to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), education is taken to comprise all deliberate and systematic activities designed to meet learning needs. Instruction in particular skills which is not part of the recognized educational structure of the country (for example, in-service training courses in factories) is not normally considered "school attendance" for census purposes.</p> <p>UN Recommendation, Censuses, 2008, § 2.237  The economically active population comprises all persons of either sex who provide the supply of labour during a specified time reference period, as employed or as unemployed, for the production of economic goods and services, where the concept of economic production is established with respect to the System of National Accounts (SNA)<sup>68</sup>. Activities are within the economic production boundary defined by the SNA<sup>69</sup> if they comprise:  (a) Production of goods or services supplied, or intended to be supplied to units other than their producers, including the production of goods and services used up in the process of producing such goods or services (intermediate consumption);  (b) Production of all goods retained by their producers for their own final use (own-account production of goods);  (c) Production of housing services by owner-occupiers,  (d) Production of domestic and personal services produced by paid domestic staff.</p>
8	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<p>UN Recommendation, Censuses, 2008, § 2.161  Ethnicity; Broadly defined, ethnicity is based on a shared understanding of history and territorial origins (regional and national) of an ethnic group or community, as well as on particular cultural characteristics such as language and/or religion. Respondents' understanding or views about ethnicity, awareness of their family background, the number of generations they have spent in a country, and the length of time since immigration are all possible factors affecting the reporting of ethnicity in a census. Ethnicity is multidimensional and is more a process than a static concept, and so ethnic classification should be treated with movable boundaries.</p>
9	<b>Religion</b>	<p>UN Recommendation, Censuses, 2008, § 2.152  Religion: For census purposes, religion may be defined as either:  (a) Religious or spiritual belief of preference, regardless of whether or not this belief is represented by an organized group; or  (b) Affiliation with an organized group having specific religious or spiritual tenets.</p>
10	<b>Mother tongue</b> <i>Mother tongue / Usual language</i>	<p>UN Recommendation, Censuses, 2008, § 2.156  Language; There are three types of language data that can be collected in censuses, namely:  (a) Mother tongue, defined as the language usually spoken in the individual's home in his or her early childhood;  (b) Usual language, defined as the language currently spoken, or most often spoken, by the individual in his or her present home;  (c) Ability to speak one or more designated languages.</p>
11	<b>Literacy</b>	<p>UN Recommendation, Censuses, 2008, § 2.202  Literacy has historically been defined as the ability both to read and to write, distinguished between "literate" and "illiterate" people. A literate person is one who can both read and write a short, simple statement on his or her everyday life. An illiterate person is one who cannot, with understanding, both read and write such a statement. Hence, a person capable of reading and writing only figures and his or her own name should be considered illiterate, as should a person who can read but not write as well as one who can read and write only a ritual phrase that has been memorized. However, new understanding referring to a range of levels, of domains of application, and of functionality is now widely accepted.</p>

12	<b>Unaccompanied minors</b>	Qualification Directive 2004/83/EC, Article 2 (i); 'unaccompanied minors' means third-country nationals or stateless persons below the age of 18, who arrive on the territory of the Member States unaccompanied by an adult responsible for them whether by law or custom, and for as long as they are not effectively taken into the care of such a person; it includes minors who are left unaccompanied after they have entered the territory of the Member States;
13	<b>Disability (physical/mental)</b>	UN Recommendation, Censuses, 2008, § 2.351 Disability status characterizes the population into those with and without a disability. The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health defines disability as "an umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions. It denotes the negative aspects of the interaction between an individual (with a health condition) and that individual's contextual factors (environmental and personal factors)." For the purpose of determining disability status using census data, persons with disabilities are defined as those persons who are at greater risk than the general population for experiencing restrictions in performing specific tasks or participating in role activities. This group would include persons who experience limitations in basic activity functioning, such as walking or hearing, even if such limitations were ameliorated by the use of assistive devices, a supportive environment or plentiful resources. Such persons may not experience limitations in the specifically measured tasks, such as bathing or dressing, or participation activities, such as working or going to church, because the necessary adaptations have been made at the person or environmental levels. These persons would still, however, be considered to be at greater risk for restrictions in activities and/or participation than the general population because of the presence of limitations in basic activity functioning and because the absence of the current level of accommodation would jeopardize their current levels of participation.
14	<b>Date of Asylum claim CoA</b>	Procedural Directive 2005/85/EC, Art. 2 (b), 'application' or 'application for asylum' means an application made by a third country national or stateless person which can be understood as a request for international protection from a Member State under the Geneva Convention. Any application for international protection is presumed to be an application for asylum, unless the person concerned explicitly requests another kind of protection that can be applied for separately;
15	<b>Final decision;</b> 1951 Convention or subsidiary protection <b>Type of decision</b>	Procedural Directive 2005/85/EC, Art. 2 (d), 'final decision' means a decision on whether the third country national or stateless person be granted refugee status by virtue of Directive 2004/83/EC and which is no longer subject to a remedy within the framework of Chapter V of this Directive irrespective of whether such remedy has the effect of allowing applicants to remain in the Member States concerned pending its outcome, subject to Annex III to this Directive;

Sources:

Council Directive 2004/83/EC of 29 April 2004, Qualification Directive;

Council Directive 2005/85/EC of 1 December 2005, Procedural Directive;

Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection;

Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/58/Rev.1, United Nations, 1998;

Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Series M No. 67/Rev.2, United Nations 2008

## Annex 7, Claim type categories, Canada (CTRA)

Source; Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

<b>Generic (all countries) Claim Types</b>	<b>Catégories génériques (tous les pays) Types de revendication</b>
<b>No Nexus - Criminality/Corruption</b>	<b>Aucun lien - Criminalité/Corruption</b>
Personal vendetta/Family feud	Vendetta personnelle/Querelle de famille
Witness/Victim of Common crime	Témoign/Victime de crime de droit commun
Witness/Victim of Guerrilla/Rebels	Témoign/Victime de guérilla/rebelles
Witness/Victim of Organized crime	Témoign/Victime de crime organisé
Witness/Victim of State agents	Témoign/Victime d'agents de l'État
Varied/Other	Variés/Autres
<b>No Nexus - Varied/Other</b>	<b>Aucun lien - Variés/Autres</b>
Economic migrant	Migrant économique
Fear is unspecified/unclear	Crainte non précisée/incertaine
Generalized risk	Risque généralisé
Varied/Other	Variés/Autres
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Race/Origine ethnique</b>
Varied/Other	Variés/Autres
<b>Religion</b>	<b>Religion</b>
Varied/Other	Variés/Autres
<b>Particular Social Group - Gender/Age</b>	<b>Groupe social particulier – Sexe/Âge</b>
Female - Domestic violence	Femme - Violence conjugale
Female - Forced marriage	Femme - Mariage forcé
Female - Non-domestic sexual violence	Femme - Violence sexuelle non conjugale
Female – Other	Femme - Autre
Male – Other	Homme - Autre
<b>Particular Social Group – Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>Groupe social particulier - Orientation sexuelle</b>
Bisexual	Bisexuel
Gay	Homosexuel
Lesbian	Lesbienne
Varied/Other	Variés/Autres
<b>Particular Social Group - Varied/Other</b>	<b>Groupe social particulier - Variés/Autres</b>
Varied/Other	Variés/Autres
<b>Political Opinion - Activism</b>	<b>Opinion politique – Militantisme</b>
Academics/Artists/Intellectuals	Universitaires/Artistes/Intellectuels
Anti-government	Opposant au gouvernement
Anti poverty/Community activist/NGO	Activiste/ONG communautaire/contre la pauvreté
Journalist (Print/Radio/TV)	Journaliste (Presse écrite/Radio/TV)
State employee/Appointee/Police/Military	Employé de l'état/Personne nommée/Policier/Militaire
Student activist/organizer	Activiste/organisateur étudiant
Trade/Labour unionist	Syndicaliste
Varied/Other	Variés/Autres
<b>Political Opinion - Military Service</b>	<b>Opinion politique - Service militaire</b>
Varied/Other	Variés/Autres
<b>Political Opinion - Organization</b>	<b>Opinion politique – Organisation</b>
Varied/Other	Variés/Autres
<b>Political Opinion - State Policy Issues</b>	<b>Opinion politique – Questions de politique d'État</b>
Varied/Other	Variés/Autres
<b>Political Opinion - Varied/Other</b>	<b>Opinion politique - Variés/Autres</b>
Varied/Other	Variés/Autres

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