



## **EMN Ad-Hoc Query on Best Practices for Conducting Asylum Interviews**

Requested by Suvi TIAINEN on 15th March 2016

### **Protection**

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, Norway (22 in total)

#### Disclaimer:

*The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.*

### **Background information:**

The Finnish Immigration Service has received funding from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) for its project „Flow - Improving the initial part of the asylum procedure through developing stakeholder cooperation, tools and professional competences”. The project contributes to objective 1.1 of AMIF’s national program: strengthening and developing the common European asylum system. The key objective is to improve the efficiency and quality of the initial part of the asylum procedure by developing stakeholder cooperation, data exchange and professional competences as well as databases and other tools used in the asylum process.

In this regard, we need information from the other Member States for identifying best practices for asylum interviews.

### **Summary**

The Finnish Immigration Service is working on improving the initial part of its asylum procedure and made an ad hoc query to identify best practices for conducting asylum interviews, since it is a crucial part of the initial part of the asylum procedure. A total of 22 Member States sent in their replies.

All Member States usually have one personal interview for establishing the motives for seeking international protection, but in some cases one or more additional interviews can be arranged if necessary. However in several Member States, including Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg and Netherlands) this interview is preceded by a shorter interview or hearing for establishing the identity, nationality and travel route of the asylum seeker and usually also a short description of the motives for seeking international protection. In some Member States, including Estonia and Malta, the applicants are given a questionnaire or asked some information about their motives to apply for international protection when the applicant submits the application. The initial hearing and the personal interview are commonly conducted by two different authorities, but in some Member States, including Finland, Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom, they are conducted by the same authority.

When an initial hearing is conducted it usually takes place as soon as possible after the application for international protection has been submitted or it takes place at the time of the registration of the application.

In many Member States the time for arranging the personal interview after the application has been submitted has extended since the recent high influx of applicants for international protection. The time for arranging the interview can vary a lot depending on the case. For instance in Belgium it is possible in some cases to organize the interview within a few weeks after the application was submitted, but in many cases it can take several months, even up to ten months. In Estonia the interview is scheduled as soon as possible, preferably no later than one month after the application was submitted and in Cyprus within 3 months from the submission of the application. Germany is implementing a new system where existing processes at German Federal and German Federal State level are centralized within a new target process comprising all stages of the asylum procedure from the registration of applications to the decision. Germany estimates that in this new system it should be possible to process most of the asylum procedures (from the preparation and opening of the file to the interview and the decision on the application) within 48 hours.

Only Sweden stated that they have an automated booking system for asylum interviews. In the Netherlands the sending of invitations is partly automated. In all Member States there is an interpreter present if the applicant needs one, a representative for unaccompanied minors and a legal counsellor if the applicant requests one. Both Norway and the United Kingdom stated that the presence of a legal counsellor is rare. In some Member States other stakeholders can be present in the interview. For instance in Croatia a representative of the UNHCR or another organization dealing with the protection of human rights or the rights of refugees may participate in the interview if the applicant doesn't object. In most Member States the interviews last from 1 to 5 hours depending on the case.

In most Member States the minutes of the interview are interpreted to the applicant at the end of the interview and they have a chance make precisions or correct the information in the minutes. In some Member States, including Estonia and Norway, the minutes are not interpreted to the applicant. In these cases an audio record of the interview is always made. Some member states use prefilled document templates for the minutes of the interview, mostly consisting of general information and in some cases certain obligatory questions. Most Member States emphasize the case by case assessment of applications without prefilled questions.

A few Member States, including Estonia, Finland, Germany, Sweden and Norway, stated that they have made changes to the way asylum interviews are arranged and conducted in recent years to accommodate the procedure due to the increased influx of applicants for international protection. For instance Norway has among other measures started to screen cases for different length interviews, audio recording the interviews instead of interpreting the minutes to the applicants and conducting interviews on Skype. Estonia has

also started using audio recording instead of interpreting the minutes even though there hasn't been any increased influx in applicants for international protection.

### Questions


1. Do you have more than one interview for applicants of international protection? Yes / No. If Yes, explain the function of the different interviews and are they conducted by the same or different national authorities.
2. Describe how asylum interviews are arranged in your country:
  - a) How long does it approximately take for the interview to be arranged after submitting the application for international protection?
  - b) Do you have an automated system for booking asylum interviews or do you send invitations to the interviews?
  - c) Which stakeholders usually take part in the interview (e.g. interpreter, legal counsellor, representative for an unaccompanied minor) and how do they receive information about an upcoming interview?
  - d) How long does an asylum interview approximately last?
  - e) Does the asylum seeker get to review the minutes of the interview? Yes / No. If Yes, how is this arranged?
3. Do you use some kind of a prefilled document template for the minutes of the interview? Yes / No. If Yes, we would kindly ask you to send us an exemplar of the template to us if possible.
4. Have you made changes to the way asylum interviews are arranged and conducted in recent years, to accommodate the procedure due to the increased influx of applicants for international protection? Yes / No. If Yes, please describe the changes and how they have improved your processes.
5. **We are planning to visit some Member States based on the conclusions made from the answers to this questionnaire. In order to enable follow up on specific issues and to plan possible visits, please provide contact details for an official in your administration to whom any supplementary queries in relation to this questionnaire can be addressed.**


Name of contact person.....


Telephone number.....

Email address.....

**Responses**

	Country	Wider Dissemination	Response
	Austria	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> Yes, at least two interviews take place. The first is conducted by specialized police authorities and the second by the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum (BFA). Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>2.</b> a) The first interview focused on questions concerning identity and travelling route has to take place as soon as possible at the police facility after the submission of the application, approximately within few days. b) The case owner of Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum sends invitations to the interviewees. c) Interpreters, legal counsellors, representatives for an unaccompanied minor are informed by the police authorities and/or Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum about every upcoming interview. d) The duration of interviews varies according to complexity of individual cases, but durations beyond one hour are not unusual - especially due to interpretation. e) Yes, the minutes of the interview are presented for review and to sign hereafter by the interviewee. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Yes, templates are used. Concerning the question of sending, please contact the Federal Office directly as below indicated. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>4.</b> Yes, on the one hand organizational changes were implemented – above all - for initial interviews that are conducted now by especially trained police officials since 2015. Concerning unaccompanied minors the appointed legal advisor as the first legal representative has to be present</p>

			<p>at the initial interview and confirm its content in respect to the welfare of the child. Concerning vulnerable groups such as sexually harassed persons or victims of violence special safeguards have been legally introduced in order to avoid additional traumatization during the interview. Moreover, interviews before the Federal Office including obligations to inform applicants of procedural rights are constantly adapted to increasing requirements concerning humanitarian aspects, notably safeguarding human rights (e.g. right to family and private life, prevention of torture or trafficking). Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Official Email address of Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum (BFA): BFA-Einlaufstelle@bmi.gv.at Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p>
	Belgium	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> In Belgium, the Immigration Office is the authority responsible for the registration of asylum applications. At the Immigration Office, a short interview takes place to establish the identity, nationality and travel route of the asylum seeker and to fill in a questionnaire for the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS) about the reasons why they fled their country of origin. If Belgium is the responsible State under the Dublin Regulation, the file is sent to the CGRS. The CGRS is the central authority for the Belgian asylum procedure. It is the body that is authorized to assess the asylum application. At least one personal interview by a protection officer at the CGRS is imposed by law. The interview serves the CGRS to examine whether the asylum application is credible and qualifies for refugee status or subsidiary protection status.</p> <p><b>2.</b> a) How long does it approximately take for the interview to be arranged after submitting the application for international protection? In the second half of 2015, an exceptionally high number of asylum applications were filed in Belgium. As a result, the CGRS is unable to process all cases in a short term. The processing time of an asylum application at the CGRS varies strongly. In some cases, the CGRS continues to invite an asylum seeker for an interview some weeks after the application was made. However, this is impossible for all asylum seekers. In many cases, it can take several months, even up to ten months, before the applicant is summoned for an interview. b) Do you have an automated system for booking asylum interviews or do you send invitations to the interviews? There is no automated booking system. The CGRS will usually send the invitation</p>


			<p>about three weeks before the interview. c) Which stakeholders usually take part in the interview (e.g. interpreter, legal counsellor, representative for an unaccompanied minor) and how do they receive information about an upcoming interview? During the interview, the asylum applicant must tell the protection officer the truth and do everything possible to prove his identity, origin, travel route and statement. The lawyer or another person of confidence chosen by the asylum seeker can attend the interview. The interpreter is neutral and has an obligation of professional secrecy. If the applicant has a lawyer, he must inform the CGRS that he is involved with the asylum procedure. He will receive a copy of all correspondence that the CGRS sends to the applicant including the summons letter for the interview(s). At the beginning of the interview, the protection officer gives information about the purpose and the course of the interview. d) How long does an asylum interview approximately last? The protection officer interviews every applicant individually. The interview proceeds in a professional and calm way and can take up to 4 hours. There is at least 1 break. e) Does the asylum seeker get to review the minutes of the interview? Yes / No. If Yes, how is this arranged? In principle, the CGRS protection officer confronts the asylum applicant with contradictions in the statements. At the end of the interview, the protection officer asks the applicant and the lawyer, representative or trusted person if they would like to clarify certain points. Additional remarks or supporting documents can be sent to the CGRS afterwards and will be taken into consideration. The asylum seeker may order a copy of the interview report, together with the complete asylum file.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Yes</p> <p><b>4.</b> Yes, during recent years intensification of preliminary screening and profiling of cases, enabled the CGRS to organise the asylum interviews in a more efficient manner.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Peter Van Costenoble <a href="mailto:peter.vancostenoble@ibz.fgov.be">peter.vancostenoble@ibz.fgov.be</a></p>
	Croatia	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> 1. Police officers on border crossing points as well as police officers at police stations and administrations and at Reception center for foreigners are conducting the first interview in order to establish the identity, travel route and entry into the country of an applicant for international protection. Afterwards, applicant lodges the application for international protection in form of</p>



interview. Based on that, decision makers conduct the interview. Pursuant to Act on International and Temporary protection (Act on ITP) there is no limitation for conduction interviews.

**2.** 2. a) Pursuant to Act on ITP the Ministry is obliged to appoint the personal interview as soon as possible. In practice, it takes no longer than 5-7 days after the application has been lodged. b) The interview is appointed by official invitation on language that applicant understands and communicates. In case where applicant has representative/lawyer invitation is sent to him. In case of UAM invitation is sent to the guardian. c) Interpreter, lawyer, a representative of the UNHCR or another organization dealing with the protection of human rights or the rights of refugees may participate in the interview if the applicant does not object. The unaccompanied minor is obliged to participate in person in the interview in the presence of the guardian ad litem. According to Act on ITP the Ministry is obliged to cooperate with UNHCR on matters relating to applicants, asylees, foreigners under subsidiary protection and foreigners under temporary protection. The Ministry at the request of UNHCR, supply information on: 1. Applicants, asylees, foreigners under subsidiary protection and foreigners under temporary protection in the Republic of Croatia; 2. The application of the 1951 Convention, and other international documents relating to refugees; and 3. Laws and other regulations in the field of international protection which are applicable or are in the process of being created. So copy of every lodged application, with the consent of applicant, is immediately sent to UNHCR. All other stakeholders are informed in writing by official letter/invitation upon submitted valid authorization (power of attorney for lawyer) d) There is no prescribed duration, it depends on particular circumstances of individuals and perhaps fact that applicant is vulnerable person with special procedural needs. Prior to the interview an official explains what the purpose of the interview is and that the obligations of the applicant is to provide a necessary documents and to tell the truth. The official also explains the role of the other present persons including a Ministry data protection rules. When the interview is concluded the minutes are read to applicant in order to give an opportunity to the applicant to correct taken facts. In practice the interview can last from 1,5 to 5 hours. In certain cases it can be extended or continued to the next day. e) Yes. The interpreter reads the minutes to asylum seeker, each question and each answer. After corrections are made all stakeholders sign the minutes.

**3.** 3. Questions depend on circumstances of individuals. The content of minutes are: personal data of the applicant; beginning and place of interview, names and titles of present persons, short



			<p>explanation of obligations of applicant and the purpose and reason of interview, questions, finish time of interview and signatures of present persons.</p> <p>4. 4. No</p> <p>5. 5. Josip Paradzik <a href="mailto:jparadzik@mup.hr">jparadzik@mup.hr</a></p>
	Cyprus	Yes	<p>1. Usually there is only one interview taking place during the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) procedure. There are cases, however, which require a second interview, for the purpose of clarification of specific claims of the applicant, or in case the applicant claimed to be a victim of torture and was referred to the competent medical board etc. In case a second interview is required, the officer of the Asylum Service who performed the first one, will also perform the second one.</p> <p>2. a) The interview is scheduled within three months (maximum) from the submission of application for international protection. b) Invitations are sent by the Asylum Service to the address submitted by the applicant at the time of his/her asylum application or in order to accelerate the procedure we conduct the applicant on his/her given telephone number. c) Interpreter (unless the applicant speaks Greek or English fluently and requests not to have an interpreter at the interview), legal counsellor (if requested by applicant), in case of an unaccompanied minor, the representative of the minor (Social Welfare Services). These stakeholders are put in copy in the interview letter sent to the applicant. d) Depends on each case, based on level of difficulty. e) Yes. The applicant may review the interview right after the interview is completed, or (s)he may request to review it at a later stage (e.g. if the claim is rejected the applicant or his legal advisor may wish to review the interview in order to prepare for the appeal procedure).</p> <p>3. Not necessarily. However for the purpose of unified conformity of the interview there is an Interview format template that case workers may follow. However this can be adjusted according to the needs of the interview. AN INTERVIEW FORMAT TEMPLATE IS ATTACHED.</p> <p>4. There were not any fundamental changes on the way asylum interviews are arranged other than the option of informing an applicant about the due day of the interview. That is, a case worker may</p>

			<p>call an applicant to inform him/her about the date of the interview that he/she has to present himself. This may accelerate the interview process and in turn may shorten the period of time that the whole RSD procedure is carried out.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Name of contact person: Ms Natasa ANDREOU (Asylum Service - Ministry of Interior) Telephone number: +357 22445263 Email address: <a href="mailto:nandreou@asylum.moi.gov.cy">nandreou@asylum.moi.gov.cy</a></p>
	Czech Republic	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> Interviews of applicants for international protection are always conducted by the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of the Interior. More than one interview is possible if needed. Interview is conducted in order to get all necessary information as regards the state of affairs.</p> <p><b>2.</b> a) Approximately 1 week. b) The invitations are sent to the applicants. c) Stakeholders taking part in the interview are following: representative of the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy, interpreter, legal counsellor – in case the applicant wishes so, parent of the minor applicant or guardian – in case of minor applicant for unaccompanied minor, psychologist – if needed (e.g. in case of traumatised applicants). Each stakeholder is invited by the written invitation or on the basis of an order. d) On average 2 – 3 hours. e) Yes, each applicant may review the minutes at the end of the interview; he/she may add or correct his/her statements.</p> <p><b>3.</b> No</p> <p><b>4.</b> No</p> <p><b>5.</b> Name of contact person: Ms Kateřina Stehlíková Telephone number: +420 974 833 152, +420 603191467 Email address: <a href="mailto:katerina.stehlikova@mvcz.cz">katerina.stehlikova@mvcz.cz</a></p>
	Estonia	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> There is a possibility to conduct more than one interview with the applicant of international protection. First the applicant submits the asylum application with a written explanation why the person needs international protection. Additional questions regarding application are asked if necessary. Then the Police and Border Guard Board will conduct a thorough interview where the</p>


asylum applicant has the possibility to explain all the reasons for applying for international protection. In case the case worker needs more information for the decision, a supplementary interview will be held. Additionally, Article 40 of the Administrative Procedure Act stipulates that an administrative authority shall, before issuing of an administrative act, grant a participant in a proceeding a possibility to provide his or her opinion and objections in a written, oral or any other suitable form. Therefore in case of a negative decision the Police and Border Guard has to give the asylum seeker a possibility to dispute the arguments of the negative decision. In practice this is done either by written form or in an interview.

2. a) After submitting the asylum application, the interviews are held as soon as possible. In practice the interviews are held no more than one month after submitting the application. The time between the submitting the application and the interview depends on the backlog of the interviews. b) There is no automated system for booking asylum interviews. The case workers send out the invitations to the interviews. c) The participants at the interview usually are: the case worker, the applicant, the interpreter, the legal counsellor. In case of an unaccompanied minor, the legal representative or the appointed guardian of the minor is also present. All the relevant persons are informed of the time and place of the interview by the case worker. d) The duration of the interview depends of the circumstances of the individual cases and therefore we are unable to make a generalization. e) Previously the minutes were translated to the asylum seeker after every interview with the possibility to make corrections. According to the new practice the interviews are being audio recorded as well as written down during the interview and the minutes are not being translated to the asylum seeker anymore. The written minutes are given to the legal representative or to the asylum applicant after the interview.


3. There are some mandatory questions and general information in the minutes of the interviews, but we do not have a prefilled template.


4. Although Estonia does not have an increased influx of asylum applicants, the taking into use of the audio recordings and therefore not translating the minutes after every interview helps to shorten the interviews.

			5. Will be specified in an email to FI NCP.
+	Finland	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> Yes and no. According to the Finnish Aliens Act, the Police and the Finnish Border Guard are responsible for establishing the identity, travel route and entry into the country of an applicant for international protection. This has been a separate interview before the asylum interview held by the Finnish Immigration Service. However, according to the Finnish Government's proposal draft for a legislative amendment to the Aliens Act, this part of the asylum investigation will be transferred from the police and the Border Guard to the Finnish Immigration Service. The amendment will be coming into force at earliest on the 1st of July 2016 and at latest on the 1st of January 2017. Even though the amendment has not yet come into force, on the 1st of March 2016, the responsibility for establishing the identity, travel route and entry into the country was transferred from the police to the Finnish Immigration Service. Since then the interview that was before held by the police has been carried out in connection with the asylum interview. The Finnish Border Guard will continue carrying out their interviews for now until the amendment comes into force. In short: The police and the Border Guard will still receive asylum applications and register asylum seekers. When the asylum application is submitted at the border there will be two interviews and when it is submitted in the police office there will be only one interview held by the Finnish Immigration Service.</p> <p><b>2.</b> a. Unfortunately the latest statistics are from the March 2015 when the average time between filing the application for international protection and the asylum interview was 134 days. b. Currently, there are no automated system for booking asylum interviews or sending invitations to the interviews in Finland. c. Normally, an interpreter and a legal counsellor are present in the interview. Sometimes the interpretation is done via a video connection or via a phone. If the asylum seeker is a minor there is also a representative for an unaccompanied minor present. The applicant is expected to find a legal counsellor (if he/she wants one) after having received the invitation to the asylum interview and make sure that the counsellor can be present at the given time. In the case where the Finnish Immigration Service considers that an applicant is in need of a legal counsellor, the counsellor can be contacted directly to make sure that she / he can be present in the interview at a given time. The interpreters are booked through interpretation companies. In the case of common languages like Arabic, the interpreters are booked beforehand and the applicants for the interviews are organized later. An invitation to an unaccompanied minor will be</p>


			<p>sent to his / her representative. d. We don't have statistics on the average length of an asylum interview, but most interviews are booked for 3 hours and most can be conducted in this time. It can be said that interviews last approximately 2 - 4 hours. e. The interpreter reads the minutes of the interview to the applicant at the end of the interview. In some cases the minutes can be given to the applicant's legal counsellor who will later on go through the minutes together with an interpreter and the applicant and send possible corrections to the Finnish Immigration Service.</p> <p><b>3.</b> We have a template with the obligatory questions that are always asked in an asylum interview. Other questions are always dependent on the applicant's free account. See attachment (in Finnish, Swedish and a rough tem-plate in English).</p> <p><b>4.</b> The asylum interviews are being reorganized to make them more efficient. For example, an asylum interview is booked for 3 hours maximum in principle instead of previous timeframe of 3 to 6 hours. This allows for 2 interviews per day per interviewer. This is the case where the police / the Border Guard have interviewed the applicant concerning the identity, travel route and entry into the country. In the case of only one interview (as a result of the transfer of competence described in the answer no. 1) the interviews will be booked for 5 hours. It has been noticed that two separate interviews by different authorities caused backlogs in the process; having only one interview in the future is expected to speed up the process. One of the key objectives for this project (by virtue of which this ad hoc query is made) is to determine best practices for asylum interviews in order to conduct the asylum interviews more efficiently without risking the previous high quality.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Laura Cupic +358 50 509 5663 <a href="mailto:laura.cupic@migri.fi">laura.cupic@migri.fi</a></p>
	Germany	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> No. Only one interview is scheduled for the applicant(s) during which he/she can elaborate quite extensively on his/her flight reasons. Beforehand, at the time of the preparation and opening of the file, only the personal data of the applicant(s) is collected and the applicant(s) will be asked about any previous procedures, papers and documents.</p> <p><b>2.</b> Applicants are handed out a form in their native tongue through which they are called to attend their interview. This allows the coordination of all those participating in the interview: the</p>


			<p>case worker taking the decision, the applicant for asylum, interpreter, possibly a legal representative. Prior to the date of the interview, the case worker conducting the interview will be provided with the case file to allow for a closer look at the documents/certificates/statements that might have been handed in. a) Due to the high number of arrivals during the year 2015, interview dates could in part only be posted with delays. At the moment, the situation in the German Federal States differs significantly. Presently, there are branches of the Federal Office that have already fixed interview dates up until the autumn of 2016, other branches are fixing appointments on a day-by-day basis. In the short term, the German Federal States will be provided with a new type of booking system allowing for fixing appointments for new applications in the so-called reception centres. A nationwide and state-wide core data system serves as the basis for the integration of the individual process which, in the short term, will lead to a higher degree of transparency and improved capacity utilization. The introduction of reception centres means that in future all asylum procedures will be processed with the same level of priority. Such new reception centres in the form of the first central stop for refugees form an important element for higher efficiency in the management of refugees. Existing processes at German Federal and German Federal State level are centralised within a new target process always comprising all stages of the asylum procedure from the registration to the actual decision on the application for asylum. This means that it should be possible to process most of the asylum procedures (from the preparation and opening of the file to the interview and the decision on the application) within 48 hours. b) The summons with the date of the interview always carries the written form and is posted to the address of the asylum seeker or his/her legal representative c) The participants in the interview are always: the interviewing case worker, the asylum seeker and the interpreter. The interview is not open to the public, however, the asylum seeker may, at his/her own request, call a legal representative and/or a person of trust (mostly NGO) to the interview. The date of the interview is fixed by the secretariat for asylum procedures in consultation with the competent case worker conducting the interview. Thereafter the form with the written summons for the date of the interview is posted to the asylum seeker or his/her legal representative. The interpreter is booked via an electronic administration system for interpreters and in practice and for the most part appointments are agreed upon orally. d) The BAMF estimates that the average duration of interviews for applications of asylum at the moment lasts 100 minutes on the whole. The interviews for applicants from the Western Balkans last on average 50 minutes and those for Syrian applicants approximately 45 minutes. e) The asylum</p>
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			<p>seeker receives a transcript of the interview. The transcript resulting from the interview is written in the form of questions and answers including the spoken word as well as remarks (concerning emotions, obligations of the asylum seeker, referrals to other asylum procedures etc.). The time used for the interview and also for the reverse translation is also specified in writing.</p> <p><b>3.</b> No. There is no form to clarify the facts of the case. Each asylum procedure constitutes a case-by-case assessment. The case worker conducting the interview is required to tackle each presentation of the reasons for making application for asylum individually.</p> <p><b>4.</b> Please see reply to 2 a).</p> <p><b>5.</b> EMN NCP Germany</p>
	Hungary	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> The alien's police authority conducts an interview where it tries to establish the identity of the foreigner and the circumstances of illegal entry to the territory of Hungary. The asylum authority conducts one or if needed more interviews where it examines the identity of the foreigner and that if the conditions of international protection can be established. Information gathered by the alien's police authority is also used in the asylum procedure.</p> <p><b>2.</b> a) The first interview takes place as soon as possible after registering the application, preferably on the same day. b) Within the asylum procedure the asylum authority sends a notification on the date set for the interview, unless the interview takes place when the person is applied for asylum. c) Within the asylum procedure an interpreter, an authorized legal counsellor (if any) and representative for an unaccompanied minor also take part in the interview and they are also notified by the asylum authority on the date set for the interview. d) It depends on the complexity of the case. e) The asylum authority following the interview re-read the minutes of the interview via interpretation.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Template containing the personal data and some basic questions can be downloaded from Asylum Information System, however it has to be completed by further questions by the interviewer according to the case.</p>

			<p>4. In order to increase efficiency there is an aim to conduct the first interview as soon as possible.</p> <p>5. EMN HU NCP</p>
	Italy	Yes	<p>1. No. The procedure for obtaining international protection provides for just one interview carried out by the Territorial Commission for the Recognition of International Protection.</p> <p>2. a) Italian legislation does not set a time limit within which a TCN has to have an interview with the Commission. In 2014 the number of Territorial Commissions for the Recognition of Refugee Status was increased to 20, which has made it possible to set interviews after one or two months at the latest from application submission; b) The date for the interview is notified to the applicant at the time of application submission at the Immigration Office of the Local Police Authority; c) Just the applicant usually takes part in the interview with the Territorial Commission, with an interpreter of the language of the applicant's choice, when needed. However, upon the applicant's request, an interview may be carried out in the presence of a cultural mediator, the applicant's lawyer or a worker from the reception centre in which the applicant has been admitted. The usual procedure is that applicants themselves inform their lawyers or the workers of the reception centre of the upcoming interview; d) It is not possible to indicate how long an interview lasts as a rule, as it depends on a number of factors such as the following: how complex the applicant's story is; to what extent the applicant, if alone, is able to understand and answer the questions put by the members of the commission; the degree of mutual understanding between the applicant and the interpreter; and the type and number of questions put by the members of the Commission; e) Yes. At the end of the interview, the applicant is entitled to review the minutes of his or her statements and ask for corrections. The interviews are not video/audio recorded.</p> <p>3. No.</p> <p>4. No.</p> <p>5. COMMISSIONE NAZIONALE PER IL DIRITTO DI ASILO Via S.S. Apostoli 16 c/o Caserma S. Marcello 00187 ROME Certified email: <a href="mailto:commissionenazionaleasilo@pecdci.interno.it">commissionenazionaleasilo@pecdci.interno.it</a> PRESIDENT: Prefetto Dr. Angelo Trovato - Tel.</p>





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	Latvia	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> According to the Asylum Law there are two interviews for applicant of international protection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- initial interview (conducted by the State Border Guard – institution responsible for asylum seekers’ identification) where the basic information on identity, documents, family links, education, job experience, travel routs and short description of grounds for asylum request is gathered;</li> <li>- personal interview (conducted by the Asylum Affairs Division of the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs – institution responsible for decision making on international protection) where grounds for protection needs are established.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. a)</b> Initial interview is conducted almost immediately after submission of the asylum application (there could be short 1-2 days delay only in cases when the interpreter isn’t available immediately). Personal interview is conducted within the time frame of one month after the decision on inclusion in asylum procedure has been made (decision on inclusion in procedure or rejection to include in procedure has to be made within 10 working days after the point when all necessary documents – information on available identity documents, written protocol from the initial interview, etc. - are received from the State Border Guard). <b>b)</b> No automated system for booking asylum interviews (current amount of asylum applications allows to manage without automated system). Information on planned personal interview (date, time and venue) is written in decision on inclusion. <b>c)</b> Usually in the interview take part: interpreter (or two interpreters – if the intermediary language is needed), representative for an unaccompanied minor, legal counsellor – only in cases when the asylum seeker has provided an information that he/she has the legal counsellor. The expert form the Asylum Affairs Division who is responsible for organising practical issues regarding the personal interview is one who provides information on time and venue of interview to the representative or legal counsellor. <b>d)</b> Personal interview - approximately from 3 to 4 hours. <b>e)</b> Yes. The report on personal interview is written during the interview (audio recording is made as well). When the interview is completed, the interpreter translates the draft report to the asylum seeker and he/she can explain what clarifications or additional information he/she wants to incorporate in the report.</p>


			<p>When asylum seeker's remarks are incorporated in the report, it is printed out, signed by the asylum seeker and copy of the signed report is handed over to the asylum seeker.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Yes, we have the template, but it contains just general information about interview in the first page (time, place, participants, duties of asylum seeker during the interview) and in the last page (where asylum seeker confirms that he/she had possibility to explain all necessary aspects of asylum claim, confirms that he/she understood all questions, and where all additional documents and evidences that he/she provided during the interview are listed). Template is attached, but it is only available in Latvian.</p> <p><b>4.</b> No substantial changes to the way how asylum interviews are arranged. In January 2016 the new Asylum Law came into force and according to it the duty of conducting personal interviews was handed over from the State Border Guard to the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs. As the decision makers are those who are interviewing now, the interviews are more focused on substance of asylum claim.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Will be provided directly to the FI NCP by e-mail.</p>
	Lithuania	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> Yes. I. The initial interview of an asylum applicant is conducted and minutes of this interview, which are of the established form, are drawn up by the institution receiving an application for asylum, namely, a structural division of the State Border Guard Service or a territorial police agency. The interview pursues the aim of collecting data on the asylum applicant and members of his family who came together with him, the route to enter Lithuania, data relating to determination of the EU Member State responsible for examining the application, as well as identifying reasons for lodging the application and the status of the asylum applicant in third countries. II. Prior to drawing up a reasoned conclusion on the basis of which a decision not to examine an application for asylum is taken (except for a decision not to examine the application as to substance and to determine an EU Member State responsible for examining the application), an interview of an asylum applicant is conducted by the Migration Department. The aim of the interview is to collect the data needed to ascertain that there exist circumstances under which the application for asylum is not examined, as well as to provide for the asylum applicant an opportunity to substantiate why, in his opinion, his application must be examined as to substance. Upon taking a decision not to</p>


examine an application for asylum as to substance and to determine an EU Member State responsible for examining the application, an interview of an asylum applicant is conducted by the Migration Department in compliance with Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 604/2013. The interview pursues the aim of collecting the data needed to determine an EU Member State responsible for examining the application, as well as providing for the asylum applicant an opportunity to substantiate why, in his opinion, his application must be examined in Lithuania. III. Upon taking a decision to examine an application for asylum as to substance, an interview of an asylum applicant is conducted by the Migration Department. The aim of the interview is to give to the asylum applicant an opportunity to explain in detail the reasons for lodging the application and to a civil servant of the Migration Department conducting the interview – an opportunity to collect the data needed to assess whether the asylum applicant meets the specified criteria for granting asylum, as well as other data necessary to determine the asylum applicant's legal status.


2. a) Upon taking a decision to examine an application for asylum as to substance, an interview of an asylum applicant is conducted no later than within one month after the taking of the decision, and upon taking a decision to examine the application as to substance as a matter of urgency – not later than within five working days from the taking of the decision. b) The Migration Department notifies an asylum applicant in advance in writing of the date and time of the planned interview. If necessary, the date and time of the interview are agreed upon with the asylum applicant (upon the receipt of a written notice, the asylum applicant may refer to the contact person indicated in the notice and agree upon time, this is done orally). c) An interpreter takes part in an interview if necessary. An authorised representative providing legal aid is invited to participate in the interview if an asylum applicant so requests, with the exception of unaccompanied minors. An interview of a minor asylum applicant, except for an unaccompanied minor, is attended by at least one of his parents/adoptive parents or another legal representative together with whom the minor entered Lithuania. An interview of an unaccompanied minor asylum applicant is conducted in the presence of his guardian/curator and an authorised representative providing legal aid. The participation of an interpreter and/or an authorised representative providing legal aid in an interview is ensured by the Migration Department. Interpretation services and state-guaranteed legal aid are provided by interpretation and legal services providers with whom the Migration Department has concluded contracts on the provision of interpretation or legal services. The interpreter and/or the authorised representative providing legal aid take part in the interview on a written instruction of the

			<p>Migration Department. d) The duration of each interview depends on an individual case, interviews last on average for 2-3 hours. e) No</p> <p><b>3.</b> No</p> <p><b>4.</b> No. It should be noted that there has recently not been observed any increase in the number of persons seeking asylum in Lithuania.</p> <p><b>5.</b> E-mail address: <a href="mailto:mdinfo@vrm.lt">mdinfo@vrm.lt</a></p>
	Luxembourg	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> 1. Do you have more than one interview for applicants of international protection? Yes /No. If Yes, explain the function of the different interviews and are they conducted by the same or different national authorities. Yes. At least there are a minimum of two main interviews foreseen by the law of 18 December 2015 on international protection and temporary protection. The interviews will be conducted after having registered the application in the shortest timeframe (there is no deadline enshrined in law). During the first interview, the judicial police proceeds with the necessary verification procedures to establish the identity and itinerary of the applicant(s), including to take the fingerprints of the applicant(s). In case the judicial police needs to identify the applicant, it can take pictures of the applicant and submit him/her to a language test. After the interview with the judicial police, the international protection applicant has the right to a personal interview on the merits of the application with an agent of the Directorate of Immigration. The absence of a lawyer does not preclude such an interview taking place. There are other interviews foreseen on the framework of the Dublin procedure and on the procedure of admissibility of the application in accordance with article 13 (1).</p> <p><b>2.</b> 2. Describe how asylum interviews are arranged in your country: a) How long does it approximately take for the interview to be arranged after submitting the application for international protection? There is no deadline enshrined in law for the personal interview on the merits of the application. This varies from case to case because it will depend of the backlog of interviews that need to be treated, the available staff. b) Do you have an automated system for booking asylum interviews or do you send invitations to the interviews? No. There is no automated system for booking asylum interviews. The Refugee Department send an invitation to the</p>



			<p>interviews. Article 12 (2) expressly indicates that the applicant is under the obligation to appear when s/he is summoned by the Minister in charge of Immigration (Directorate of Immigration). c) Which stakeholders usually take part in the interview (e.g. interpreter, legal counsellor, representative for an unaccompanied minor) and how do they receive information about an upcoming interview? Normally the stakeholders that usually take part in the interview are the applicant, as well as the interpreter and the legal counsel and an agent from the Ministry in charge of Immigration (Directorate of Immigration) in accordance with article 13 (1) and (2) and article 14 (3) c). The absence of a lawyer does not preclude such an interview taking place. d) How long does an asylum interview approximately last? This depends on each case. e) Does the asylum seeker get to review the minutes of the interview? Yes / No. If Yes, how is this arranged? Yes. Article 15 (2) establishes that a detailed and factual report is drafted. At the end of the interview, the applicant has the possibility to make comments or to make precisions (orally or written) regarding any translation mistake or any misunderstanding included in the report. Then the applicant is invited to confirm that the content of the report reflects correctly what it was said during the interview (article 15 (3)). Also the article 15 (4) allows that the interview will be audio or video recorded. A transcription of the recording will be lodged into the file of the applicant and the applicant has the right to make written comments or precisions in the next eight days after the transcription of the recording.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Yes.</p> <p><b>4.</b> No.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Name of contact person: Serge Thill Telephone number: +352 24784055 Email address: <a href="mailto:serge.thill@mae.etat.lu">serge.thill@mae.etat.lu</a></p>
	Malta	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> Refer to attached</p> <p><b>2.</b> Refer to attached</p> <p><b>3.</b> Refer to attached</p>


			<p>4. Refer to attached</p> <p>5. Refer to attached</p>
	Netherlands	Yes	<p>1. Before the asylum procedure starts, the INS conducts a very short intake to see who the asylum seeker is which is based on a form that he fills in beforehand. Only after that intake, the General Asylum Procedure can start. In the General Asylum Procedure there is one interview whereby we ask questions about the country of origin, identity and nationality and one interview where we ask questions about the asylum motives/international protection. They are all done by the Immigration and Naturalisation Services (INS). We have a special procedure for subsequent asylum requests (only 1 interview) and for asylum requests whereby the asylum seeker is from a safe country of origin (also only 1 interview), in both cases there is also no intake. The border procedure is the same as the General Asylum Procedure, only then without an intake.</p> <p>2. A. - General Asylum Procedure: the waiting time now is 7 months before the General Asylum Procedure can even start. - Safe country of origin: 1 or 2 days. - Subsequent asylum requests: 2-4 weeks. - Border procedure: 1 or 2 days. B. We send invitations, but they are partly automated (e.g. not signed). C. Caseworker of the INS, interpreter, and if the asylum seeker would like the legal counsellor to join him, or the Refugee council, it is also allowed. In case of unaccompanied minors there should be a legal counsellor or representative during the interview. D. - Intake: 2 hours. - First hearing: 6 hours. - Second hearing (asylum motives): 8 hours - Safe country of origin: 8 hours. - Subsequent asylum requests: depending on the case, 1 to 5 hours is my estimation. E. Yes, together with his legal counsellor, mostly the day after the hearing/interview.</p> <p>3. Yes, we do. We can send it to you, privately. Please feel free to email me.</p> <p>4. Yes, especially for safe countries of origin. We also developed other special procedures, but they haven't been used yet. I can explain more via email/phone.</p> <p>5. Name of contact person: Sietske Dosker Telephone number: +31612275431 Email address: <a href="mailto:s.dosker@ind.minvenj.nl">s.dosker@ind.minvenj.nl</a></p>

	Poland	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> No.</p> <p><b>2.</b> a) The invitation to the interview shall be sent within 35 days since the submission of the application. b) Invitations are sent. c) It depends on the needs of the applicant. In general, there is only an interpreter and his/her proxy present. If however a foreigner is a person with special needs, during the interview a guardian of an unaccompanied minor, a psychologist or a doctor can be present. The invitation for the interview is forwarded to the applicant's proxy for information, whereas the other stakeholders are informed about the date of the interview. d) 2-3 hours. e) Yes. The asylum seeker receives a copy of the minutes. He/she can also review his/her dossier at any time.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Yes. Find enclosed template (available only in Polish and Russian).</p> <p><b>4.</b> No. Poland does not register increased influx of applicants for international protection.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Name of contact person: Pawel Stefanek Telephone number: 0 22 36 17522 Email address: <a href="mailto:pawel.stefanek@udsc.gov.pl">pawel.stefanek@udsc.gov.pl</a></p>
	Slovak Republic	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> An interview is always conducted with the applicant, after giving his/her statement, in the shortest time possible via a questionnaire. If circumstances of the case so require (e.g. need for additional information, elimination of contradictions in his statement regarding his/her country of origin) subsequent (supplementary) interview is conducted and noted in records. If necessary, there can be multiple interviews. In practice, the asylum procedures contain one entry interview and one supplementary interview. Both interviews are conducted by case workers of the Procedural Department of the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic.</p> <p><b>2.</b> a) After submitting the application, entry interviews with applicants are conducted in the shortest time possible, the rest of the interviews are conducted if necessary and within the earliest possible schedule, too. In practice, it is estimated up to 15 days. b) Invitations are sent out for the interviews. c) In all the cases a case worker, an applicant, an interpreter and a counsellor (if the applicant requests) are present. In case of an unaccompanied minor, interview is conducted only in the presence of the legal representative or appointed guardian of the minor. With the consent of the</p>

			<p>applicant, representative of UNCHR can also be present. The persons concerned are informed about the date of the interview in advance via letter. d) The length of the entry interview as well as the supplementary interview is dependent on the circumstances of each case and therefore it is not possible to generalize it. e) On the request of the applicant, a copy is made from the entry interview or supplementary interview and is delivered to him/her by a mean agreed in advance (in person, via post).</p> <p><b>3.</b> Yes, an example of the questionnaire is attached to the annex of the Act on Asylum. It is available at: <a href="http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/disk/zz/file/2002/2002c184z0480p02d.pdf">http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/disk/zz/file/2002/2002c184z0480p02d.pdf</a> (available only in Slovak language). Depending on the circumstances, it is possible to extend the questionnaire according to the needs.</p> <p><b>4.</b> No.</p> <p><b>5.</b> The information is provided in a separate document attached – not for wider dissemination.</p>
	Slovenia	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> Stakeholders that take part of the in the interview are: asylum applicant, official who is conducting the procedure, legal representative of the applicant, interpreter and if applicant gives consent also representative of UNHCR.</p> <p><b>2.</b> Approximate time for interview to be arranged is usually 2 weeks after submitting the application for international protection. There is no automated system for booking asylum interviews, so we send invitations to the interviews. Stakeholders that take part of the in the interview are: asylum applicant, official who is conducting the procedure, legal representative of the applicant, interpreter and if applicant gives consent also representative of UNHCR. Applicant and the legal representative receive information in written in the form of invitation. Asylum interview approximately lasts 4-5 hours. About interview minutes are written. The minutes have character of public document. The minutes are after the conclusion of interview read to all present at the interview, who can give remarks to the minutes, minutes are signed by all present.</p> <p><b>3.</b> NO</p>



			<p><b>4. NO</b></p> <p><b>5. Ministry of the Interior Republic of Slovenia Internal Administrative Affairs, Migration and Naturalisation Directorate Tel.; + 386 1 428 44 65 Email address: <a href="mailto:dunzmn.mnz@gov.si">dunzmn.mnz@gov.si</a></b></p>
	Spain	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> The personal interview is an essential element of the asylum procedure and cannot be omitted in any case. However, the possibility for a second interview with the applicant can indeed be omitted when there are sufficient elements to decide on the asylum claim. A second interview is considered necessary to make a decision when: (i) there is essential information that needs to be completed or when facts raised during the first interview must be further examined;(ii) the applicant must clarify new documentary evidence introduced in his/her claim or (iii) there are new circumstances since the first interview was conducted in his/her country of origin. The different interviews are conducted by different national authorities.</p> <p><b>2.</b> The notification of the interview is made in person at the designated places (Spanish Office for Asylum and Refugees, Office for Aliens or designated police stations). The notifications of a second interview are sent to the address provided by the applicant in his/her application. a) The timeframe between the notice and the interview appointment depends on the number of applications and the administrative capacity available. b) No. we send invitations to the interviews. c) Usually, interpreters, legal counsellor and representative for unaccompanied minors take part in the interviews. d) Depending on the case, it can last until four hours. e) Yes, during the interview the asylum seeker has the opportunity to review the minutes.</p> <p><b>3.</b> No, we do not use a prefilled document template.</p> <p><b>4.</b> -</p> <p><b>5.</b> Name of contact person: Inmaculada Vidal Email address: <a href="mailto:ividal@interior.es">ividal@interior.es</a></p>
	Sweden	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> In Sweden a shorter interview is conducted in conjunction with the registration of the asylum seeker. This is a short interview so that we can get an idea about the grounds for the application, if</p>


			<p>the asylum seeker has any special needs and if he or she has any identification document. We call it a registration interview. The asylum interview is conducted as a later stage. The entire asylum examination process is handled by the Swedish Migration Agency.</p> <p><b>2.</b> a. Due to the high influx in 2015 the time from submitting the application until the time for the interview is long. At the moment it can take up to 9 month from the application until the interview. b. We have a booking system but it requires manual registration as well. c. All of the above mentioned stakeholders. We send them a copy of the calling for the interview. d. It depends on the case but the approximate time is 2-3 hours. e. If the asylum seeker has a legal counsellor a copy of the interview protocol is sent to him/her. The legal counsellor goes through the document with the asylum seeker and lets the Migration Agency know if it is approved or if there are parts that need to be corrected. If the asylum seeker does not have a legal counsellor the case officers reads the protocol to the asylum seeker at the end of the interview.</p> <p><b>3.</b> We do have a special protocol for the asylum interview but it does not contain many prefilled questions. The idea is that the case officer should prepare questions based on the special case. At the moments we are going through all of our interview documents and are updating them.</p> <p><b>4.</b> We are in the middle of a really big change in our asylum process at the moment. We are going to start implementing the new process in May 2016.</p> <p><b>5.</b> NA</p>
	<p>United Kingdom</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><b>1.</b> Two main types of interview are conducted in connection with claims for international protection: asylum screening interviews and substantive asylum interviews. In some circumstances, for example in the case of children, the requirement for these two interviews to be fully undertaken may not apply. In other circumstances, there may be the need for additional interviews, to obtain further information or to otherwise clarify information previously given. All screening and substantive interviews are conducted by trained Home Office officials. The two main interview types are explained in more detail below. • The screening interview is conducted as part of the asylum claim registration process. It is intended to record key pieces of information about the applicant, to establish who they are, what their needs might be and how their claim might</p>

be considered. It captures information relating to identity, travel history, health, and the applicant's basis of claim. In some cases, it will also record information relating to family members. The asylum screening interview form is not used inflexibly; screening officers conducting the screening interview are encouraged to ask follow-up questions if necessary and relevant to this purpose, and to record the answers on interview continuation sheets. The Home Office publishes information on the gov.uk website (see here and here), to explain to applicants what they can expect from the screening process. • The substantive asylum interview is conducted to obtain information about the reasons why someone has claimed asylum to allow the claimant to provide evidence in support of their claim in order to establish, as far as possible, whether or not the claimant meets the threshold for their asylum or human rights claim to succeed. The Home Office publishes information here which explains why and how caseworkers should conduct substantive asylum interviews.

2. a) We look to interview and decide 100% of 'straightforward' cases within a 182 day timescale (6 months) from when the applicant raises a claim. b) We book interviews, interpreters and rooms manually. We send invite letters to all applicants, representatives and social services where applicable allowing 5 working days to ensure the applicant receives their letter. Further to this, we conduct pre interview checks 3 days prior to the interview date to ensure the interview goes ahead successfully. c) Adult applicant – Interviewing Officer; Home Office Interpreter; Legal Rep can be present (rare); Applicant's Interpreter can be present (rare) Minor - Interviewing Officer; Home Office Interpreter; Responsible Adult; Legal Rep can be present; Applicant's Interpreter can be present. d) Previously interviews would last, on average, between 4-5 hours. However, recent improvements to the process mean the majority of straightforward interviews last no longer than 2 hours 30 minutes. e) Yes. They are handed a typed verbatim copy of the interview.

3. Please see the 2 documents attachments (These are already available in the Public Domain. • Statement of Evidence Form [Interview Record] • Screening interview

4. The changes and how they have improved your processes. Yes. The initial interview is now a more efficient and streamlined process. All pre and post interview 'administrative' work (form filling, meeting and greeting applicants, photocopying, etc.) are conducted by more junior administrative staff. The caseworker is only responsible for the asylum interview itself. Further, training has been provided to all caseworkers to ensure interviews remain focused and the key

			<p>aspects of the asylum claim and caseworkers are expected to complete the majority of interviews in under 2 hours 30 minutes. In order to accommodate the influx further, experienced caseworkers are often expected to complete back to back interviews (i.e. 2 per day) for appropriate cases to ensure a more efficient and cost effective method of arranging interviews. There have been minor iterative changes to the screening interview questions over recent years, intended to improve the clarity of the information given to applicants, to improve the overall efficiency of the screening interview process, and to ensure that we are recording the information upon which later parts of the asylum process may be reliant. Examples are the simplification of the explanatory text, the reordering of questions for improved flow, and more focused questions added relating to the appropriateness of detaining the applicant whilst their asylum claim is considered). There have been no recent policy changes to how asylum interviews are conducted. However, we have emphasised the need to make sure that interviews focus on the key aspects of the individual claim to ensure both quality and efficiency in the asylum process.</p> <p>5. Simon Woollacott 020 7035 8674 <a href="mailto:simon.woollacott2@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk">simon.woollacott2@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk</a></p>
	Norway	Yes	<p>1. Yes. The initial registration of the asylum applicant, done by the Norwegian Police, includes getting some information about the reason for the application for protection. The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) also conducts one asylum interview. There are some exceptions for example, interviews with unaccompanied minors, where UDI on some occasions conducts two interviews. Otherwise, if we need additional information after the first asylum interview, we can book a second interview.</p> <p>2. a) How long does it approximately take for the interview to be arranged after submitting the application for international protection? Due to the high influx of asylum applications last year, most applicants will, in the unforeseeable future, have to wait between 6 – 12 months (depending on their nationality), before they are invited to the asylum interview. b) Do you have an automated system for booking asylum interviews or do you send invitations to the interviews? Invitations to the asylum interview are sent to reception centers that pass on the information to the applicant. c) Which stakeholders usually take part in the interview (e.g. interpreter, legal counsellor, representative for an unaccompanied minor) and how do they receive information about an</p>

upcoming interview. We have a special unit in charge of booking interviews. They have a system/database with information about all interpreters, representatives for unaccompanied minor and other applicants. When booking the interview they also contact the interpreter and/or the representative either by phone, SMS or e-mail. Legal counsellor: Most applicants do not have a legal counsellor at the time of the interview. d) How long does an asylum interview approximately last? An interview is booked for either a full day (seven hours), or half a day (three hours), depending on our need for information. Average interview-time is approximately four - five hours. e) Does the asylum seeker get to review the minutes of the interview? Not as a general rule, but there are some exceptions. We recently changed our practice on this matter, from letting the applicant review the minutes of the interview in all cases, to only doing this on some occasions. If we need the applicant to review the minutes it is done at the end of the interview. The interpreter is asked to read back the interview report to the applicant, and the applicant has the opportunity to add or correct information if necessary. After having made audio-recordings compulsory in all interviews, the minutes are now only read back to the applicant if:

- there is doubt about the quality of interpretation
- there is reason to believe that the interview report contains ambiguities or deficiencies
- there is reason to believe that the applicants can be excluded
- there is for some reason no audio recording of the interview

**3.** Yes. An example of the template (in Norwegian) is attached.

**4.** Yes; the following measures have been implemented to reduce the time needed to gather sufficient reliable information about the reasons for the application:

- We differentiate between cases, and some cases are booked for shorter (half day) interviews, depending on our need for information
- All interviews are audio-recorded, and the minutes from the interview are normally not read back to the applicant
- We have tried out giving information to applicants (about the aim and the frames of the interview) in groups, before the interview, to reduce the time spent on giving information during the interview
- We conduct more interviews on skype
- We arrange trips to reception centers, to be able to conduct the interview where the applicants live

**5.** Contact person: Ms. Linn M. Krane, Senior Advisor, Norwegian Directorate of Immigration  
Mail: [lkr@udi.no](mailto:lkr@udi.no) Phone: +47 40705896 Recent research and development project carried out by the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration on credibility assessment in asylum cases - 35 page

			summary in English as well as particular chapters in English: <a href="https://www.udi.no/globalassets/global/forskning-fou_i/beskyttelse/troverdighetsvurderinger-asylsaker-2014.pdf">https://www.udi.no/globalassets/global/forskning-fou_i/beskyttelse/troverdighetsvurderinger-asylsaker-2014.pdf</a>
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