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2026.13 Provision of free legal counselling

**European Migration Network
Ad-hoc query**

May, 2026

AD-HOC QUERY ON 2026.13 PROVISION OF FREE LEGAL COUNSELLING

REQUESTED BY EMN NCP FINLAND ON 27 FEBRUARY 2026

COMPILATION PRODUCED ON 28 AUGUST 2026

Exported for: Unrestricted Dissemination

Responses from: EMN NCP Belgium, EMN NCP Bulgaria, EMN NCP Croatia, EMN NCP Cyprus, EMN NCP Czech Republic, EMN NCP Estonia, EMN NCP Finland, EMN NCP Germany, EMN NCP Greece, EMN NCP Hungary, EMN NCP Ireland, EMN NCP Latvia, EMN NCP Lithuania, EMN NCP Luxembourg, EMN NCP Netherlands, EMN NCP Norway, EMN NCP Poland, EMN NCP Serbia, EMN NCP Slovakia, EMN NCP Slovenia, EMN NCP Spain, EMN NCP Sweden **(22 in total)**

Disclaimer: The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN National Contact Points (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 Country.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As the implementation of the Asylum Procedures Regulation (APR) is approaching fast and plans as to how to organize free legal counselling are likely to take shape in different countries, Finland would like to conduct an ad-hoc query focusing on some concrete and practical issues regarding the provision of free legal counselling.

We are aware that some of the questions might not yet be possible to give an answer to. However, we are grateful for whatever information is available.

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As a background to question 4 relating to the extent of free legal counselling, please note the following:

According to APR Art. 16(2)a, free legal counselling “shall include the provision of guidance on and explanation of the administrative procedure on rights and obligations during that procedure.” However, legal counselling goes beyond mere information provision. According to EUAA Practical Guide on Free Legal Counselling

([https://www.euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2025-](https://www.euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2025-10/2025_Practical_Guide_on_Free_Legal_Counselling.pdf)

[10/2025_Practical_Guide_on_Free_Legal_Counselling.pdf](https://www.euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2025-10/2025_Practical_Guide_on_Free_Legal_Counselling.pdf)) “legal counselling is an interactive process that covers, in addition to general information, aspects that are connected to the applicant’s profile, focusing on questions that are of direct concern to them.”

In consultations with the AHQ coordinator, this query with seven questions has been approved. Due to the length of the query and seeing the amount of work EMN currently has under way, the deadline of this query is extended to six weeks and will be counted as two ad-hoc queries for reporting purposes.

WE WOULD LIKE TO ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

We would very much appreciate your responses by **10 April 2026**.

1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection?
2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats?
3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)?
4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country

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or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.)

5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way?

6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit?

7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling?

RESPONSES

		Unrestricted Dissemination ?	
	EMN NCP Belgium	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? Applications for international protection are registered and lodged (at the same time) at the Immigration Office (IO), which is also tasked with the application of the Dublin regulation. During the registration and lodging, the counselling will be done by the Immigration Office itself. Only employees who are not involved in case processing would be eligible to provide legal counselling, after following an internal training.

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		After the registration of the application for international protection, applicants have the right to legal assistance and representation from a pro bono lawyer. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? Legal counselling will be provided in person. It will be provided in collective sessions or one-on-one, depending on the vulnerabilities and needs of the applicant. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? Only general information will be provided in group. At first, written information will be provided, which can be complemented by verbal information based on concrete questions. Interpretation will be provided by interpreters already at the scene for the registration of applications for international protection. Individual information will always be provided to each person individually. Questions about the asylum story, for example, are to be addressed to the lawyer at a later stage. 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) At a first stage, the information provided during registration and lodging of the application, the
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			information will be general, eg. the process IP, the core principles of IP, the right to pro bono lawyer etc. As from the application is lodged (in Belgium the same day as the making and registration), the applicant has right to a pro bono lawyer, who can advise him on the individual aspect of his application and other rights in Belgium during the procedure. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? NO 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? Pro bono lawyers receive a fixed fee for each action they take. However, there are no financial or time limits for the applicant. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? After the registration of the application for international protection, applicants have the right to legal assistance and representation from a pro bono lawyer in the administrative procedure.
	EMN NCP Bulgaria	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? The draft law provides that the National Legal Aid Bureau shall provide free legal aid and

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		representation, as well as free legal counselling. The National Legal Aid Bureau is an independent state body under the Minister of Justice, which organises, manages and controls the system of free legal aid in Bulgaria. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? According to the draft law free legal counselling will be provided in both formats. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? Legal counselling is provided by attorneys listed in the legal aid registry of the National Legal Aid Bureau, as designated by the Bureau's Chairperson or an official authorized by him. The quality of their work is guaranteed by an established mechanism for monitoring the quality of the legal aid provided. The draft law envisages that, when free legal counselling is provided simultaneously to several applicants, the number of such applicants shall not exceed thirty. The final decision regarding the number of candidates to whom legal counselling is provided by a single representative is taken by the Chairperson of the National Legal Aid Bureau. 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.)
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		The provisions of the draft law on free legal counselling are based on the requirements of Articles 16 and 18 of Regulation 2024/1348. Legal advice includes the provision of information of a more general nature and is valid for any applicant for international protection, regardless of the country of origin or the profile of the applicant. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? This is not envisaged at this stage. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? The draft law does not specify a monetary or time limit. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? The draft law provides that applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure. Free legal aid is provided to applicants upon their request to the Chairman of the National Legal Aid Bureau through the Chairman of the State Agency for Refugees or officials authorized by him.
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	EMN NCP Croatia	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? Counselling is provided by a civil society organization (association) – the Croatian Law Center. Project activities are implemented by graduate lawyers. The project is financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and includes the following activities: providing general legal information regarding the procedure for granting international protection, the implementation of the procedure for determining the Member State responsible and the border asylum procedure, providing legal information on the right to work and the right to free legal aid for applicants for international protection, providing legal and procedural information on the granting of international protection in relation to the specific request of an applicant for international protection, informing about the status of the submitted application for international protection, explaining the reasons why the application was rejected and the possibility of using a legal remedy, holding workshops on rights, obligations and the importance of individual actions in the procedure for granting international protection (group counsellings), providing legal counselling to special guardians of unaccompanied children seeking international protection, printing information materials and brochures on the methods and conditions for exercising the right to legal counselling in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, distributing materials in facilities where applicants for international protection are accommodated in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior and publishing materials on the Beneficiary's websites, presenting the project in the Reception Centre for Applicants for International Protection in Zagreb and Kutina and at locations where border asylum procedures will be implemented. Project activities, i.e. legal counselling, are carried out every working day in the business premises of the association and twice a week in the Reception Centre for Applicants for International Protection in Zagreb and once a week in the Reception Centre for Applicants for International Protection in Kutina, and if necessary in reception centres for foreigners and in institutions where unaccompanied minors are accommodated. Similarly, applicants for
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		international protection can be counselled by telephone or electronically, for which an audit trail must be ensured. After the start of the application of the new Pact on Migration and Asylum, legal counselling will also be carried out to the same extent at locations for the implementation of the border asylum procedure under the new Pact on Migration and Asylum. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? As a rule, it is carried out individually. In order to inform international protection seekers about their rights and obligations, as well as free legal counseling services, group educational lectures are held in Reception Centers for international protection seekers, reception centers for foreigners, and will also be held at locations where the border asylum procedure is to be implemented. The legal counselling itself is carried out in a way that takes care of the protection of personal data. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? Group counselling are primarily educational and relate to general information about the rights and obligations of applicants in the international protection procedure. Taking into account that legal counselling is provided to applicants for international protection in a language that it is reasonably assumed that they understand and can communicate in, the civil society organization provides interpretation and the printing of appropriate information material on the methods and conditions for exercising the right to legal counselling in the most common languages of international protection applicants.
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		4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) Applicants for international protection are provided with legal counselling exclusively in accordance with their individual needs, with particular attention paid to the care of minors, unaccompanied minors, persons with disabilities or serious illnesses, elderly people and pregnant women, single parents with minor children, victims of human trafficking, persons with mental disorders, persons who have been exposed to torture, rape or other severe forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? No. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? There is no such kind of restriction in Republic of Croatia. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? An applicant for international protection has the right to both legal counselling and free legal aid.
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	EMN NCP Cyprus	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? The organisation Cyprus Refugee Council – offers free legal advice and representation to asylum seekers. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? In Cyprus, free legal counselling for applicants for international protection is provided in both formats. As previously reported in CY's contribution to AHQ 2025.33, applicants who can, upon request, benefit from individual legal counselling include: - Minors, including unaccompanied minors - Applicants that have been identified as highly vulnerable during the vulnerability assessment (such as victims of human trafficking, people who have suffered torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence) pursuant to the definition of vulnerable persons contained in article 2 of Refugee Law 2000/ draft Refugee Law of 2025. [Note: in the vulnerability assessment carried out three outcomes are possible: high, medium and low vulnerability] - Other applicants when this is deemed justified, for example due to the complexity or sensitivity of their case, or if they have specific questions regarding the administrative procedure which would not be appropriate to be asked and answered during a group session because of confidentiality reasons. Criteria that might be taken into account in assessing the complexity and sensitivity of the case include, but are not limited to, the country of origin of the applicant, identified vulnerabilities, identification of potential exclusion indicators, documents provided by the applicant relating to acts or persecution, such as legal documents concerning them issued by the country origin, issues of statelessness or multiple nationalities.
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		The need for individualized counselling in such cases would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the legal counselors on site on the basis of information provided by the applicant requesting the individual counselling session. If the questions are of a generic nature the applicants would be guided to follow a group session. Additionally, the country/place of origin or former habitual residence, in combination to the profile and the personal circumstances of the applicant, may also be taken into account (e.g. countries/profiles that statistically have a high recognition rate). Apart from the above, the Asylum Service is also planning to ensure that the legal counselling also covers assistance in the lodging of the application for international protection. The administration is taking into consideration the EUAA Guidelines on Free Legal Counselling in the process of designing and planning the implementation of free legal counselling. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? At present, no specific answer can be provided. Although this procedure has been introduced in the national legislation of Cyprus, the responsible body and the way in which it will be implemented are not yet known. 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) At present, no specific answer can be provided. Although this procedure has been introduced in the national legislation of Cyprus, the responsible body and the way in which it will be
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		implemented are not yet known. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? No, at this stage there are no plans to use videos as a tool to support legal counselling in Cyprus. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? No. In Cyprus, the national legislation does not set any monetary or time limits on the provision of legal counselling to applicants. There is no restriction regarding the volume of legal assistance provided (e.g. number of sessions) or the duration of each session. The only time-related limitation concerns the deadline for submitting a request for legal counselling, which is set at one month from the submission of the application for international protection. Furthermore, legal counselling and assistance provided for the purposes of the AMMR are explicitly stipulated in the law as not being subject to any financial or time limitations (Article 144(4) of the draft law). 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? The applicants will receive free legal counseling within the meaning of article 16(2) of EU Regulation 2024/1348. There is no provision in the draft law regarding free legal representation/aid during the administrative procedure. Cyprus did not make use of the
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			optional clause of Article 15(3) of EU Regulation 2024/1348.
	EMN NCP Czech Republic	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? The process of announcing a public procurement for the provision of legal counselling is currently underway. Only law firms are allowed to take part in the public procurement. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? So far, the Czech Republic provides individual counselling to all asylum applicants. The Pact on Migration and Asylum allows group counselling, as well as the amendment to the Asylum Act, but in practice individual legal counselling will be provided. Group counselling could be useful e.g. during the next possible migration waves. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? N/A 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.)

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		It is necessary to consider the applicant's individual situation, including issues related to the specific country or profile. Nevertheless, the legal counsellor should provide specific information about the asylum procedure regarding the individual situation and possible special needs of the applicant. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? The use of video is not planned as part of the standard procedure, but it is not entirely excluded. Video might be used, for example, in the event of migration pressure. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? NO 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? The law provides for the free legal counselling in the administrative procedure only. However, in practice the mentioned public procurement presumes wider scope of the legal counselling than in Asylum Procedure Regulation (as well as in national law).
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	EMN NCP Estonia	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? Police and Border Guard is the responsible authority to organize legal aid. For that task the latter can procure a legal aid firm of firms. The procurement procedure is ongoing. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? There is no legal counselling provided. Estonia will organize legal aid and representation from the registration of the asylum application. Additionally, there are councilors without legal knowledge who provide information but no legal counselling (so called information provision officers). Information provision can be done personally or in the group. There are no restrictions in the legal acts. The details of providing legal aid and representations are not yet finalised as the procurement process is underway. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? N/A 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) There is no legal counselling provided. Estonia will organize legal aid and representation from the registration of the application. There are councilors without legal knowledge who provide
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			information but no legal counselling (so called information provision officers). Information provision can be done personally or in the group. There are no restrictions in the legal acts. The details of providing legal aid and representations are not yet finalised as the procurement process in underway. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? The details of providing legal aid and representations are not yet finalized as the procurement process in underway. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? The details of providing legal aid and representations are not yet finalized as the procurement process in underway. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? All applicants will receive free legal aid and representation from the registration of the application until the end of the court proceedings.
	EMN NCP Finland	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection?

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		In Finland, Finnish Immigration Service is responsible for offering Free Legal Counselling. In order to ensure independence and absence of conflict of interests, the provision of free legal counselling is conducted by an organisational unit/division which is completely separate from the decision-making and investigation of grounds of asylum. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? At the moment we are planning a hybrid solution. But this is actually our key concern at the moment: if legal counselling can be given mainly in groups and if yes, how will it be organized effectively and the quality of counselling be guaranteed to the applicant. In addition to group sessions, we are planning to offer individual counselling at a later stage of the process. This individual counselling would be provided only by request of the applicant. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? At the moment this is our key question and we would like to hear ideas from other countries, how group counselling is planned to be organized in practice. In Finland, we currently receive approximately 7 applicants per day, and applicants can be from different language groups and backgrounds. Therefore, forming groups for separate profiles can be challenging. We are aiming to find the right balance as to how much to focus on individual needs versus general information.
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		4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) This is currently being considered. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? YES. Yes. At the moment we are planning to use them as supportive tools for applicants to understand the process. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? YES. In Finland time limits have not been set at least yet. It is possible that time limit or some frames will still be laid down in the Aliens Act. If not, the Finnish Immigration Service is planning to make instructive guidelines on the limitations to how much free legal counselling one applicant can get. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? Currently, most asylum applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure in Finland. This is likely to change: most likely there will be legal changes after which the general rule is that applicants will receive only free legal counselling during the
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			administrative procedure, and only some of the applicants will have right to receive free legal aid – most likely strongly vulnerable applicants.
	EMN NCP Germany	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? In Germany, providing free legal counselling according to Art. 16 APR and Art. 21 AMMR is the responsibility of the asylum authority, i.e. the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) (§ 12b asylum act implementing the CEAS). Therefore, asylum seekers are legally entitled to receiving free legal counselling. Consequently, it will be assumed that questions of this ad hoc query refer to the implementation of the APR and AMMR and thus only the legal counselling by the BAMF will be addressed. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? In a first step of the procedure, the BAMF will provide free legal counselling in a group format. However, since applicants have the right to free legal counselling in every phase of the procedure, applicants may make use of free legal counselling several times. In such cases, group counselling for applicants regarding their ongoing procedure may not be viable and counselling needs to be provided for an individual applicant. Therefore, free legal counselling will be provided in both formats. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain

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		how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? Several measures are in place to ensure the quality of group counselling. A group counselling consists of a standardised presentation of all necessary information on the asylum procedure followed by a Q & A session according to the needs of the participants. To ensure that all relevant information is conveyed in an accessible manner, a standardised presentation will be used. To ensure a high level of competency, interpreters for the group sessions will be drawn from the same pool used by the BAMF for hearings in the asylum process. Finally, groups will be limited in size (ideally around six participants) and as homogenous as possible (mostly regarding the country of origin). 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) Meetings, in which the individual situation of the applicant can be discussed, may also take place upon request. For example, when legal counselling is carried out during an ongoing asylum procedure, the applicant may also receive help in understanding the legal decision on the application. However, free legal counselling will not provide an individual assessment of the chances of receiving international protection. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? NO. It is not planned to show explanatory videos during group or individual sessions.
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			In order to allow for a timely implementation of the obligations regarding free legal counseling, it will be provided in-person only for the time being. However, in future the BAMF may resort to offering legal counselling online, as this could facilitate the access to free legal counselling for applicants and it would allow for more flexibility in the use of the personnel involved. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? NO. The German asylum act implementing the new CEAS does not currently impose monetary or legal limits on free legal counselling. The incentive for the improper or strategic use such counselling is minimized by the fact that it does not, under any circumstances, delay the individual steps of the asylum procedure. Furthermore, should improper use become apparent, the BAMF may decide to exclude applicants from free legal counseling on a case-by-case basis. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? The issue is still being assessed by the Federal Ministry of the Interior.
	EMN NCP Greece	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? According to the draft bill under consideration, legal guidance may be provided by Lawyers registered with the local bar associations of the applicants' place of residence or by legal advisors of international organizations, following the conclusion of a relevant agreement with

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		the Ministry of Migration and Asylum. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? Legal guidance can be provided either on an individual basis or on a group basis, in groups of up to fifteen (15) people who fall under the same procedure or procedural stage, or in any case of grouping in a manner that ensures the effective application of par.2 of Article 16 of the Regulation 2024/1348. The session is conducted in a language that the applicants understand or is reasonably considered to be understood by them, with the assistance of an interpreter, and under conditions that ensure the required confidentiality. In the event of the submission of a disproportionately large number of international protection applications or in other exceptional cases, the number of people per group session may be increased up to a maximum of fifty (50) people. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? As already mentioned in question 2, the session is conducted in a language that the applicants understand or are reasonably expected to understand, with the assistance of an interpreter, and under conditions that ensure the required confidentiality. It is clarified that, in this case, the information provided will be of a more general nature and will not focus on actual circumstances and information originating from a specific applicant, so as to avoid any issues regarding the protection of personal data. However, the further framework for the provision of legal guidance is to be established shortly, through a Joint Ministerial Decision issued by the Minister of Migration and Asylum and the Minister of Justice.
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		4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) The specific details of providing legal counselling are under processing and it is not possible to provide further information at this stage; however, as already mentioned, the primary concern of Greece is to ensure the quality of the legal guidance services provided based on the terms of Article 16 and 18 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1348. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? Please see the answer to question 4. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? The legal guidance provided should give all the information referred to in Article 16 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1348 and respond to any relevant question or concern of the applicants within the framework of this provision. Further details regarding the provision of legal counselling, including any time or monetary limits, as mentioned in the question, are expected to be specified by a Joint Ministerial Decision. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling?
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			According to Greece's draft legislation under preparation, applicants shall be provided with free legal counselling within the framework of the administrative procedure, upon their written request to the competent registration authority, submitted no later than the registration of the application; the content of such counselling is provided for in Article 16(2) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1348. Given, however, the possibility for Civil Society Groups and NGOs registered in the relevant Registry maintained by the Ministry to operate in the field, there is a further possibility for free legal assistance during the administrative procedure by these entities. Free legal assistance and representation by the State is provided only at the appeal procedure, under certain conditions.
	EMN NCP Hungary	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? Hungary does not have a formal state-run system for free legal counselling for asylum applicants; in practice, legal assistance is mainly provided by civil society organizations (e.g. the Hungarian Helsinki Committee). There is no decision on the implementation of the APR yet. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? N/A 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)?

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			N/A 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) N/A 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? N/A 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? N/A 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? N/A
	EMN NCP Ireland	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection?

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		Legal counselling is a new term derived from the new Asylum Procedures Regulation. This is not a previously recognised concept in the international protection administrative procedure in Ireland nor in the Irish legal system more widely. Currently, international protection applicants in Ireland seeking legal advice and representation may consult a legal representative through the Legal Aid Board (LAB). LAB is an independent State body under the remit of Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration. Following commencement of the Pact, LAB will continue to provide independent legal advice and representation to applicants for international protection under the Pact and will continue to be supported in fulfilling this role. Legal counselling will also be provided to applicants in addition to any legal assistance and representation they may obtain and is intended to inform applicants of asylum procedures, their rights, and what to expect from the process. It will be provided from the earliest possible stages after an application for international protection is made and shall be available to an applicant throughout the administrative process if required.* It is anticipated that legal counselling will also be delivered by the Legal Aid Board. The International Protection Bill 2026 is currently before the houses of the Oireachtas (parliament and senate) in Ireland. Pending approval by the houses, provisions in the Bill will enable LAB to appoint persons it deems to have appropriate expertise to provide legal counselling to applicants. *https://www.oireachtas.ie/ga/debates/question/2026-02-17/939/ 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats?
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		While the final decisions on the practicality of delivering legal counselling are yet to be made in Ireland, it is intended that legal counselling will be delivered through a mixture of group and individual formats. The provisions of the International Protection Bill 2026 allow for the individual needs of applicants to be accommodated for with respect to the delivery of legal counselling. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? As previously mentioned, the final decisions on how legal counselling will be provided are still under discussion. Key factors of delivery, such as data protection and interpretation, are being discussed by working groups, tasked with the establishment of this service. However, the success of individual legal counselling will be dependent on quality interpretation, suitable premises and sufficient individual support. 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) Legal counselling services include information on the rights and obligations of the applicant during the asylum procedure, assistance with the lodging of an application, guidance on legal issues that may arise during the proceedings, and guidance on the different procedures an application may be examined under, including the criteria and procedure for determining the Member State responsible under the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation. While legal counselling may take into account the applicant's profile and provide answers to some questions of direct concern to them, it is important to note that legal counselling is not
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		individual legal advice. Legal advice is very clearly defined on a statutory basis in Ireland and legal counselling will not be replacing this. Questions on the course of action an applicant should take in a legal matter are to be left for those permitted and qualified to provide legal advice. The kinds of questions related to an applicant's individual profile that a person providing legal counselling can provide answers for include which procedure the application is likely to be examined under. The person providing legal counselling can then provide guidance to the applicant about that procedure, what the applicant can expect from it, and what the next steps available to the applicant are. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? In Ireland, consideration is being given to the possibility of remote counselling, particularly for exceptional situations, as a complementary or initial source of information for an applicant should they wish to avail of them. Consideration is also being given to the provision of information on applicants' rights and responsibilities through video orientation at the point of application.* *https://www.oireachtas.ie/ga/debates/question/2026-02-17/939/ 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? There is no monetary or time limitation to the provision of legal counselling. It shall be available from the earliest possible stages after an application for international protection is made and shall remain available to the applicant throughout the administrative process. However, legal counselling may become of less relevance to the applicant as asylum
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		procedures goes on. It is likely that legal advice or representation would become more appropriate for the kinds of legal issues that an applicant may face during the course of an application, including advice and representation at appeal stage. Under the International Protection Bill 2026, the provision of legal counselling may only be excluded where the applicant is already being assisted by a legal representative. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? Legal counselling is not a replacement for the existing systems of civil legal aid and advice being provided in Ireland. Implementing this new additional service will not take away from those services but in fact will bolster the system, ensuring that applicants have access to information pertinent to the application process before they have completed the lodging of their application.* International protection applicants will remain entitled to apply for legal aid from the Legal Aid Board (LAB) subject to the standard eligibility criteria. Applicants may also procure the services of a private solicitor at their own expense if they so choose. Currently the support provided by the LAB include**: - Provide legal assistance and advice in support of an application for international protection - Assist in the preparation for an international protection interview and any written representations to the Minister for Justice - In the case of a negative recommendation, provide representation in any appeal to the International Protection Appeals Tribunal (IPAT) *https://www.oireachtas.ie/ga/debates/question/2026-02-17/939/ **https://ipo.gov.ie/en/IPO/IPO%201%20Information%20Booklet%20Final%20English%20.p
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			df/Files/IPO%201%20Information%20Booklet%20Final%20English%20.pdf
	EMN NCP Latvia	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? The project of the new Asylum Law currently is still under discussions between institutions involved, but it is planned that responsible authority for organizing free legal counselling will be the Court Administration. The Court Administration is considering the possibility of involving NGOs in the process. The Court Administration of the Republic of Latvia is a direct administrative authority under the authority of the Minister of Justice. The aim of the activities of the Court Administration is to provide support for the effective work and development of district (city) courts and regional courts, to provide support for the work and development of other institutions in the field of justice, as well as to provide state-provided legal aid and compensation to victims in the cases and procedures established by laws and regulations. (https://www.ta.gov.lv/lv/areas-activity) 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? Not decided yet. Could be different regarding from the place of residence of the applicants or composition of asylum flow. The group format can be seen as a possibility in case of providing legal counselling on general aspects in cases, for example, with similar origin and circumstances. In these cases an individual consultation can not be excluded upon request.

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		3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? N/a 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) Not decided yet. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? Not decided yet. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? Not decided yet. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? The applicant will have access to free legal aid during appeal procedure and it is planned to be
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			the responsibility of the Court Administration, which is the same as under the current procedure.
	EMN NCP Lithuania	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? In Lithuania, for applicants for international protection, state-guaranteed legal aid is organized and coordinated by the Reception and Integration Agency. Depending on the type of aid, services are provided either by the Agency's staff, project partners, or legal service providers contracted by the Agency. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? Free legal counselling is currently envisaged in an individual format. The applicable Lithuanian framework does not provide for group counselling. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? N/A 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.)

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		Free legal counselling is envisaged as individualized, but only within the specific situations defined by Lithuanian law. For applicants for international protection, this means that state-guaranteed legal aid covers three main types of support: first, the applicant may receive, free of charge and in a language they understand, information about their rights and obligations, the consequences of not complying with those obligations, and information about how their asylum application will be examined; second, they may receive legal assistance in matters related to detention or alternatives to detention, as well as when appealing court decisions connected with the asylum application; third, legal aid may also be provided during the applicant's asylum interview, including the initial asylum interview, if the applicant wishes. In practice, this means that counselling is tailored to the applicant's own case and to the procedural stage they are in, rather than being framed as a broad, open-ended service that systematically covers all country-of-origin or profile-specific issues. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? Potentially yes. Although no specific format is prescribed, applicants must receive, free of charge and in a language they understand, information on their rights and obligations, the consequences of non-compliance, and the examination of their asylum application. This may in practice be supported by different tools, including written or audiovisual materials. At present, Lithuania is adapting EUAA-prepared information brochures to the Lithuanian context for use in different procedural situations. In addition, the possible use of supplementary audiovisual information is being considered, although no such materials are currently being developed. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit?
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			Yes, but only for certain types of legal counselling. For applicants for international protection, legal counselling on detention-related matters or on the imposition or extension of alternatives to detention is limited to no more than two consultations on the same issue, with each consultation lasting no longer than one hour. The current framework does not set a general overall monetary cap per applicant. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? Applicants will have access not only to free legal counselling, but also to free legal aid in certain parts of the administrative procedure. In particular, legal aid may be provided during the asylum interview and in matters related to detention or alternatives to detention. In addition, the Lithuanian framework also provides for legal aid in judicial appeal proceedings, including the preparation of procedural documents and representation before the court.
	EMN NCP Luxembourg	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? In Luxembourg, the conditions for granting legal aid are governed by the Law of 7 August 2023 on the Organisation of Legal Aid, which replaced Article 37-1 of the amended Law of 10 August 1991 on the Legal Profession. Under Article 1 of the Law of 7 August 2023, the President of the Bar Association, or a member delegated by the President in the judicial district of the applicant's place of residence, is the competent authority to grant legal aid to persons whose financial resources are insufficient to defend their interests.

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		According to Article 3 of the same law, any foreign national whose resources are insufficient is entitled to legal aid for procedures relating to applications for international protection. The financial resources of an applicant requesting full legal aid are assessed on the basis of the total gross income and assets of the applicant and of the persons living with him or her in the same household. This assessment is carried out in accordance with Articles 9 and 10 of the amended Law of 28 July 2018 on the Social Inclusion Income, and within the limits of the amounts set out in Article 5 of that law. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? Free legal counselling and legal assistance are provided on individual basis. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? N/A. 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) As legal counselling and legal assistance are provided individually, they address the specific situation of the applicant.
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			5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? No, so far, it is not envisaged to use videos to support legal counselling. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? No, there are no financial limits envisaged. As mentioned above, legal aid is provided by lawyers of the Bar Association, and the financial remuneration is fixed by the Bar Association. The above-mentioned law states that legal aid may be granted to foreign nationals whose financial resources are insufficient to cover the cost of proceedings in matters relating to asylum or return. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? YES. If they do not have sufficient resources, the applicant is entitled to free legal aid.
	EMN NCP Netherlands	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? In the current plans the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst, IND) will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection until they are matched with an attorney. The Dutch Council for Refugees (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland, VWN) also has a role in

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		providing applicants for international protection with information on their procedure and is partly funded by the state. The directive for VWN has been altered, which has resulted in their funds being reduced. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? Currently, the service provision is still under design. However, it is very likely that legal counselling will be provided mainly individually. The legal counselling that the IND will provide, consists of three aspects:[1] Assistance with filing the asylum application. As for the current design, this will be organized on an individual level. Counselling as preparation for the procedure. The information provision in preparation for the procedure is likely to be done in groups of applicants based on the language they speak. Each group will be provided with general information in preparation of the procedure by a legal counsellor who is assisted by a translator. Legal counsel helpdesk. Following the legal counselling, applicants need to be able to reach a legal counsellor for questions in relation to their own procedure until they are assigned an attorney later in the procedure. Most likely, a helpdesk will be organized. A digital and physical channel will be available for applicants. ^ Information provision by a specialist of the subject matter. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection,
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		interpretation, etc.)? As the general principle is to provide legal counselling individually, this question does not apply. 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) The legal counselling will only provide general information about the administrative procedure and the rights and duties of the applicant during this procedure. The individual situation of the applicant is not discussed during these sessions. Applicants can direct such questions to their attorney once appointed. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? The current design aims to build on the information provision during the initial reception and registration phase of the asylum application. In that phase, most of the information that needs to be provided with counselling is already provided by distributing flyers and/or on a tablet that is used for registration. It is possible that some information videos are shown in the tablet. For counselling, it is not decided yet if videos will be used as supporting material.[2] ^ Information provision by a specialist of the subject matter. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit?
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			YES. Legal counselling will be limited by time and appointment. Moreover, the assignment for legal counselling will be limited by its budget. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? In the current procedure, applicants have access to legal aid from an attorney from the start of the administrative procedure. In the new procedure the access to free legal aid from an attorney will move back to after the interview (persoonlijk onderhoud) has taken place.[1] The attorney will be involved from writing up the correction and additions to the interview minutes. The applicant and the attorney do have the possibility to get acquainted before the interview takes place. Free legal aid from an attorney remains accessible for applicants in the border-procedure, AMMR-procedure and procedures concerning access to accommodation and restrictive measures, as well as during appeals.[2] ^ Information provision by a specialist of the subject matter. ^ Kamerstukken II 2025-2026, 19637 nr. 3479, p. 2
	EMN NCP Norway	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? In Norway, free legal counselling and legal aid are provided through publicly funded lawyers

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		under the Legal Aid Act, administered by the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) as well as the Government (County Governor) and used in asylum cases via UDI's lawyer scheme. Applicants for international protection have access to free legal aid at specific stages of the asylum procedure. In Norway, most applicants receive free legal aid after receiving a negative decision from UDI. The lawyer will inform the person about the rejection and help to consider whether to appeal. The lawyer will provide legal counselling, preparation of an appeal, and full legal representation before the Immigration Appeals Board (UNE). Certain vulnerable groups, such as unaccompanied minors, are entitled to legal aid earlier in the process. See udi.no In addition, NOAS (Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers) provides free legal aid and individual case assessments after negative decisions in asylum cases. Caritas Norway provides information and guidance to newly arrived asylum seekers, including structured information sessions at the National Arrival Centre (NAS). These sessions do not constitute legal counselling under the Legal Aid Act, but provide early-phase support. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? State-funded free legal counselling is provided individually. Norway does not provide group-based legal counselling under the Legal Aid Act. However, Caritas Norway conducts group-based information sessions at the arrival centre, focusing on general procedural information rather than legal counselling. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)?
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		Group-based legal counselling is not part of the Norwegian state legal aid system, which is strictly individualised. Therefore, quality assurance rules for group counselling do not apply to the official scheme. Caritas Norway, which provides group information sessions at the arrival centre, ensures quality by limiting sessions to general, non-case-specific information, using trained staff, and offering individual follow-up when confidential or case-specific issues arise. These sessions are complementary and not a substitute for the individual legal aid guaranteed after a negative UDI decision. 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) Free legal counselling provided under the Legal Aid Act is fully individualised. When an applicant becomes entitled to free legal aid—most commonly after a negative decision from UDI—the appointed lawyer provides: - an individual assessment of the applicant's grounds for protection - tailored preparation for the case presentation - full legal representation before the Immigration Appeals Board (UNE) NOAS provides individual legal aid at specific stages, particularly following rejections. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? No. There is currently no plan to introduce videos as part of free legal counselling. General informational videos may be used by authorities or NGOs, but these are not part of the legal counselling framework.
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			6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? Yes. Norway uses fixed time allocations (stykkprisordningen, i.e., a fixed-fee system). According to NOAS, asylum seekers receive five hours of free legal aid in a standard asylum case after UDI has issued a negative decision. Additional hours may be granted in complex or vulnerable cases. For cases heard in an oral UNE board hearing, an additional five hours are provided. This is separate from the free legal representation guaranteed during the appeal. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? Applicants have access to free legal aid, but primarily after receiving a negative UDI decision. At that point, the applicant receives a state-funded lawyer who prepares the appeal and represents the applicant before UNE. Until a negative decision is made, only certain categories—such as unaccompanied minors or particularly vulnerable individuals—receive free legal assistance. Caritas Norway provides general information in the early stage, and NOAS may review cases and provide legal aid after a negative decision.
	EMN NCP Poland	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? According to current regulations, the authority authorized to providing free legal counselling is the Head of the Office for Foreigners.

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		2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? individually 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? n/a 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) The free legal aid system is universal and covers foreigners regardless of the individual situation related to the country of origin or the applicant's profile. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? no 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? Fees for services are specified by law and are not subject to a limit per foreigner.
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			Furthermore, the timeframe is limited by the duration of the proceedings. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? Free legal counselling is provided at the first administrative instance. Free legal aid is also provided in administrative procedure (it should be noted that the Polish appeal system includes a second instance body, which is an administrative body, and at the next appeal stage, the administrative court is competent).
	 EMN NCP Serbia	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? The Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection prescribes that a foreign national who has expressed the intention to seek asylum in the Republic of Serbia, as well as an asylum seeker, may receive free legal aid and representation before the competent authorities from associations whose objectives and activities are aimed at providing legal assistance to asylum seekers and persons granted asylum, as well as free legal aid from UNHCR. The Law on Free Legal Aid stipulates that, in addition to nationals of the Republic of Serbia, stateless persons and foreign nationals with permanent residence, free legal assistance may also be provided to other individuals entitled under another law or a ratified international treaty, including persons seeking asylum in the Republic of Serbia, refugees, persons granted subsidiary protection, and internally displaced persons.

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		2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? The free legal counselling is provided individually. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? N/A 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) The Law on Free Legal Aid prescribes that provision of free legal advice shall be detailed explanation of the method and possibility of resolving the legal matter at hand before the court, another state authority and/or a public authority, which shall pertain to the right, obligation or interest of the beneficiary of free legal assistance which is based on the law. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? NO 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit?
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			Currently, there are not rules regulating this issue within asylum procedure. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? See Q1
	EMN NCP Slovakia	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? In the Slovak Republic, free legal counselling for applicants for international protection is expected to be provided primarily by non-governmental organisations selected through grant schemes (notably under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund – AMIF) or public procurement. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? According to the forthcoming national legislation (new Act on International Protection), legal counselling may be provided in both individual and group formats. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? Group provision of legal counselling is primarily envisaged for applicants who speak the same

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			language. It is envisaged that group counselling will be provided mainly to families. Providing free legal counselling in groups does not exclude the possibility of subsequently providing individual legal counselling to a specific applicant. 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) In the Slovak Republic it is envisaged that the applicants will have access to free legal counselling throughout the whole procedure on an individual basis. In current practice (AMIF-funded projects), counselling typically takes into account the applicant's individual protection needs and relevant country of origin information. Under the new legislation, this is expected to be further expanded to all applicants, including those outside asylum facilities. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? No, this is not envisaged at this stage. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? No. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will
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			applicants receive only free legal counselling? Applicants in the Slovak Republic are expected to continue to have access not only to legal counselling but also to legal representation (legal aid) already in the administrative procedure through AMIF funded project. This reflects existing practice, where NGOs provide both counselling and representation. Legal aid in later stages of the asylum procedure is also provided by Centre for Legal Aid, which is a state funded institution.
	EMN NCP Slovenia	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? Organizations and individuals who meet the legally prescribed conditions will be able to apply for the public tender. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? Not decided yet (preparation of legislation is still in progress). 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? N/A 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation

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			of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) Not decided yet. We will make every effort to ensure treatment in line with APR. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? Not decided yet. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? Not decided yet. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? Our answers apply only to free legal counselling in the administrative procedure as the APR talks about "free legal counselling in the administrative procedure" and there is no mention of "free legal aid".
	EMN NCP Spain	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? In Spain, free legal aid already includes the content of free legal counselling. Thus, both can

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		be considered subsumed under the Duty Lawyers Service (legal aid duty scheme), which provides advice, guidance and representation in a unified manner and is organized by the territorially competent Bar Association. The system is governed by the Free Legal Aid Act 1/1996. However, beneficiaries of free legal aid may also avail themselves of the services offered by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or non-profit organizations specialized in assisting migrants or persons in vulnerable situations. These services may also include free legal counselling. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? We envisage free legal counselling and legal aid to be provided exclusively on an individual basis, in line with the personalized nature of the Duty Lawyers Service system and the specific circumstances of each applicant's case. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? N/A. 4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.)
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		Since free legal counselling is delivered as part of the integrated legal aid system, the assigned lawyer will provide tailored guidance that goes beyond general information to address aspects directly connected to the applicant's individual profile and specific circumstances, including, where relevant, country of origin issues. This approach ensures that each applicant receives personalized legal assistance at all stages of the administrative procedure, with full attention to the particular features of their case. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? No. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? There is no time limit on the provision of free legal aid. Financial eligibility thresholds are established in the Free Legal Aid Act 1/1996, which regulates the economic conditions under which applicants may access the system. In practice, a lawyer from the Duty Lawyers Service is appointed immediately upon request, while the procedure to determine whether the applicant meets the eligibility conditions runs in parallel. The appointed lawyer will remain as such throughout the administrative procedure and, where applicable, the judicial one. Should a decision denying free legal aid be issued during the administrative procedure on the grounds that the applicant has sufficient means to afford a lawyer of their own choosing, the right to legal aid will be withdrawn and the applicant will be required to reimburse the
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			expenses incurred up to that point. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? Applicants will have access to both free legal counselling and free legal aid in the administrative procedure. This includes not only guidance and advice on the procedure, but also legal assistance and representation where applicable.
	EMN NCP Sweden	Yes	1. In your EMN Member or Observer Country, which organization will be responsible for providing free legal counselling to applicants for international protection? The Swedish Migration Agency will appoint legal counsels / lawyers, which are going to perform this task. 2. Will free legal counselling be provided individually, in group or in both formats? Free legal counselling will be provided individually. 3. If you answer to Q2 that free legal counselling is provided in groups, can you please explain how the quality of the counselling will be ensured (e.g. regarding data protection, interpretation, etc.)? N/a.

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		4. To what extent is it envisaged that free legal counselling will address the individual situation of the applicant, including country or profile specific issues? (Please see background section for further clarification on the question.) The free legal counselling will only be provided according to the minimum standard in the APR. 5. Is there a plan to use videos to support legal counselling? YES/NO. If yes, in which way? No. 6. Will there be a monetary or time limit as to how much legal counselling one applicant can get in accordance with APR Article 19(4)? YES/NO. If yes, what is the limit? The general rule is two hours, but an extra hour can be given if a good reason for it is provided. 7. Will applicants have access to free legal aid in the administrative procedure, or will applicants receive only free legal counselling? Only free legal counselling.
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