

# Inspection report published: Inspection of Country of Origin Information, June 2019

My report from the June meeting of the Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) was sent to the Home Secretary on 29 July 2019. The report looked at information produced by the Home Office in respect of Ethiopia and Jamaica.

In the case of both countries, the Home Office accepted most of the detailed amendments recommended by the independent reviewers appointed by IAGCI.

Updated versions of the Ethiopia Country Policy and Information Notes (CPINs) were published on GOV.UK in August ('Opposition to the government') and October 2019 ('Oromos including the "Oromo Protests"').

An updated version of 'Fear of organised criminal groups, Jamaica' was also published in August 2019. Instead of updating the March 2018 'Background information, including actors of protection, and internal relocation' CPIN, the Home Office issued two new CPINs (in August and September 2019): 'Country Background Note' and 'Actors of Protection'. The bulk of the published information about 'internal relocation' is now found in the 'Fear of organised criminal groups, Jamaica' CPIN.

As my report noted, the viability of relocation in Jamaica, due in part to the size of the island, is likely to affect anyone who is returned there, not just those who have reason to fear organised criminal groups. It would appear from the embedded hyperlink that the Home Office is intending to produce a separate CPIN on 'Jamaica: Internal Relocation'. If so, it should expedite this.

I made one overarching recommendation, repeated from an earlier inspection report, that the Home Office should carry out a thorough and open needs analysis for Country of Origin Information (COI), involving both Home Office "customers" (primarily asylum caseworkers) and external stakeholders, which I am pleased has been accepted, albeit with caveats in relation to external stakeholders. I look forward to seeing the results of this exercise, which will be important in demonstrating that COI is serving its purpose of ensuring that asylum and other decision makers are as well-informed as possible about the factors that should be considered when making what are potentially life-changing decisions.