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Common analysis and guidance note

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List of abbreviations and glossary

Term	Definition
ACLED	Armed Conflict Location & Event Data
AFF	Afghanistan Freedom Front
ALM	Afghan Liberation Movement
ANDSF	Afghan National Security Forces, including Afghan National Army (ANA), Afghan National Police (ANP) and National Directorate of Security (NDS)
Anti-government elements	Armed opposition fighters, or insurgents, who are fighting against the Afghan government and its international allies. Examples of such groups of fighters are the Taliban, the Haqqani network and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan.
<i>baad</i>	The practice of exchanging women/girls to resolve a dispute; exchanging daughters between families for marriage to avoid bride price costs.
<i>bacha bazi</i>	Dancing boys: boys or young men who are sexually exploited by men for entertainment. They are made to dance in female garb and provide sexual favours. This practice is often associated with men in power.
CJEU	Court of Justice of the European Union
COI	Country of origin information
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
EU	European Union





Term	Definition
EU+ countries	Member States of the European Union and associated countries
GDI	General Directorate of Intelligence
<i>haad (plural: hudud)</i>	In Muslim law, <i>hudud</i> are the penalties explicitly established by the Koran and the Sunnah
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDP(s)	Internally displaced person(s)
IED	Improvised Explosive Device. A bomb constructed and deployed in ways other than in conventional military action.
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPA	Internal protection alternative
ISKP	Islamic State Khorasan Province
<i>jirga</i>	A council or assembly of tribal elders held for dispute resolution; <i>jirgamar</i> refers to elders whose profession is dispute settlement.
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (persons)
<i>mahram</i>	A close male relative: either a husband or a male relative whom a woman cannot marry, such as a brother, father, son or uncle.
<i>Madrassa</i>	Islamic religious school
Member States	Member States of the European Union
MPVPV	Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice
<i>Muhtasibin</i>	Official enforces of <i>sharia</i>





Term	Definition
<i>mujahideen</i>	Islamic ‘holy warriors’. In the context of the conflict of Afghanistan, the term dates back to the 1980s, when it referred to Islamic fighting groups opposed to the communist regime and the military forces of the former Soviet Union in Afghanistan. Its fighters have since been called <i>mujahideen</i> . Currently, the Taliban refer to their fighters as <i>mujahideen</i> .
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NRF	National Resistance Front
<i>Pashtunwali</i>	A traditional social, cultural, and quasi-legal code regulating the Pashtun way of life.
PDPA	People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan
SOGIESC	Sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, or sex characteristics
<i>qisas</i>	In Muslim law, <i>qisas</i> are proportionate retaliation for intentional bodily harm or murder
QR	Qualification Regulation - Regulation (EU) 2024/1347 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection and for the content of the protection granted, amending Council Directive 2003/109/EC and repealing Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council
Refugee Convention	The 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees and its 1967 Protocol (referred to in EU asylum legislation and by the CJEU as ‘the Geneva Convention’)
<i>sharia</i>	The religious law of Islam; Islamic canonical law.





Term	Definition
<i>shura</i>	A decision-making community council; often formed for non-State dispute settlement; made up of a group of people with community authority (elders) to discuss and find solutions to a problem.
TTP	Tehreek-e-Taliban, 'the Pakistani Taliban'
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WFP	World Food Program
<i>zina</i>	A criminal offence in Islamic law referring to unlawful sexual intercourse, fornication or adultery.



Introduction

The country guidance documents provide country-specific common analysis and guidance in relation to the assessment criteria established in the Qualification Regulation (QR) ⁽¹⁾, which repealed the recast Qualification Directive (QD) ⁽²⁾ with its entry into application on 12 June 2026. They are developed by the EUAA together with a network of senior-level policy officials from EU+ countries and represent their joint assessment of the situation in main countries of origin, in accordance with current EU legislation and jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU). The European Commission and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also provide valuable input in this process.

The aim of the country guidance documents is to assist decision-makers and policy-makers in their daily work and to foster convergence in the assessment of applications for international protection and the type of protection granted in the context of the Common European Asylum System.

The development, review and update of country guidance is regulated under [Article 11 of the EUAA Regulation](#) ⁽³⁾.



In accordance with Article 11 (3) EUAA Regulation, Member States have the obligation to take into account the common analysis and guidance notes when examining applications for international protection, without prejudice to their competence to decide on individual applications.



For more details on the process of producing country guidance documents and the exact role of stakeholders involved, see 'EUAA, [Country Guidance: Methodology](#), November 2024'.

This document encompasses the development, review and update of country guidance and regulates the work of the EUAA Country Guidance Network and all related processes.

This common analysis is based on country of origin information (COI) covering the period 1 October 2023–30 November 2025. Some additional information on major legislative, security-related, and humanitarian developments covering the period 1 December 2025–25

-
- (1) Regulation (EU) 2024/1347 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection and for the content of the protection granted, amending Council Directive 2003/109/EC and repealing Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council.
- (2) Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted (recast).
- (3) Regulation (EU) 2021/2303 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2021 on the European Union Agency for Asylum and repealing Regulation (EU) No 439/2010.



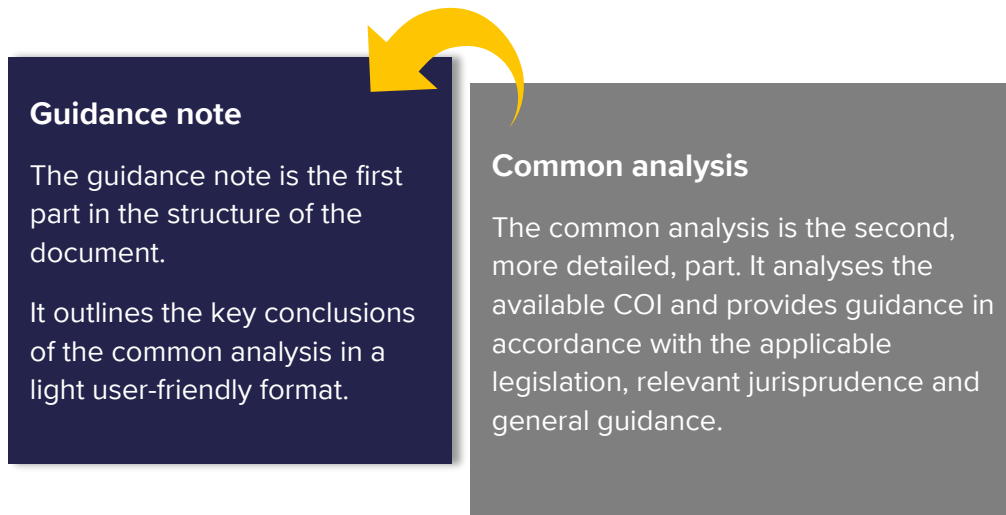
March 2026 has also been reflected. Each section of the country guidance documents also clearly states the timing of its last update.

The analysis and guidance within this document should be considered valid as long as current events and developments in the country fall within the trends and patterns described within the COI on which the assessment at hand is based on.

The analysis and guidance provided within this document are not exhaustive.

Common analysis, guidance note and methodological approach

The country guidance document consists of two components: the guidance note and the common analysis. These two parts focus on the situation in the country of origin and provide analysis and guidance on the assessment of relevant international protection needs.



The Country Guidance documents should be read in conjunction with the separate document 'EUAA, [Country Guidance: explained](#), February 2026'.

This document outlines the general guidance relied upon in this analysis, as well as the methodological framework, approach and indicators used to assess the different elements of qualification for international protection.

Scope of this update

The current version of the guidance updates and supersedes the EUAA, [Country Guidance: Afghanistan](#), May 2024. A new approach regarding the incorporation of COI in the legal analysis has been adopted in this document and all sections of the document have been updated and restructured to reflect this approach.





Guidance note

Last update: June 2026

The current version of the document supersedes the one issued in May 2024.

The guidance note on Afghanistan is produced by the EUAA together with EU+ countries ⁽⁴⁾ in accordance with Article 11 of the EUAA Regulation ⁽⁵⁾. It is based on and summarises the conclusions of the comprehensive common analysis. The aim of the guidance note and the common analysis is to assist EU+ countries in the examination of applications for international protection, thereby fostering convergence of asylum practices and decisions across the EU.

The guidance note is part of the 'Country Guidance: Afghanistan' and should be read in conjunction with the Common analysis.

The Taliban *de facto* government, which is currently the sole entity exercising effective control over all parts of Afghanistan, remains **the main actor of persecution and serious harm** in the country. In addition, several non-State actors continue to be active. Notably, these include the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) and other armed groups, such as the National Resistance Front (NRF) and the Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF). Clans, tribes, (locally) powerful individuals, family members, and criminal groups may also be relevant non-State actors of persecution or serious harm in the context of Afghanistan. Finally, in light of the civilian casualties caused by the Pakistani security forces in the context of the ongoing clashes with Afghanistan, Pakistan is also included among the actors of serious harm (see [2. Actors of persecution or serious harm](#)).

In light of the current situation, for Afghan women and girls a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated. This is without prejudice to granting refugee status to female applicants also on account of additional circumstances which may substantiate further grounds for persecution.

Among the most commonly encountered profiles of applicants for international protection, the following would have a well-founded fear of persecution in general and would **highly likely qualify for refugee status**:

- [Members of the security institutions](#) of the former government
- [Judges, prosecutors, and court personnel](#) of the former government
- [Persons affiliated with foreign forces](#)
- [Individuals perceived as members or supporters of resistance groups](#)
- [Individuals with \(perceived\) affiliation to the Islamic State in Khorasan Province \(ISKP\)](#)

⁽⁴⁾ The assessment and guidance reflect the conclusions of the EUAA Country Guidance Network, which consists of EU Member States, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. The guidance note has been endorsed by the EUAA Management Board.

⁽⁵⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/2303 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2021 on the European Union Agency for Asylum and repealing Regulation (EU) No 439/2010, [url](#).





- [Critics of the Taliban including protesters, activists, human rights defenders, and human rights lawyers](#) publicly advocating for human rights
- [Journalists and other media workers](#) perceived as critical of the Taliban
- [Humanitarian workers](#) whose activities are perceived as non-neutral or in violation of cultural or religious norms
- [Individuals considered to have committed blasphemy and/or apostasy](#)
- [Individuals perceived to have transgressed religious, moral and/or societal norms](#) by committing *zina*
- [Hindus and Sikhs](#)
- [Women and girls](#)
- [Persons with diverse SOGIESC](#)

Further guidance is provided on the **risk-impacting circumstances** which may affect the probability of granting refugee status for the following profiles:

- [Public officials and servants of the former government and judicial system](#) other than judges, prosecutors and court personnel of the former government
- [Critics of the Taliban](#) other than protesters, activists, human rights defenders, and human rights lawyers publicly advocating for human rights
- [Individuals perceived to have transgressed religious, moral and/or societal norms](#) other than those perceived to have committed *zina*
- [Individuals of Hazara ethnicity and other Shias](#)
- [Salafis](#)
- [Tajiks](#)
- [Children](#)
- Individuals involved in [Land disputes](#)
- [Persons living with mental health issues](#)

The following profiles **would likely not qualify for refugee status**:

In the absence of reported cases of [forced recruitment](#) during the reference period, a well-founded fear of persecution would generally not be substantiated for related profiles.

The mere fact of being a [Turkmen or an Uzbek](#) **would in general not substantiate a well-founded fear of persecution**. Should an individual falling under this profile be targeted, it would be related to other circumstances than the mere fact of being a Turkmen or an Uzbek.

For [individuals involved in blood feuds](#) the individual circumstances of the applicant need to be taken into account to determine whether or not a nexus to a reason for persecution can be substantiated.

The treatment faced by [Afghans who were born in Iran or Pakistan and/or who lived there for a long period of time](#) in general **would not amount to persecution**. Should an individual





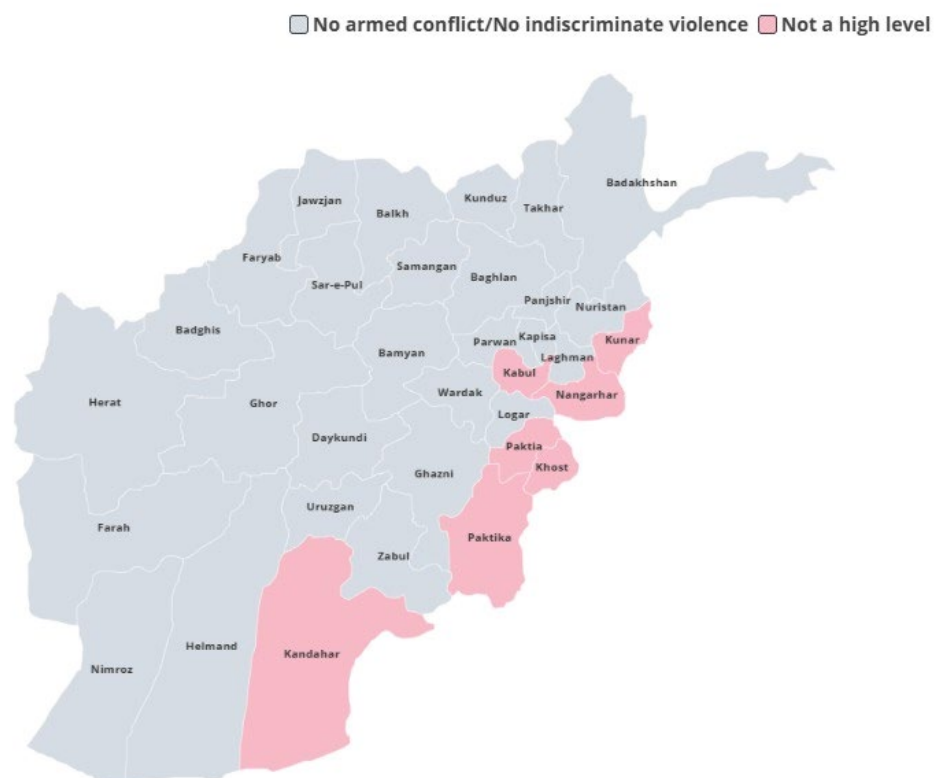
falling under this profile be targeted, it would be related to other circumstances than the mere fact of being an Afghan returning from Iran or Pakistan.

If an applicant is not considered eligible for refugee status, the assessment should proceed with the **examination of subsidiary protection**.

If there is a real risk for the applicant to face death penalty or execution, and no nexus to a reason for persecution can be substantiated, subsidiary protection under [Article 15\(a\) QR](#) death penalty or execution may be granted. All *de facto* judges have been ordered to issue so-called *hudud* and *qisas* punishments which include, *inter alia*, execution. In some cases, executions have been carried out in public. Extrajudicial killings have also been documented in several cases.

[Article 15\(b\) QR](#) relating to the risk of torture, or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, may be applicable in certain cases. Arbitrary arrests and illegal detention by the *de facto* authorities have been documented for numerous groups of persons. Floggings and other forms of corporal punishments are enforced, including in public, and torture and other forms of ill-treatment are reportedly common practice in detention facilities. Article 15(b) QR may also apply in the case of violent crimes and forced evictions.

With regard to subsidiary protection under [Article 15\(c\) QR](#), the guidance provides an assessment of the level of indiscriminate violence in each province as per the following map:



The protection needs of Afghan applicants are further compounded by the general lack of protection in the country, since the **Taliban *de facto* government**, currently the sole entity exercising effective control over all parts of Afghanistan, is **not considered an actor of protection** fulfilling the requirements of Article 7 QR. See [Actors of protection](#).





Furthermore, it is assessed that [Internal protection alternative](#) (IPA) **would in general not be applicable to any part of Afghanistan** in accordance with Article 8 QR.

Finally, [Exclusion](#) considerations may be relevant in a number of cases concerning applicants from Afghanistan, such as members of the Taliban *de facto* authorities and affiliated groups, members and supporters of the ISKP, members of armed groups opposing the Taliban, members of the security institutions of the former government, persons affiliated with foreign forces, as well as individuals involved in blood feuds and land disputes.





Common analysis



1. Recent developments

1.1. State building and political system under Taliban rule⁽⁶⁾

Last update: June 2026

The information below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 1., 2.; [Country Focus 2026](#), 1.1., 1.1.1., 1.1.2., 1.2.1., 1.2.2., 1.2.3., 1.2.4., 1.2.5., 1.2.7., 1.2.8.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 1.1.2, 1.1.3., 1.2., 1.2.1., 1.2.2., 1.2.3., 1.2.4., 1.2.6.; [COI Update 2024](#), 1., 2.; [Country Focus 2023](#), 1.1.2., 1.1.3, 1.2., 1.2.1.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The Taliban returned to power on 15 August 2021 and proclaimed the re-establishment of the ‘Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan’. Since then, the Taliban’s all-male, Pashtun-dominated so-called interim government has become permanent. It has been consolidating its power, moving towards a theocratic police state. Authority is centralised under the Taliban Supreme Leader Hibatullah Akhunzada who enjoys absolute power and controls Afghanistan’s political, administrative and religious institutions.

Most of the former administration’s structure was retained and most male civilian former public officials resumed their duties within the new *de facto* administration soon after the takeover.

The Taliban follow an ultra-conservative interpretation of Sunni Islam adhering to the Hanafi School of Jurisprudence and the Deobandi school of thought. Amid the takeover they abolished the 2004 Constitution, declared that *sharia* would serve as the legal system and initiated a review of existing laws for compliance, without announcing the outcome or specifying which laws remain in force.

The *de facto* authorities, including the Taliban Supreme Leader, impose their religious ideology on the general population through numerous restrictions and have issued verbal and written instructions based on their own interpretations of *sharia*. This has resulted in a fragmented and uncertain legal framework marked by vague instructions leading to different interpretations by individual enforcers. However, several sources noted a general trend of more uniform enforcement across the country, but some regional variations continued to be reported due to internal disagreements and local influences. The most comprehensive set of restrictions is included in the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice Law (colloquially referred to as the ‘Morality law’) published on 31 July 2024.

The Taliban reopened courts across Afghanistan, replaced former staff with male judges educated in madrassas and ordered to fully implement *sharia*, including through issuing *hudud* and *qisas* punishments. Since then, *de facto* courts have been handing down capital punishments and floggings, and in some cases executions and floggings have been carried out in public.

⁽⁶⁾ In this document the Afghan authorities operating under the Taliban (since August 2021) are described as the *de facto* authorities, as the announced state government has not been internationally recognised. In July 2025, Russia became the first and only country to recognise the Taliban’s *de facto* government.



Since the takeover, the general human rights situation in Afghanistan has further deteriorated as the country has been increasingly ruled through fear and suppression of dissent. Numerous provisions regulate personal behaviour, severely curtail women's and girls' rights, limit religious and cultural practices, ban political parties, and suppress dissent through media controls, intimidation, and punishment, prompting many critics to flee, hide, or self-censor.

On 4 January 2026, the *de facto* government issued a 'Criminal Procedure Code for Courts'. The Code contains 119 articles, and several provisions appear to violate international human rights standards. Notably, it uses terms such as 'slaves' and 'masters', and some sources suggest it indirectly authorises slavery. The Code also divides society into four social categories: 'scholars', 'the elite', the 'middle class', and the 'lower class'. It stipulates that legal consequences should be determined by social status rather than by the crime itself, with punishments increasing for individuals of lower social standing.

In addition, the Code reportedly expands corporal punishment, restricts fair trial rights, and enables broad repression of dissent, minorities, and women.

There was no public announcement of the new code and there is currently no available information about its implementation.

1.2. Humanitarian situation including impact of hostilities with Pakistan

Last update: June 2026

The information below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 3., [Country Focus 2026](#), 3.1., 3.2., 3.3., 3.5.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 3.1., 3.2., 3.3., 3.5., 3.6.; [COI Update 2024](#), 5.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Prior to the Taliban's return to power, Afghanistan was already experiencing a severe economic and humanitarian crisis driven by prolonged drought, the COVID-19 pandemic and decreased international military spending.

Amid the Taliban takeover, the economy suffered a severe shock stabilising by mid-2022. Limited recovery in 2023-2024 failed to improve living standards and, by 2025, 22.9 million people, almost half of the population, required humanitarian assistance to survive, according to United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). The economy continued to be impacted by sanctions and international isolation. The US funds cutting in April 2025, followed by other donors as well as restrictions by the *de facto* authorities have also negatively affected aid delivery and complicated the work of aid organisations on the ground. These factors led to the closure of hundreds of health centres and the suspension of key programmes supporting millions of Afghans with food provision, urgent healthcare services, and water, sanitation and hygiene. The humanitarian situation has been further strained by mass returns from Iran and Pakistan and by recurring climate-related disasters, including floods, droughts, and earthquakes. In 2025, as reported by the World Bank, nearly half of the population lived below the poverty threshold with 75 % of the population being subsistence-insecure according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Unemployment is widespread, especially in urban areas, with salaried jobs declining and





casual or self-employment rising. Women and educated youth are disproportionately affected, and returning refugees have intensified job competition.

Many households resorted to negative coping strategies, including taking on debt, taking children out of school and engaging them in child labour, or marrying off girls. More extreme strategies, but still reported, included selling children and selling body organs.

According to World Food Programme (WFP), in 2025 Afghanistan faced an unprecedented hunger crisis, among the worst in the world, exacerbated by donor-funded aid cuts that further weakened the health and nutrition system. Vulnerable groups, including households headed by women, persons with lower education, persons with disabilities as well as returnee households, were most affected. In August 2025, 3.5 million children under five were affected by the nutrition crisis, with 10.3 % of them severely malnourished.

Additionally, significantly lower levels of international aid, the *de facto* authorities' negligible state budget allocation on health, and the departure of many healthcare workers have compounded the crisis of the healthcare system, leaving much of the population, particularly in rural areas, without access to it. Restrictive policies on women, including gender segregation, also contributed to the shortage of female health staff and restricted women's access to healthcare, leading to a decline in life expectancy and rising mortality among children under five.

Afghanistan is also vulnerable to climate-related disasters and faces annual flash floods, persistent droughts and earthquakes, causing severe damage and deaths and leading to displacement. A compilation by UNOCHA indicated that, in the first ten months of 2025, over 90 000 people had been affected by natural disasters, such as the earthquake hitting the eastern province of Kunar on 31 August. In addition, a shortage of female rescue staff, exacerbated by official restrictions, was reported, as according to some witnesses, male rescuers neglected and refused to assist women.

In early 2026, the conflict between Afghanistan and Pakistan re-escalated, as the previously agreed ceasefire was breached in February 2026. With the resumption of cross-border clashes and airstrikes, the geographical scope of the conflict expanded, impacting provinces located along the border with Pakistan as well as Kabul.

The military confrontations between the two countries have caused the death and injury of hundreds of civilians in Afghanistan. Moreover, the conflict has fuelled displacement, and destroyed or damaged residential houses and shelters, healthcare facilities and humanitarian sites, shops and vehicles. Furthermore, as a result of the hostilities, operations delivering humanitarian assistance have been suspended. Similarly, schooling, health and nutrition services have been disrupted or suspended.





2. Actors of persecution or serious harm



For general guidance on the country guidance approach to this section, see 'EUAA, [Actors of persecution or serious harm](#) in *Country Guidance: explained*, February 2026'.

In Afghanistan, a wide range of different groups and individuals can be considered as actors of persecution or serious harm, and a clear distinction between State and non-State actors within the meaning of Article 6 QR may be difficult to make. Applicants might be at risk of persecution or serious harm by more than one actor.

The following sub-sections highlight the main actors of persecution and serious harm in Afghanistan as well as their areas of control/activity, in a non-exhaustive manner.

2.1. Taliban *de facto* authorities and affiliated groups

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026](#), 1.1., 1.1.1., 1.1.2., 1.2.1., 1.2.5., 1.2.8., 1.3., 2.1., 2.2.1., 4.1.2., [Country Focus 2024](#), 1.1.1., 1.1.3., 1.2.1., 1.2.3., 1.2.4., 1.2.6., 4.1.2. 4.1.4.; [Country Focus 2023](#), 1.1.3. 1.2.1., 1.2.2., 1.2.3., 4.4.2.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Taliban *de facto* authorities

Since their takeover in August 2021, the Taliban maintain territorial and effective control over Afghanistan. Although the *de facto* authorities have met armed opposition by resistance groups and the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP), it is considered that such opposition poses no significant challenge to the *de facto* authorities' hold on territorial control.

The *de facto* authorities impose their religious ideology on the general population through numerous restrictions aimed at implementing *sharia* in order to 'purify' Afghan society, as reflected in the structure and function of their governance. The influential *de facto* Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (MPVPV) is responsible for enforcing the 'Morality Law' and other instructions of the *de facto* authorities that regulate the private lives of Afghans. Following the introduction of the law, additional enforcers have been deployed across Afghanistan. The Ministry reports directly to the Taliban Supreme Leader on important matters. Although it has in principle a more guiding role, the *de facto* MPVPV is allowed to detain individuals failing to comply or issue extra-judicial punishments. Additionally, reports indicate that the *de facto* MPVPV enforcers use force, including verbal intimidation, arrests, harassment, and physical violence.

The *de facto* MPVPV also cooperates with the *de facto* General Directorate of Intelligence (GDI), whose mandate allows for further coercive measures. Moreover, Afghan *de facto* authorities committed a wide range of human rights violations against various categories of individuals considered as critical or opponents of their religious and political agenda. Such



violations included killings or enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture and ill-treatment as well as excessive violence in order to suppress protests. As a consequence of increasing surveillance of social media activities, numerous individuals have been arrested for posting content considered critical and/or 'un-islamic' by the Taliban. Following a *de facto* court judgement, corporal and capital punishments have also been enforced. The Taliban's policies on women are widely considered as 'gender persecution'.

Haqqani Network

The Haqqani Network is a designated terrorist organisation in the EU, UK and the US, and is also on the UN Security Council's sanctions list. It is known for having carried out high-profile attacks and suicide missions in the past. Members of the Network hold influential posts in the *de facto* government of the Taliban.

Al-Qaida

According to the UN, the *de facto* authorities in Afghanistan continued to maintain a permissive environment for a range of UN-designated terrorist groups, including Al-Qaida and its affiliates. There are conflicting assessments of Al-Qaida's presence in Afghanistan. The UN Sanctions and Monitoring Team noted reports of Al-Qaida maintaining a presence in the country, although the group's resources are limited and its operations have significantly downsized. It also noted reports of small, rudimentary training camps across the country, where allegedly both Al-Qaida and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) fighters are trained. Other sources have questioned some of these reports, in particular those of Al-Qaida running overt training camps in Afghanistan.

For more information on the methods and tactics, see [4.3.3\(a\) Security situation in Afghanistan: recent events](#).

2.2. Resistance groups opposing the Taliban

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 2.1., 2.2.1., 2.3., 2.4., 4.3.1.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 1.1., 1.2., 1.3.](#); [COI Update 2024, 4.](#); [Security 2022, 2.2.1.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Armed resistance groups aligned with the former government emerged in Afghanistan as a response to the Taliban takeover. The main groups have been the National Resistance Front (NRF) and the Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF). In addition, the Afghanistan Liberation Movement (ALM), the People's Sovereignty Front, the National Mobilization Front, the National Battle Front, and the Islamic Liberation Front have been noted as of October 2025. While many other groups have previously proclaimed their existence, their actual capacity has in some cases not extended beyond social media announcements. No armed resistance groups currently control territory or maintain overt presence in Afghanistan, and, according to UN reporting, they do not pose significant challenge to the *de facto* authorities' territorial control.

The NRF is led from headquarters located in Tajikistan, and most of the group's members are ethnic Tajiks. The group was formed after the Taliban conquered Kabul in mid-August 2021



and reportedly consisted of former civilians, former ANDSF personnel, including many low-ranking ex-officers, and others who supported the previous Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The NRF claims to have a strength of 5 000 men, present in 20 provinces, while other groups have previously been described as smaller than the NRF. However, it was not possible to corroborate NRF's claim, and no information on the size of other resistance groups was found. Additionally, it is reported that the NRF use children in 'direct hostilities', including to plant and detonate IEDs, carry weapons, spy and as guards.

Reportedly, resistance groups have been almost completely defeated including in NRF's former strongholds in Panjshir province and the district of Andarab in Baghlan province. In October 2024, it was reported that recent attacks have been relatively marginal and rarely noticed while it was stated in January 2025 that attacks by the NRF and AFF were increasing but underreported due to censorship. ACLED suggests that resistance groups targeted only the *de facto* security forces, while UNAMA has noted the harm of civilians by such groups in deliberate attacks.

For more information on the methods and tactics, see [4.3.3\(a\) Security situation in Afghanistan: recent events](#). See also [3.14.2. Child recruitment](#).

2.3. Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP)

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 2.2.2., 2.3.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 2.1., 2.2.2., 2.3.](#); [Anti-Government Elements, 3., 3.3.](#). Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The ISKP is a UN-designated terrorist organisation in Afghanistan with operational ties with local groups. It is a Salafi-Jihadist organisation aiming to revive a pure form of Islam through armed *jihad*.

In 2025, the strength of the ISKP was estimated to 2 000 individuals and the group was described as scattered across the northern and northeastern provinces with no evident presence in Afghanistan under the *de facto* government. The group reportedly operates through decentralised networks of cells spread across the country. Many ISKP cells have moreover reportedly relocated from former strongholds to Pakistan and northern Afghanistan. In 2025, the UN assessed that the ISKP posed no significant challenge to the *de facto* authorities' territorial control. However, reports indicate that in the provinces of Badakhshan and Kunduz sympathisers and support for the group have increased significantly, including in retaliation for the *de facto* authorities' poppy eradication campaign.

The number of ISKP attacks significantly decreased after a peak in 2022. The group's operational capacity has been reportedly weakened following intense counter-operations in which the *de facto* authorities captured and killed several ISKP commanders and dismantled numerous ISKP cells. It was reported that ISKP had shifted its operations to targets abroad although sources noted that sporadic ISKP attacks have continued in Afghanistan, mainly targeting the *de facto* authorities, but also religious or ethnic minorities, including one attack against the Sufi community in Baghlan. Some civilian deaths in events involving ISKP have been reported by UCDP in the period 1 October 2024–November 2025.





For additional information on ISKP activities please refer to [3.12.1. Individuals of Hazara ethnicity and other Shias](#) as well as to [4.3.3\(a\) Security situation in Afghanistan: recent events](#) for more information on the methods and tactics.

2.4. Other actors

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 1.2.5., 2.5., 4.4.7., 4.8.3.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Human rights violations are also committed by other non-State actors, such as **clans, tribes, (locally) powerful individuals, family members**.

Customs and customary law including alternate justice mechanisms as well as mediation involving different actors such as *jirgas* and *shuras*, religious leaders, and family or community elders are still common in the Afghan society. Enforcement of traditional justice may result in harmful traditional practices, such as forced marriage and family violence against women, including so-called honour killings committed by family members despite the Taliban having outlawed some practices by decree. Other consequences of alternate justice mechanisms might include further human rights violations, such as imprisonment of women seeking protection or being forced back to abusive marriages.

As a consequence of the progressive transformation in a theocratic police state, many Afghans have adapted to the Taliban's restrictions through self-regulation, and social pressure. Reportedly community surveillance has led families to resort to 'self-policing' their female family members and might result in further human rights violations against women and other individuals who do not conform to the Taliban's rules.

For further guidance see also the following profiles [3.10. Individuals considered to have committed blasphemy and/or apostasy](#), [3.11. Individuals perceived to have transgressed religious, moral and/or societal norms](#), [3.13. Women and girls](#), [3.15. Persons with diverse SOGIESC](#), [3.16. Individuals involved in blood feuds and land disputes](#).

Criminal groups and individuals committing crimes can also be non-State actors of persecution or serious harm in accordance with Article 6(c) QR. There are no crime statistics available in Afghanistan and information on the level of violent crime is conflicting. While it was reported in October 2024 that the situation concerning violent crime had significantly improved, some media outlets indicated that violent crimes have increased in many parts of the country during 2025.

2.5. Regional actors

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026, 3.](#); [Country Focus 2026, 2.1., 2.2.3., 2.3.1.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 2.2.3.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.





Pakistan has faced recurring attacks that they attributed to Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP, ‘the Pakistani Taliban’) and has accused the Afghan *de facto* authorities of harbouring this organisation. This resulted in several border clashes, and airstrikes that impacted Afghan civilian population. Between 1 December 2025 and 20 March 2026, UCDP recorded 360 civilian deaths, although cautioning that the data is preliminary amid the conflict with Pakistan and that the records of civilian deaths recorded during this period might increase. On 4 March 2026, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) issued a statement in which it noted that nearly 66 000 people had been displaced in eastern and southeastern Afghanistan due to the conflict with Pakistan.

For additional information please refer also to [4.3. Article 15\(c\) QR: indiscriminate violence in situations of armed conflict](#).



For further information on human rights violations committed by different State and non-State actors and their relevance as potential exclusion grounds, see [7. Exclusion](#).



3. Refugee status

This chapter provides analysis and guidance on the potential international protection needs of selected profiles of applicants. These profiles were selected based on their relevance in the caseload of EU+ countries. The list of profiles addressed in this chapter is non-exhaustive and the fact that a certain profile is included or not is without prejudice to the determination of their protection needs. Furthermore, the order of listed profiles does not reflect any ranking of the potential level of risk of persecution.

While the conclusions under this common analysis provide general guidance, the protection needs of each applicant should be **examined individually**.

The considerations under each profile should, furthermore, be viewed without prejudice to the credibility assessment of the applicant's claims. This common analysis deals solely with issues of risk analysis and qualification.

For each profile, the guidance responds to the following questions:

Step 1: Do the reported acts qualify as persecution?

This part provides examples of acts reported to be committed against individuals belonging to the profile as well as guidance on whether such acts would reach the level of persecution according to Article 9 QR.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

This part assesses how likely it is for applicants within the profile to have a well-founded fear of persecution. Further guidance is provided with regard to the circumstances which should be taken into account in the individual assessment, addressing also how they would impact the risk.

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

This part provides guidance on whether in case of substantiated well-founded fear of persecution, this would be connected to a reason falling within the provision of Article 10 QR (nexus).

Relevant COI is also included in the analysis to substantiate the assessment provided. Links to the relevant EUAA COI reports and/or queries are also added.



For more guidance on how to read the following subsections, see 'EUAA, [Refugee status](#) in *Country Guidance: explained*, February 2026'.



3.1. Members of the security institutions of the former government

Last update: June 2026

This profile refers to members of the former Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF), including former Afghan Local Police (ALP) and pro-government militias. Situation of family members is also addressed. This profile should be read in conjunction with [3.3. Persons affiliated with foreign forces.](#)

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 5.; [Country Focus 2026](#), 4.1.1., 4.1.2., 4.1.3., 4.1.4., 4.2.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 4.1.1., 4.1.2., 4.1.3., 4.1.4., 4.1.5., 4.2.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

During the conflict before the takeover, ANDSF personnel both on and off duty was a priority target of the Taliban. After August 2021, many left the country. A general amnesty for members of the former government's administration and security forces was issued by the Taliban, but the text has not been made publicly available, creating uncertainty regarding its scope and enforcement. Despite the amnesty and some security officials having retained their job, targeting has been documented. The *de facto* authorities have reportedly deterred reporting on killings, while ambiguity and limited control over officials have enabled arbitrary arrests and abuses without accountability.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Some acts to which members of the security institutions of the former government could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. More specifically, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, torture (*inter alia* to extract contact details of former colleagues), abuse and other ill-treatment as well as extortion have been reported. Most recorded violations against former security personnel occurred in the months following the takeover, although retaliatory violence has continued ever since. In subsequent human rights reports by UNAMA covering 1 January - 31 December 2025, 41 killings of former ANDSF members were documented. In the period 1 October - 31 December 2025, former civilian government officials and ANDSF members returning from Iran and Pakistan have been subjected to arbitrary arrests and extrajudicial killings.

Most sources indicate that the killings that have occurred are not part of an orchestrated campaign, however, some reports suggest some level of systematicity. As Taliban *de facto* officials have not been held accountable, a climate of impunity exists. Former security personnel are reported to live in hiding or to live with a constant fear of being arrested.

Cases were reported where **family members** of former security personnel have been targeted to put pressure on former security officials, including to force them to come out of hiding. Instances of arrests and detention have been registered. Cases in which family members had been detained and killed together with former military officials were also documented.

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that persons under this profile could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should also



be considered. For example, it was noted that former security officials were prevented from leading a normal life and faced hurdles in simple tasks such as registering a vehicle.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

A well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for members of the security institutions of the former government, given the severity and persistent nature of the targeting, as well as the unpredictability as to who may be targeted.

Family members may also have a well-founded fear of persecution, for example in the context of Taliban putting pressure on former security officials or conducting house raids and searching for the individual they are related to.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Persecution of individuals under this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of **political opinion** as having fought for the former government is considered as collaborating with ‘the enemy’.



Exclusion considerations are relevant to this profile, as members of the security institutions of the former government may have been involved in excludable acts. See [7. Exclusion](#).

3.2. Public officials and servants of the former government and judicial system

Last update: June 2026

This profile refers to individuals employed by the previous government and members of the judiciary, including court personnel and civil servants. Situation of family members is also addressed.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 4.1.1., 4.1.2., 4.1.3., 4.1.4., 4.1.5., 4.8.1.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 4.1.1., 4.1.2., 4.1.3., 4.1.4., 4.1.5., 4.1.6.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

During the years of conflict, employees of certain ministries (for example the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Interior Affairs, and the Ministry of Justice) and judicial staff, including judges and prosecutors, were regularly targeted by the Taliban. After the takeover, the



Taliban issued a general amnesty for individuals who had served the former government, but the text has not been made publicly available, creating uncertainty regarding its scope and enforcement. Despite the amnesty and the call on former government officials to resume work and return from abroad, retaliatory acts by Taliban members against persons under this profile were reported, albeit to a lesser extent than against former security personnel. The *de facto* authorities have reportedly deterred reporting on killings, while ambiguity and limited control over *de facto* officials have enabled arbitrary arrests and abuses without accountability. Most civilian former public officials, except female civil servants, have been able to resume their duties within the new *de facto* administration in Kabul, although a gradual replacement of this personnel has been taking place.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Some acts to which public officials and servants of the former government and judicial system could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. *Inter alia* extrajudicial killings, torture and other ill-treatment, arbitrary arrests, and enforced disappearance have been documented, including sporadic cases in which former government officials returning from abroad as well as individuals who had been personally invited back by the Taliban were victimised. Most recorded violations against persons under this profile have occurred in the months following the takeover, although retaliatory violence has continued ever since.

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that family members of public officials and servants of the former government and judicial system could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should also be considered. For example, ransom was extorted from families of former government officials who are perceived to have the means to pay.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

For judges, prosecutors, and court personnel of the former government and judicial system a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated as they have faced extensive and continued targeting at the hands of the Taliban, including threats, harassment and killings. The UN Special Rapporteur stated that former judges are among the groups severely affected by human rights violations. Additionally, almost all judges, prosecutors, and former court personnel have been fired, and many left the country or went into hiding for fear of reprisals.

For public officials and servants of the former government and judicial system other than judges, prosecutors, and former court personnel, the individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Possible personal enmities:** personal hostilities or rivalries could increase the risk, taking into account the pervasive ‘revenge culture’ in Afghanistan.



- **Ethnic background:** individuals belonging to non-Pashtun groups may be exposed to higher risks as for example Hazaras have been ‘systematically treated differently’ by the local Taliban. See also [3.12.1. Individuals of Hazara ethnicity and other Shias](#)

Family members may also have a well-founded fear of persecution, for example in the context of the Taliban searching for the individual they are related to.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for individuals under this profile, persecution is highly likely to be for reasons of **political opinion**, as having served the former government is considered as collaborating with ‘the enemy’. In some cases, **membership of a particular social group** and/or **religion** could also be seen as relevant grounds, such as in the case of former female judges and other female public officials. See also [3.13. Women and girls](#). **Race** may also be substantiated.

3.3. Persons affiliated with foreign forces

Last update: June 2026

This profile refers to individuals associated with the foreign troops which were present in Afghanistan, primarily interpreters, and security guards, as well as civilian contractors, and logistics personnel whose involvement was visible or otherwise known to their community. Situation of family members is also addressed.

This profile should be read in conjunction with [3.1. Members of the security institutions of the former government](#).

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 4.1.1., 4.1.2., 4.1.3., 4.1.4., 4.2.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 4.1.1., 4.1.2., 4.1.3., 4.1.4., 4.1.5., 4.2.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

During the conflict, before the takeover, persons working with foreign forces were seen as traitors and were a priority target of the Taliban. The general amnesty extends to individuals affiliated with foreign forces; however, many violations have been reported and persons under this profile have been described as particularly vulnerable and being ‘hunted down’. Many individuals left the country, including through evacuations, and others live in hiding out of fear of retribution.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?



Acts to which persons affiliated with foreign forces could be exposed are of a such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. In particular, many cases of killings, detentions, torture and other forms of ill-treatment have been documented. House searches, death threats and torture to receive information on the whereabouts of persons under this profile are reported, including after a major data leak which revealed the names of 18 000 Afghans who worked for the British forces. Following the data breach, the *de facto* authorities have reportedly conducted house searches of family members as well as allegedly killed some of them in their attempt to locate persons appearing on the lists.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

Given the severity of treatment and the high level of targeting by the Taliban, **a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated** for individuals affiliated with foreign forces as defined in the scope.

Family members may also have a well-founded fear of persecution as relatives have reportedly been targeted to exert pressure on persons formerly affiliated with the foreign forces.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Persecution of individuals under this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of **political opinion** as they are seen as 'spies' and collaborators of foreign forces fighting the Taliban.



Exclusion considerations could be relevant to this profile, as persons affiliated with foreign forces may have been involved in excludable acts. See [7. Exclusion](#).

3.4. Individuals perceived as members or supporters of resistance groups

Last update: June 2026

This profile concerns the situation of individuals perceived as members or supporters of resistance groups, in particular the NRF (National Resistance Front) and the AFF (Afghanistan Freedom Front).

With reference to the role of armed resistance groups as potential actors of persecution or serious harm, see [2.2. Resistance groups opposing the Taliban](#).



The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 2.1., 2.3., 4.1.2., 4.1.3., 4.3.1.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 4.1.3., 4.3.1.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Since the takeover, the *de facto* government has faced armed opposition from resistance groups aligned with the former government, primarily the NRF and the AFF. The Taliban have responded with force, particularly in the immediate aftermath of the takeover and especially in areas with a history of armed resistance, most notably Panjshir province, as well as the provinces of Baghlan, Takhar, and Daykundi. Although the *de facto* authorities' ill-treatment of civilians in these areas has decreased over time, the targeting of individuals suspected of affiliation with resistance groups has continued.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Acts to which individuals perceived as members or supporters of resistance groups could be exposed are of a such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. More specifically, civilians accused of cooperating with military and political opponents, including the NRF and the AFF, have reportedly been killed, often by the Taliban. Arrests of former government affiliates on allegations of links to the NRF have been documented in particular in Panjshir and Kabul. A local source identified 'anyone accused of cooperating with anti-Taliban groups' as one of the primary targets of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance and torture. Reports also indicate that individuals from Panjshir have been targeted on the basis of their geographical origin and a suspected affiliation with anti-Taliban groups. In addition, civilians in Panjshir province have reportedly been assaulted and beaten by the *de facto* authorities following clashes with the NRF. Tajiks have been identified among the communities more vulnerable to violations following the takeover: Tajik men have been reportedly arrested on the basis of 'blanket assumptions' of affiliation with the NRF including in areas far from the group's former strongholds. There are instances of collective punishments and other abuses against civilians suspected of supporting anti-Taliban groups. Allegations of 'collaboration' or 'carrying weapons' have been used to justify arrests of perceived opponents, including civil society activists, journalists, former government employees, and former security personnel, who have been disproportionately targeted as 'potential resistance fighters', regardless of actual involvement in hostilities.

See also [3.1. Members of the security institutions of the former government](#), [3.2. Public officials and servants of the former government and judicial system](#), [3.7. Critics of the Taliban including protesters, activists, human rights defenders, and human rights lawyers](#), [3.8. Journalists and other media workers](#)

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

A well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for individuals perceived by the Taliban as being involved with or as supporting resistance groups such as NRF and AFF in light of the widespread and persistent targeting of those 'accused of cooperating with Anti-Taliban groups'.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Persecution of individuals under this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of **political opinion** as resistance groups such as NRF and AFF are considered as historical opponents by the *de facto* authorities.



Exclusion considerations could be relevant to this profile, as actual members or supporters of resistance groups may have been involved in excludable acts. See [7. Exclusion](#).

3.5. Individuals with (perceived) affiliation to the Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP)

Last update: June 2026

This profile refers to a) persons wrongly perceived as supporting or being affiliated to the ISKP (e.g. for the mere fact of residing in the group's area(s) of operations/control), b) former members as well as other persons who participated in the activities of the ISKP.

Exclusion cases should be detected as early as possible. An applicant shall be excluded from being a refugee where there are serious reasons for considering that they have committed or have incited or otherwise participated in the commission of the crimes or acts referred to in Article 12(2) QR.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA products: [COI Update 2026](#), Annex II; [Country Focus 2026](#), 4.3.2.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 2.2., 2.3.; [Country Focus 2023](#), 1.1.1.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The ISKP has opposed the Taliban rule with armed force. The *de facto* authorities responded with intense counteroperations efforts, which targeted also prominent members of the Salafi communities and other civilians without actual links to ISKP in the provinces of Nangarhar and Kunar. After significantly weakening ISKP operational capacity, the *de facto* authorities shifted to a different approach, with 'less frequent but more targeted detentions'. Suspected ISKP affiliates were still reported to be targeted in 2024 and 2025.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Acts to which individuals under this profile could be exposed are of a such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. Notably, in 2024, young Salafis without actual links to the ISKP were kidnapped, beheaded and killed in extrajudicial killings in Nangarhar province, although in lower numbers than in previous years due to most targets having been killed or having relocated to other provinces. Targeting of suspected ISKP affiliates was reported also in 2025, in particular against those who did not pledge allegiance to the Taliban. In Takhar province, during the period 1 December 2025–20 March 2026, one person was arrested on accusations of being a member of the ISKP.

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that individuals under this profile could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should be considered. Due to general suspicion against Salafis, Salafi elders reported discrimination from the Taliban, also in areas where ISKP activity had ceased.

See also [3.12.3. Salafis](#).

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

A well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for individuals under this profile, as they continue to be targeted by the *de facto* authorities, owing to their alleged allegiance with the group.

If there are indications of an applicant's association with acts or groups considered to be of a 'terrorist' nature, this is a strong indication that exclusion should be explored.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Persecution of individuals under this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of **political opinion** and/or **religion** as the ISKP is considered being an opponent of the political and religious agenda of the Taliban.



Former membership and/or participation in the activities of the ISKP should trigger exclusion considerations. An individual assessment of the specific facts must always be conducted.

In the case of a minor, grounds negating individual responsibility, including duress, should be carefully assessed. In the case of an applicant who has been a member

of the leadership of that group, there is no need to establish that himself or herself instigated a terrorist act or otherwise participated in it ⁽⁷⁾. See also [7. Exclusion](#)

3.6. Persons fearing forced recruitment

Last update: June 2026

This profile refers to persons fearing recruitment against their will by the Taliban or the ISKP. For child recruitment, see [3.14.2. Child recruitment](#).

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 2.4.](#), [4.1.1.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 2.6.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The *de facto* authorities have created a new national military force on a voluntary basis, in which their own members have been recruited preferentially. No sources reported on forced recruitment carried out by the Taliban; instead reports described a situation where joining the *de facto* security structure is desirable as there are few other job opportunities in the country.

Some former security personnel have been invited in the *de facto* military forces due to their specialist skills and have gone back to work, possibly out of fear, reasoning that it is the best security against possible reprisals.

No information about forced recruitment by the ISKP was found in the reference period. The ISKP reportedly sought to recruit individuals with a militant Salafi profile and particularly religious students. It was reported that the new ISKP leader was focusing on recruiting more educated individuals and had extended recruitment to non-Salafis. Sources noted that the ISKP has ‘capitalised on the Taliban’s harassment of Salafis’. The most common pathway to join the ISKP is through personal relationships or through religious institutions.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Forced recruitment amounts to persecution. The consequences of refusal of (forced) recruitment could also amount to persecution.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

No cases of forced recruitment were reported during the reference period, therefore a **well-founded fear of persecution would in general not be substantiated**.

⁽⁷⁾ CJEU, judgment of 31 January 2017, [Mostafa Lounani v Commissaire général aux réfugiés et aux apatrides](#), C-573/14, Grand Chamber.

3.7. Critics of the Taliban including protesters, activists, human rights defenders, and human rights lawyers

Last update: June 2026

This profile addresses the topic of perceived criticism of the Taliban. It also refers to individuals who engage in activities aimed at promoting, protecting or enforcing human rights and fundamental freedoms (such as freedom of expression or the right to education, for example teachers advocating for women and girls' education). It encompasses, *inter alia*, human rights defenders, human rights lawyers, and protesters publicly advocating for human rights. It also includes criticism expressed via social media. Situation of family members is also addressed.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 1.; [Country Focus 2026](#), 1.1.1., 1.1.2., 1.2.1., 1.3., 4.1.5., 4.7.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 1.1.3., 4.1.7., 4.8., 4.10., 4.11.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Since the Taliban takeover, the space for civil society in Afghanistan has drastically shrunk, with many organisations closing, suspending activities, or limiting their work to humanitarian and development efforts under strict restrictions. Human rights defenders have been targeted, forcing many to flee, while those who remain are unable to operate openly. In the immediate aftermath of the takeover, protests led largely by women's rights activists were violently suppressed, and broader opposition mostly disappeared.

Criticism of the *de facto* authorities is not tolerated and may attract retaliation. Even moderate dissent, including through media and online platforms, can lead to reprisals, creating a climate of fear and widespread self-censorship. A 2022 ban on defamation and unproven criticism of officials further restricted freedom of expression. Repression intensified in 2025 with the adoption of stricter policies. The GDI plays a central role in suppressing dissent, while the authorities rely on intelligence gathering, surveillance, and community reporting to identify critics, leading many individuals to go into hiding or flee the country.

Additionally, in 2026, the *de facto* government issued a 'Criminal Procedure Code for Courts'. Although there is currently no available information about its implementation, it is reported that the code authorises the *de facto* authorities to kill opponents, critics, and human rights activists. It also prescribes six months imprisonment and corporal punishments for those insulting the Taliban leaders. Those who witness or have knowledge of "subversive" meetings and activities of "opponents of the regime", but do not report to the Taliban are considered as 'criminals' and may be sentenced to two years imprisonment.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Acts to which human rights defenders, including human rights lawyers, activists, protesters and other critics of the Taliban could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. Human rights defenders and activists have been subjected to extrajudicial killings, torture and other ill-treatment, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, and destruction of property. Arrests, disappearances and torture have been used to silence



and deter civil engagement, with non-violent opponents reportedly targeted in a systematic manner. Since February 2023, there have been reports of increased surveillance and targeting of LGBTIQ+ activists and community members, including through arrest, violence and other forms of humiliation. There are moreover no protection mechanisms or laws in place for human rights defenders under the *de facto* government, which controls and monitors ‘any remnant of civil society’.

The *de facto* authorities have also violently suppressed protests, including those related to women’s rights, through arrests and, in some cases, the use of live ammunition against protesters. Protesters have reportedly faced torture, including sexual violence, imprisonment, threats against family members, and other forms of severe physical and psychological ill-treatment.

Individuals who criticise the Taliban online may be confronted with threats, house searches, arbitrary arrests and detentions. In the first half of 2025 numerous arrests were documented of individuals posting critical content on social media or for illegitimate activities online, and content creation. Afghans speaking out against the Taliban ‘face arbitrary arrest, physical and sexual violence, arbitrary and indefinite detention’, as well as torture and other ill-treatment. Some critics have been subjected to arbitrary arrest and detention, harassment, intimidation, and violence.

Harassment, intimidation and detention have also been reported against individuals, including teachers, advocating for girls’ education and modern education. A high school teacher was sentenced to death for alleged blasphemy after making comments on modern education.

Human rights lawyers in Afghanistan reportedly face a dire situation, characterised by significant risks and hardship in the exercise of their profession, and have been targeted due to their role in defending human rights.

Family members of perceived critics have also been targeted through threats, detention, and reprisals. Sources report that relatives of, inter alia, human rights defenders and activists have faced threats, intimidation, detention, and other forms of retaliation aimed at silencing critics. Some family members have been arrested together with women activists, including due to the fact that men may be held accountable for women’s activities.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

Due to the persistent crackdown of the Taliban on activities related to human rights, a **well-founded fear** of persecution would in general be substantiated for **human rights defenders, including human rights lawyers and activists as well as protesters publicly advocating for human rights**.

For other individuals perceived as critics of the Taliban the individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:



- **Sensitivity of the topic:** persons publicly criticising the de facto authorities, e.g. on issues related to women’s rights or general human rights or expressing critics that may be considered as un-Islamic are particularly vulnerable.
- **Extent of public nature:** in light of the lack of a sophisticated digital surveillance system available to the Taliban, the extent of the public nature and the outreach of the online content may be taken in consideration.
- **Visibility:** having a visible position when voicing criticism increases the risk.
- **Being known to the authorities** may increase the risk.

Family members of individuals under this profile may also have a well-founded fear of persecution. Family members of female activists may be particularly at risk, as they may also face repercussion, and men may be held accountable for women who do not follow the Taliban’s edicts.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for individuals under this profile, persecution is highly likely to be for reasons of **political opinion** and/or **religion**, as being a human rights defender, activist, protester, (perceived as) critical of the Taliban would be seen as opposing their ‘theocratic police state’.

3.8. Journalists and other media workers

Last update: June 2026

This profile refers to the situation of journalists and other media workers (perceived as) critical of the Taliban or as not complying with conditions and limitations set by the Taliban. Situation of family members is also addressed.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 1.1.1., 1.1.2., 1.2.7 c, 4.6.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 4.3, 4.7, 4.11.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Following the Taliban’s return to power, repression of Afghan journalists has intensified, leading to a large exodus, with some journalists going into hiding. Further restrictions have been introduced on media, often vague and confusing, making them difficult to follow in practice. For example, Article 17 of the ‘Morality law’ specifies that *de facto* MPVPV inspectors are to ensure that contents of publication or public information do not contradict *sharia*, ‘deride or humiliate Muslims’, or include pictures of ‘animate objects’. Media outlets accused

of violating these instructions have been suspended or shut down. The Afghan media landscape has been described as ‘devoid of pluralism’. Only a few independent media outlets still operate in the country and media workers have resorted to self-censorship, driven by a fear of retribution. Female media workers have been particularly affected by restrictions.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Acts to which journalists and other media workers could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. Journalists and media workers have increasingly been facing arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture and ill-treatment, as well as harassment, threats and intimidation by the *de facto* authorities. Journalists have reportedly been detained on allegations such as having links to media outlets operating in exile, producing content considered not in line with Taliban restrictions or failing to cover official events. Beatings, torture and physical abuse in custody are used to deter other journalists from reporting on ‘sensitive’ or ‘inappropriate’ issues.

Family members of journalists have been threatened and detained by the *de facto* authorities as a way to obtain information, and to scare and intimidate them.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

A well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for journalists and other media workers (perceived as) critical or as not complying with conditions and limitations set by the Taliban given the severity and persistent nature of the targeting and the general policy to suppress critical voices.

Family members of individuals under this profile may also have a well-founded fear of persecution, as threats and detentions have been reported in order to make it difficult for people to speak up.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Persecution of individuals under this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of **political opinion** and/or **religion** as the restrictions imposed on journalists and other media workers derive from a strict interpretation of *sharia* and contravening them may also be perceived as opposition to the Taliban rule.

3.9. Humanitarian workers

Last update: June 2026

This profile relates to individuals working for national and international NGOs, including healthcare personnel, whose activities are perceived as non-neutral or in violation of cultural or religious norms (e.g. not complying with gender segregation rules, as well as employing women, promoting public awareness on issues such as health and hygiene, peacebuilding, and advocating for human rights).

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 4.4.5., 4.7.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 3.6., 4.9.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Following the Taliban takeover, some humanitarian workers have been evacuated from Afghanistan. The *de facto* authorities have been interfering with humanitarian operations and confronting them with restrictions, forcing aid workers to constantly navigate 'a difficult environment'. NGOs have been limited to humanitarian and development-related activities. Women have been banned from working in international and national NGOs since December 2022, and for the UN since April 2023. Following the publication of the 'Morality law', there has been a general increase in the enforcement of restrictions for NGOs and UN agencies. The Taliban warned NGOs that not complying with restrictions would make them lose their license to operate in Afghanistan. In reaction to this, some NGOs stopped recruiting Afghan women.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Some acts to which humanitarian workers could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. An increase in the number of arrests of humanitarian workers was reported after the Taliban takeover. Often the arrests took place at healthcare facilities motivated by the lack of gender segregation or other accusations of lack of morality. Also armed *de facto* officials beating healthcare personnel was noted. In May 2025, dozens of Afghan women received death threats in relation to their work for UN agencies. Attacks by unknown actors have been recorded in which humanitarian staff was wounded and one employee was killed.

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that individuals under this profile could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should also be considered. For example, aid workers face pressure and administrative barriers or are not allowed to work.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

A well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for humanitarian workers who have been involved in activities perceived as non-neutral or in violation of cultural or religious norms and, therefore, face serious violations of human rights.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Persecution of individuals under this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of **religion** and/or **political opinion** as not complying with the *de facto* authorities' restrictions and regulations would be perceived as contravening the Taliban's interpretation of Islam and/or as political dissent.

3.10. Individuals considered to have committed blasphemy and/or apostasy

Last update: June 2026

This profile covers persons who have or are considered to have abandoned or renounced the religious belief or principles of Islam (apostasy), as well as persons considered to have spoken sacrilegiously about God or sacred things (blasphemy)⁽⁸⁾. It includes individuals who have converted to a new faith (e.g. converts to Christianity), as well as those who disbelieve or lack belief in the existence of God (atheists).

It can be noted that, often, the latter grounds would be invoked *sur place* (Article 5 QR).



For practical guidance on interviewing applicants with Religion-based Asylum Claims, including those with **sur place** claims, please refer to the [EUAA Practical Guide on Interviewing Applicants with Religion-based Asylum Claims](#).

See also and CJEU, Bundesamt für Fremdenwesen und Asyl v JF, C-222/22, Third Chamber, judgment of 29 February 2024 ⁽⁹⁾.

This profile should be read in conjunction with profile [3.11. Individuals perceived to have transgressed religious, moral and/or societal norms](#).

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 1.; [Country Focus 2026](#), 1.2.1., 1.2.7., 1.2.8.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 1.2., 4.6.2.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

⁽⁸⁾ ECtHR, judgement of 26 March 2026, [Case of D.M. v SWEDEN](#), application no. 32694/23, First Section, para. 194.

⁽⁹⁾ CJEU, judgment of 29 February 2024, [Bundesamt für Fremdenwesen und Asyl v JF](#), C-222/22, Third Chamber,.



The Taliban follow an ‘ultra-conservative’ interpretation of Sunni Islam and after the takeover declared that *sharia* would serve as the legal system in the country. As a consequence, the Taliban Supreme Leader ordered all *de facto* judges to fully implement *sharia*.

Allegations of blasphemy may be referred to anti-Islamic writings or speech, criticising the Taliban, or making positive comments on modern education in contrast to the educational system under the Taliban.

Converts and dissenters from Islam reportedly don’t speak out as criticising, abandoning or denouncing Islam is a taboo in Afghanistan. Therefore, very few incidents are recorded in relation to non-believers and apostates in Afghanistan.

Additionally, in 2026, the *de facto* government issued a ‘Criminal Procedure Code for Courts’. Although there is currently no available information about its implementation, it is reported that such code stipulates that it is permissible to kill those who ‘defend false beliefs contrary to Islam’ or ‘invite others to such beliefs’. It also prescribes that mockery and ridicule of Islamic rulings as well as abandoning the Hanafi school of thought may be punished with two years’ imprisonment.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Acts to which Individuals considered to have committed blasphemy and/or apostasy could be exposed are of a such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. Individuals who have left or disbelieve Islam or lack belief of God are considered as having committed apostasy which is punishable by death. Blasphemy is also punishable by death under the Hanafi jurisprudence, and an individual was reportedly sentenced to death for alleged blasphemy although the sentence is pending a *de facto* Supreme Court hearing. There have also been reports of arbitrary arrests of individuals being accused of promoting atheism or other religions than Islam. No formal policy on ‘hunting down’ converts has been released, due to a general expectation that converts will be killed by their own families, rather than by the *de facto* authorities.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

A well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for individuals considered to have committed blasphemy and/or apostasy, including converts and atheists, as those individuals are considered as opponents of the Taliban religious ideology and therefore are targeted by the *de facto* authorities.

It should be highlighted that no applicant under this profile can reasonably be expected to abstain from their religious practice in order to avoid persecution ⁽¹⁰⁾.

⁽¹⁰⁾ CJEU, judgment of 5 September 2012, [Bundesrepublik Deutschland v Y and Z](#), joined cases C-71/11 and C-99/11, Grand Chamber, para. 80.





In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Persecution of individuals under this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of **religion** as such individuals are considered violating Islamic rules according to the Taliban's interpretation of the religion.

3.11. Individuals perceived to have transgressed religious, moral and/or societal norms

Last update: June 2026

This profile refers to individuals whose actions, behaviours, or practices are seen as transgressing religious, moral and/or societal norms, irrespective of whether the perceived transgression of norms occurred in Afghanistan or abroad.

Perceived transgression may also refer to persons who are seen as influenced by foreign values due, for example, to their activities, behaviour, appearance and expressed opinions, which may be seen as non-Afghan or non-Muslim. It may also include those who return to Afghanistan after having lived in Western countries.

Practices perceived as a transgression of these norms depend on several factors, such as local context, actors involved and their interpretation of these norms.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 1.; [Country Focus 2026](#), [1.2.2.](#), [1.2.3.](#), [1.2.6.](#), [1.2.7.](#), [1.2.8.](#), [1.4.2.](#), [4.4.7.](#), [4.5.](#), [4.8.3.](#), [Annex 3](#); [Country Focus 2024](#), [1.2.1.](#), [1.2.2.](#), [1.2.3.](#), [1.2.4.](#), [1.2.5.](#), [1.2.6.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The Taliban Supreme Leader aims to 'purify' Afghan society and to establish a strict Islamic system based on ultra-conservative interpretation of *sharia*. The *de facto* authorities have introduced numerous rules regulating all aspects of daily life, behaviour, and appearance, banning content and activities considered contrary to *sharia* such as poetry addressing relationships between men and women, university curricula including topics like democracy and human rights, gender and women, and media content contradicting Islamic law and religion.

The 'Morality Law' represents the most comprehensive framework, enforcing gender segregation, strict dress codes, limits on images of living beings, bans on most music, and obligations related to religious practice including praying.

Tribal customs such as *Pashtunwali* (traditional social, cultural, and quasi-legal code regulating the Pashtun way of life) and longstanding traditions often connected to notions of honour, pride and shame also play an important role in Afghan society. In some more conservative areas, local customs already align with the restrictions of the ‘Morality Law’, therefore the rules have not significantly changed practices, particularly regarding women’s behaviour. However, there are regional differences in how dress codes and appearance requirements are defined and enforced, as well as in the enforcement of bans on images of living beings and music.

Transgression may also take the form of a person being perceived as ‘infected’ by Western values which may spread within Afghan society. It was reported that those persons, including urban residents, civil society activists, individuals having a Western education or who had adopted a lifestyle deviating from local customs, have been met with suspicion, and targeted by the Taliban.

Afghans who have lived in Europe may also experience social stigma (*inter alia* connected with the costs of emigration, often funded by the extended family) as well as rumours of being ‘contaminated’ with Western ideas and values, having ‘lost’ one’s culture and done prohibited acts, such as not praying, converting to Christianity, drinking alcohol or engaging with women.

Additionally, in 2026, the *de facto* government issued a ‘Criminal Procedure Code for Courts’. Although there is currently no available information about its implementation, it is reported that the law stipulates that mockery and ridicule of Islamic rulings is punishable with two years’ imprisonment. Dancing and watching dancing are also criminalised. All Muslims are permitted to proceed with punishment of sinners, and the destruction of ‘places or [moral] corruption’ is called for.

See also [3.10. Individuals considered to have committed blasphemy and/or apostasy](#), [3.12.1. Individuals of Hazara ethnicity and other Shias](#), [3.13. Women and girls](#), [3.15. Persons with diverse SOGIESC](#).

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Some acts to which individuals perceived to have transgressed religious, moral and/or societal norms could be exposed are of a such severe nature that they would amount to persecution More specifically, transgression of a moral and/or societal norm may lead to honour-based violence against women, including so-called honour killings, often committed by male relatives fearing social shame or to be punished for ‘immoral’ behaviour of female family members. Women and girls are also murdered, raped, and face domestic violence and girls are forced into marriage. Judicially sanctioned floggings are used as punishment for moral crimes, such as sexual relations between men, other moral crimes related to *zina* including ‘running away from home’ for women and extramarital relations, and reportedly also for theft, drinking alcohol and drug trafficking. Individuals accused of moral crimes are subjected to public punishment. Women have been arrested for not wearing ‘proper *hijab*’ or running a beauty salon and men for shaving or trimming their beards. Other acts include detention and imprisonment of barbers for providing grooming services.



The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that individuals perceived to have transgressed religious, moral and/or societal norms could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should also be considered.

Enforcement of the *sharia* by the *de facto* MPVPV is to follow a 'sliding scale', where 'advise' should be the first response to a 'wrongful act'. Only if the act continues, enforcers may resort to more forceful means (e.g. threats, fines and detentions).

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

A well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for individuals perceived to have committed *zina* as such offences are considered as moral crimes by the Taliban and are regularly sanctioned by the *de facto* authorities through corporal punishments.

For other individuals perceived to have transgressed religious, moral and/or societal norms in Afghanistan or abroad, the individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Profession (especially artists, barbers, persons working in beauty salons):** for example, the *de facto* authorities arrested persons who did not comply with the issued instructions for barbers, shut down beauty salons and detained women beauticians. The ban of most forms of music has also resulted in arrests of individuals playing or listening to music.
- **Area of origin and conservative environment:** persons violating requirements with regard to clothing and behaviour might be at higher risk in more conservative areas. Moreover, inhabitants in smaller villages or more conservative areas could experience greater control and pressure to attend prayers in contrast to areas with large populations where not everyone attends the mosque and those who omit prayers do not typically face consequences.
- **Visibility of the applicant and the transgression:** for example, men who are shaved, have trimmed their beards or wear other than the allowed traditional clothing are at higher risk of being targeted by the *de facto* authorities. Individuals returning to Afghanistan from a Western country, may show deviating appearance and behaviours since being used to a different lifestyle or not being aware of conservative Taliban norms may increase the risk to be (perceived) as a transgressor ⁽¹¹⁾.

It has to be noted that an applicant cannot be expected to adapt his or her behaviour, convictions or identity, or to abstain from certain practices, where such behaviour, convictions or practices are inherent to his or her identity, to avoid the risk of persecution in his or her country of origin ⁽¹²⁾.

⁽¹¹⁾ ECtHR, judgement of 26 March 2026, [Case of D.M. v SWEDEN](#), application no. 32694/23, First Section, para. 194.

⁽¹²⁾ Art. 10(3) QR: 'When assessing if an applicant has a well-founded fear of being persecuted, the determining authority cannot reasonably expect that applicant to adapt or change his or her behaviour, convictions or





In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where a well-founded fear is substantiated for an individual falling under this profile this is likely to be for reasons of **religion** as such individuals are considered violating Islamic rules according to the Taliban's interpretation of the religion, and/or **political opinion** as not complying with the *de facto* authorities' restrictions and regulations may be perceived as political dissent.

Persecution of this profile may also be for reasons of **membership of a particular social group**¹³ due to shared characteristics, such as a common background which cannot be changed (perceived past behaviour) or a belief that is so fundamental to identity or conscience that they should not be forced to renounce it (opposition to cultural, social or religious norms and the unwillingness to comply with them) and a distinct identity in the context of Afghanistan, linked to their stigmatisation by the surrounding society.

3.12. Ethnic and religious minorities

In the context of Afghanistan, ethnicity and religion are often interlinked. This section focuses on some ethnic and/or religious minorities.

3.12.1. Individuals of Hazara ethnicity and other Shias

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 1.; [Country Focus 2026](#), 1.1.1., 1.2.1., 1.2.7. b, 2.2.2., 4.8.1., 4.8.2., 4.8.4.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 2.2.2., 3.6., 4.6.1., 4.6.3.; [Targeting 2022](#), 6.4.1.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Estimates identify Hazaras as the third largest ethnic group in the country. Mostly, persons of Hazara ethnicity are of Shia religion. There are two main Shia communities in Afghanistan: the main Shia branch Ithna Ashariya ('the Twelvers') and the smaller Ismaili branch ('the Seveners'). The majority of the Hazara population inhabits the Hazarajat. Historically the

identity, or to abstain from certain practices, where such behaviour, convictions or practices are inherent to his or her identity, to avoid the risk of persecution in his or her country of origin', [Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1347](#).

⁽¹³⁾ Notwithstanding the assessment under [3.13. Women and girls](#), women, including minors, who (...) 'genuinely come to identify with the fundamental value of equality between women and men during their stay in a Member State may be regarded as belonging to 'a particular social group' (see CJEU, judgment of 11 June 2024, [K, L v Staatssecretaris van Justitie en Veiligheid](#), case C-646/21, Grand Chamber, para. 87(1)).



Hazarajat included Bamyan, Ghor, and Uruzgan provinces, as well as parts of several others. There are also major Hazara populations in the cities of Kabul, Herat and Mazar-e Sharif.

The Hazara community has historically faced discrimination, forced evictions and mass killings under various rules in Afghanistan. Even before the Taliban takeover in 2021, Hazaras were targeted by both the Taliban and the ISKP. Since 2016, the ISKP has been conducting attacks targeting Hazaras and other Shia Muslims, without them having access to protection from such attacks.

Additionally, in 2026, the *de facto* government issued a 'Criminal Procedure Code for Courts'. Although there is currently no available information about its implementation, it is reported that the law refers to those following Muslim branches other than the Hanafi school of thought or other religions as 'heretics'.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Some acts to which individuals of Hazara ethnicity and other Shias could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. More specifically, there have been arrests of Shia religious scholars for not complying with Taliban instructions. Land disputes frequently result in forced evictions and displacement, often including Hazaras, with reports of deaths, injuries and destruction of property.

Hazara women have been disproportionately affected by arrests and imprisonment in the context of controlling dress codes. Some women reportedly were beaten, abused and subjected to derogatory anti-Hazara remarks during detention.

Cases were reported in which Ismailis were forced to convert to Sunnism. Those who refused to convert were subject to physical assaults, coercion and death threats. Also, killings of Ismailis are documented.

ISKP attacks targeting members of religious minorities, especially Shia, continued to be reported, albeit on a lower level than at its peak in 2022. Examples of recent acts claimed by the ISKP include the execution of 14 Hazara travellers, shooting and suicide bomber attacks on Shia mosques and IED attacks against buses transporting Hazaras.

Unclaimed attacks killed Shia religious leaders and killed and wounded civilians in an explosion in a commercial centre in a Hazara neighbourhood.

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that individuals of Hazara ethnicity and other Shias could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should be also considered. Hazaras have been 'systematically been treated differently' by the local Taliban. The following acts were reported: widespread discrimination, including with regard to aid distribution and development and public projects as well as in legal disputes, barriers in obtaining passports and in accessing government services, the requirement to use Pashtun in government interactions in some Hazara-populated areas, conversion attempts to Sunni Islam, restrictions on Shia commemorations and ceremonies, (collective) dismissals from government departments, removal of references to Shia teachings from school curriculums and land disputes disproportionately affecting Hazaras.



Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for **individuals of Hazara ethnicity and other Shias** to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Role and function:** being a Shia scholar or Imam, or advocating Shia rights, may increase the risk.
- **Area of origin:** in areas where the ISKP is particularly active, Hazaras are exposed to a higher risk. Many ISKP cells have relocated from former strongholds to northern Afghanistan and are reportedly scattered across the northern and northeastern provinces. See [2.3. Islamic State Khorasan Province \(ISKP\)](#). In the case of Ismailis, those originating from Badakhshan are at increased risk as most incidents of targeting Ismailis by the Taliban are reported to have occurred in Badakhshan.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Being a Hazara may also be a risk-impacting circumstance in relation to other profiles ⁽¹⁴⁾, such as: [3.1. Members of the security institutions of the former government](#), [3.2. Public officials and servants of the former government and judicial system](#), [3.9. Humanitarian workers](#), [3.11. Individuals perceived to have transgressed religious, moral and/or societal norms](#) [3.14. Children](#), [3.16. Individuals involved in blood feuds and land disputes](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for an applicant under this profile, this may be for reasons of **religion** as Hazaras and other Shias are considered as ‘not proper Muslims’, **political opinion** as Hazaras are perceived as associated with the former government, and/or **race (ethnicity)** as Hazaras are a distinct ethnic group.

3.12.2. Hindus and Sikhs

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 1.; [Country Focus 2026](#), [1.2.1.](#), [4.8.1.](#), [4.8.8.](#); [Country Focus 2024](#), [4.6.4.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Only approximately 100 of the 700 000 Hindus and Sikhs recorded in the 70s remain in the country. The Taliban have pledged to protect the rights of Sikhs and Hindus, although safety

⁽¹⁴⁾ ECtHR, judgement of 26 March 2026, [Case of D.M. v SWEDEN](#), application no. 32694/23, First Section, para. 177.

and security concerns are reported. Due to their small numbers and low visibility in the country, there have been few reports of mistreatment.

Additionally, in 2026, the *de facto* government issued a ‘Criminal Procedure Code for Courts’. Although there is currently no available information about its implementation, it is reported that the law refers to those following Muslim branches other than the Hanafi school of thought or other religions as ‘heretics’.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Some acts to which Hindus and Sikhs could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. In the period after the takeover, attacks by the ISKP have been reported against, for example, Sikh places of worship and a Sikh shop.

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that Hindus and Sikhs could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should also be considered. Threats of physical violence and attacks against religious minorities, including Sikhs, were noted.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

A well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Hindus and Sikhs, taking into account their historical discrimination and past pattern of targeting, the very low number of individuals still remaining in the country, and the aim of the *de facto* authorities to establish a ‘true Islamic system’.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Persecution of individuals under this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of **religion**.

3.12.3. Salafis

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 1.; [Country Focus 2026](#), 1.2.1., 4.3.2., 4.8.1., 4.8.9.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 4.3.2.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The Afghan Salafis, of whom there are several hundred thousand in the country, reside mainly in the eastern provinces of Nangarhar, Kunar, and Nuristan. In the first years after the takeover, the Taliban have reportedly been cracking down on Salafis perceived as associated

with the ISKP. Hostility towards the community in general is reported, with pressure on some Salafi madrassas to conform with Hanafi doctrines. The *de facto* authorities have closed multiple Salafi madrassas and reportedly also Salafi mosques.

Additionally, in 2026, the *de facto* government issued a 'Criminal Procedure Code for Courts'. Although there is currently no available information about its implementation, it is reported that the law refers to followers of Muslim branches other than the Hanafi school of thought or other religions as 'heretics'.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Some acts to which Salafis could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. More specifically, it is mentioned that some people have been arrested for praying 'Salafi-style', as well as Salafi women and children have been arrested without charges. Additionally, young Salafis, believed to work for or being part of the ISKP, have been kidnapped from their homes, beheaded and killed in extrajudicial killings in the province of Nangarhar.

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that Salafis could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should be also considered. For example, it was noted that persons were not allowed to enter mosques and pray Salafi-style.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for Salafis to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Visibility:** individuals advocating for Salafi or non-Hanafi practicing of Islam may be exposed to higher risk.
- **Role and function:** Salafis having more prominent roles such as Imam and teachers may be exposed to higher risk; for example, a Salafi religious scholar was shot dead in Badakhshan Province.
- **Affiliation with pro-Taliban groups:** Salafis under Jamaat al-Dawah (which involves most Salafis in Kunar, and some Salafis in Nangarhar) have not been targeted by the Taliban as they pledged allegiance to the Taliban in 2020.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

For further guidance on the targeting of the Salafi community linked to their perceived support and affiliation to ISKP, see [3.5. Individuals with \(perceived\) affiliation to the Islamic State in Khorasan Province \(ISKP\)](#).



Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for an applicant under this profile it is highly likely to be for reasons of **political opinion** and/or **religion**, as being perceived as supportive of the ISKP would be seen as political dissent and being an adherent of Salafi religion could be seen as conflicting with the Taliban's version of Islam.

3.12.4. Tajiks

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 4.8.1., 4.8.2., 4.8.5.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 4.3.1., 4.6.1.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Tajiks form the second largest ethnic group in Afghanistan and are mainly Sunni Muslims but there are also those adhering to the Shia branch of Islam. Tajiks live in various areas of the country, but are mainly concentrated in northern, northeastern and western Afghanistan, as well as in Kabul (both the province and the city).

It was noted that in the aftermath of the takeover, Tajiks were among the communities more prone to human rights violations, due to their perceived affiliation to armed resistance groups and/or the former government.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

The severity and/or repetitiveness of acts that Tajiks could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should be considered. For example, Tajiks have faced discrimination in hiring and dismissals procedures for *de facto* government positions. They were also excluded from equal access to government services, development projects and humanitarian aid in some regions.

In addition, since the Taliban takeover, mainly during 2022, groups perceived as supported by the *de facto* authorities, including Kuchis, have carried out forced evictions and land seizure leading to the displacement of Tajiks.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for Tajiks to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Perceived affiliation with the NRF or other resistance groups:** for further guidance on the targeting of the Tajiks linked to their perceived support and affiliation to resistance groups, see [3.4. Individuals perceived as members or supporters of resistance groups.](#)
- **Area of origin:** Tajiks from Panjshir and Andarab district (Baghlan province) being particularly at risk.





In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Being a Tajik may also be a risk-impacting circumstance in relation to other profiles, such as: [3.16. Individuals involved in blood feuds and land disputes](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for an applicant under this profile it is highly likely to be for reasons of **race (ethnicity)** and/or **political opinion** as Tajiks are a distinct ethnic group and are associated to armed resistance groups (NRF) as well as the former government.

3.12.5. Turkmens and Uzbeks

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 4.8.2., 4.8.6., 4.8.7.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 4.6.1.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Turkmens make up 1 % to 3 % of the Afghan population, adhere to the Sunni Hanafi school of thought and predominantly reside in northern Afghanistan.

Uzbeks make up around 9 % of the Afghan population, are Sunnis and belong to the Turkic peoples.

Turkmens and Uzbeks were subjected to deliberate and seemingly organised campaigns by Pashtuns to forcibly evict them from rich agricultural land.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

The severity and/or repetitiveness of some acts that Turkmens and Uzbeks could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should be considered. For example, ethnic and religious minorities face marginalisation and discrimination in hiring and dismissals procedures for *de facto* government positions. Turkmen and Uzbek languages have been removed from the official curriculum.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The mere fact of being a **Turkmen** or an **Uzbek** would in general not substantiate a well-founded fear of persecution. **Should an individual falling under this profile be targeted, it would be related to other circumstances than the mere fact of being a Turkmen or an Uzbek, for example in relation to land disputes.** See [3.16.2. Land disputes](#).



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

3.13. Women and girls

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 1., 2.; [Country Focus 2026](#), [1.1.1.](#), [1.2.5.](#), [1.2.6.](#), [1.2.7.](#), [4.4.1.](#), [4.4.2.](#), [4.4.3.](#), [4.4.4.](#), [4.4.5.](#), [4.4.6.](#), [4.4.7.](#), [4.4.8.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The necessity of gender segregation is a central idea within the Taliban movement, which inspires the decisions of the *de facto* government, resulting in a wide range of human rights violations committed against women and girls, and leads to a situation that some described as ‘gender apartheid’. In July 2025, the ICC (International Criminal Court) issued arrest warrants for the Taliban Supreme Leader and the *de facto* Chief Justice on charges of crime against humanity of persecution on gender grounds against Afghan women and girls.

During the initial phase after the Taliban takeover, the enforcement of directives and restrictions on women and girls was not consistent; however, a more complex and systematic enforcement model has reportedly taken hold, limiting the variances that existed across the country. Several regulations have been issued restricting women’s and girls’ rights since the Taliban takeover including the ‘Morality law’ of July 2024.

Gender-based violence taking place inside and outside of women’s homes, in both the public and private sphere, perpetrated by both family members and the authorities, is also a persistent problem in the Afghan society. Even before the takeover there was a high prevalence of incidents, but the issue is reportedly on the rise.

The Taliban frequently assert that the *de facto* authorities are protecting women’s rights and have issued several decrees on outlawing traditional harmful practices and on prosecuting perpetrators of unlawful acts against women, such as shooting, forced marriages, or violating a woman’s rights (to inheritance, dowry, independence). However, despite those decrees, cases of gender-based violence have reportedly been treated inconsistently by the *de facto* authorities, with many cases being resolved through informal means such as mediation. Additionally, in 2026, the *de facto* government issued a ‘Criminal Procedure Code for Courts’ that reinforces husbands’ authority and control over their wives through provisions that, *inter alia*, allow them to carry out discretionary punishments, and indirectly legitimise different forms of domestic violence.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

The accumulation of the discriminatory measures introduced by the Taliban, which restrict the rights and freedoms of women and girls in Afghanistan, amounts to persecution ⁽¹⁵⁾.

Such measures affect their freedom of movement, freedom of expression, access to healthcare, work, education and justice, among others.

The requirement of a *mahram* (male relative) for daily life situations including **travelling** and using public transport has prevented women's and girl's access to public services, work, and humanitarian assistance and has also created barriers to conduct other activities outside their homes. Women without a *mahram* are denied access to *de facto* government premises, courts, health clinics, shops, markets, as well as taxis, while access is denied for all women and girls to public bathhouses, gyms and parks. Although the implementation of the *mahram* requirement has differed across the country, travelling without a *mahram* may result in arrests, sometimes with rigorous inspections, harassment and beatings, including being stopped, interrogated, and harassed at checkpoints.

The Taliban have also established strict rules related to the **behaviour and appearance** of women and girls, including the *hijab* requirement (as one of the most policed aspects in 2025), prohibition for unrelated women and men to look at each other, and restrictions on women's voices. Non-compliance with those rules has reportedly led to verbal intimidation, arrests, harassment and physical violence, in particular by *de facto* MPVPV enforcers.

Regulations have also significantly restricted **access to education and employment** for women and girls, starting with secondary education in 2022, followed by university education later that year, and, most recently, from attending medical education in December 2024. MPVPV inspectors have been monitoring girls' education bans, compliance with the *hijab* requirement and gender segregation between male and female teachers. Women are only permitted peripheral functions within the *de facto* administration, for example at airports, in detention facilities, in public services, at checkpoints, and in the banking sector. Women have been banned from working in international and national NGOs, for the UN and foreign embassies. Women in other professions have also been impacted, including former women security personnel and women lawyers and judges who lost their jobs or have been barred from practicing. Others, such as female journalists and teachers have been facing severe restrictions, and female beauticians have been prohibited to work. All those restrictions leave the private sector being one of the few areas for women to work in; however, the Taliban have restricted some activities in the private sector by closing women-run shops, markets or cafés and by their general restrictions imposed on women.

⁽¹⁵⁾ CJEU, judgement of 4 October 2024, [AH and FN v Bundesamt für Fremdenwesen und Asyl](#), Joined Cases C-608/22 and C-609/22, Third Chamber, para. 46 'Article 9(1)(b) of Directive 2011/95 must be interpreted as meaning that an accumulation of discriminatory measures in respect of women – consisting, *inter alia*, in depriving them of any legal protection against gender-based and domestic violence and forced marriage, requiring them to cover their entire body and face, restricting their access to healthcare and freedom of movement, prohibiting them from engaging in gainful employment or limiting the extent to which they can do so, prohibiting their access to education, prohibiting them from taking part in sports and excluding them from political life – adopted or tolerated by an 'actor of persecution' within the meaning of Article 6 of that directive comes within the concept of 'act of persecution', since those measures, by their cumulative effect, undermine human dignity as guaranteed by Article 1 of the Charter.'



Women's access to **healthcare** has been reduced by 'significant barriers', including restrictions on their movement, gender segregation, poverty, the financial cost of treatment, and a lack of female healthcare professionals. The situation has reportedly worsened under the 'Morality law', with inspectors regularly visiting facilities to enforce compliance, for example regarding *hijab*, segregation and *mahram* rules. The requirement for women to be accompanied by a *mahram* when travelling has impacted both women seeking and those providing care. The general restrictions for women's access to education and the ban for pursuing medical education are likely to exacerbate the existing shortage in women medical staff. This has an adverse impact on the health outcome for women, given that cultural norms limit the treatment of women by male doctors and that these norms restrict health-care providers in seeing patients of the opposite sex. Despite the announcement of the Minister of Communications that male doctors are to be considered a *mahram* when treating female patients, women and girls still need a *mahram* in many provinces to be able to be seen by a male doctor. The bans on women from working for NGOs and the UN, the restrictions on female aid workers and on women in general, have moreover negatively impacted the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance to women.

Women and girls in Afghanistan may also face other forms of gender-based violence amounting to persecution. Corporal punishments imposed by *de facto* courts have increased under the Taliban rule, particularly in cases involving *zina* where women and girls are disproportionately affected, as they are more likely to be accused of adultery, often on the basis of little or no evidence. The fear of social shame to be punished for 'immoral' behaviour of female family members, along with the fear of being held accountable and face reprisals for such behaviours led men towards repression including through 'honour' killings and domestic violence. Cases of child marriage, forced marriage, rape, domestic violence are also reported. Those forms of violence in some instances also induced women and girls to commit suicide. Perpetrators of gender-based violence also include unidentified people and *de facto* MPVPV enforcers in the streets, workplace, and other public places. Reportedly, several women who were detained have also been subjected to sexual violence by the *de facto* authorities.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

For **women and girls** in Afghanistan, **well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated** as the Taliban's restrictions of women's and girl's basic rights applies to all female members of the Afghan society ⁽¹⁶⁾.

⁽¹⁶⁾ CJEU, judgement of 4 October 2024, [AH and FN v Bundesamt für Fremdenwesen und Asyl](#), Joined Cases C-608/22 and C-609/22, Third Chamber, para. 58: '*Having regard to the foregoing considerations, the answer to the second question is that Article 4(3) of Directive 2011/95 must be interpreted as not requiring the competent national authority - in order to determine whether, having regard to the conditions in a woman's country of origin at the time of the assessment of her application for international protection, the discriminatory measures to which she has been or could be exposed to in that country amount to acts of persecution within the meaning of Article 9(1) of that directive - to take into consideration, in the individual assessment of her application for the purposes of Article 2(h) of that directive, factors particular to her personal circumstances other than those relating to her gender or nationality.*



Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Persecution of women and girls is highly likely to be for reasons of **membership of a particular social group** as women and girls in Afghanistan are considered forming a particular social group defined by the innate characteristic of being a female and perceived as being different by the Afghan society in general because of the social, moral and legal norms in the country ⁽¹⁷⁾. Other grounds, such as **religion** and/or **political opinion** may also be substantiated as the restrictions imposed on women and girls derive from a strict interpretation of *sharia* and contravening them may also be perceived as opposition to the Taliban rule.

3.14. Children

This profile refers to Afghan nationals under the age of 18.

3.14.1. Violence against children

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 1.; [Country Focus 2026](#), 2.4., 3.2., 4.4.7.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 2.5.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The ongoing economic and humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan has led to households resorting to negative coping strategies including those exposing children to violence and/or impacting significantly on their life. For violence against girls see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Additionally, in 2026, the *de facto* government issued a ‘Criminal Procedure Code for Courts’. Although there is currently no available information about its implementation, it is reported that some provisions prohibit physical forms of violence against children by teachers only if they result in ‘bone fracture’, ‘torn skin’ or ‘bodily bruising’. The law also grants a father the right to punish his 10 years old son when the child is acting against his own interest, such in the case of abandoning prayer.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Acts to which children could be exposed are of a such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. More specifically, children have been sold and, in extreme but documented cases, sold for their body organs, forced into marriages or exploited in child

⁽¹⁷⁾ CJEU, judgment of 16 January 2024, [WS v Intervyuirasht organ na Darzhavna agentsia za bezhantsite pri Ministerskia savet](#), C-621/21, Grand Chamber, para. 62: ‘Article 10(1)(d) of Directive 2011/95 must be interpreted as meaning that, depending on the circumstances in the country of origin, women in that country, as a whole, and more restricted groups of women who share an additional common characteristic may be regarded as belonging to ‘a particular social group’, as a ‘reason for persecution’ capable of leading to the recognition of refugee status’.

labour ⁽¹⁸⁾. Children have reportedly also been victims of violent crimes such as rape and extrajudicial killings with many incidents linked to Taliban members or unidentified individuals.

Abuses of boys also occur in the form of *bacha bazi* (practice that refers to boys being dressed up like girls and forced to dance in front of older men with many of them being raped). Both perpetrators and victims of the practice have been stigmatised by the surrounding community, although it has usually affected the victim more than the perpetrator due to their weak social position. After the Taliban takeover in 2021, the practice reportedly continued and boys as young as nine years old were exploited.

Children may also be recruited by the Taliban and other armed groups. See [3.14.2. Child recruitment](#).

Being a child is to be taken into account in the assessment on whether an act reaches the threshold of persecution.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for **boys** to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Socio-economic situation of the child and the family:** the ongoing economic crisis may force families in poor economic conditions to resort to negative coping strategies, resulting in violence against children such as child marriage or selling children. Being part of a female-headed household might also increase the risk.
- **Available support network:** the lack of a support network considerably increases the risk for children to any form of abuse.
- **Displacement:** being displaced increases the risk for children to any form of abuse.
- **Age and appearance:** young non-bearded boys (from the age of 9 years old) could be subjected to *bacha bazi*.
- **Occupation:** boys employed as bodyguards, secretaries, support staff or drivers for Taliban members are vulnerable to sexual abuse by their superiors.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Not all work done by children should be classified as child labour, an assessment should be made in light of the nature of the work and the age of the child. Work that is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children could be considered to reach the severity of persecution. The impact of child labour on access to education should also be taken into account. Other risks, such as involvement in criminal activities and trafficking should also be considered (International Labour Organization (ILO), [Convention C138 - Minimum Age Convention, 1973 \(No. 138\)](#), 26 June 1973; Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, [Convention C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 \(No. 182\)](#), 17 June 1999).

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

The individual circumstances of the child need to be taken into account to determine whether a nexus to a reason for persecution can be substantiated in relation to a well-founded fear of violence.

For example, in individual cases, a link could be established to **membership of a particular social group**, e.g. boys who have been subjected to *bacha bazi* could have a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of membership of a particular social group, based on common background that cannot be changed and having a distinct identity linked to their stigmatisation by the surrounding society.

3.14.2. Child recruitment

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 2.4.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 2.6.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Children have reportedly been recruited by both the Taliban and other armed groups as soldiers for combat and support roles.

The Taliban have often recruited children through coercion, fraud, and false promises. After the takeover, the *de facto* authorities have taken measures to remove and avoid recruiting young boys into their ranks, including by forming a commission for this purpose. Reportedly, many children have been removed from armed forces in this process. However, many people in Afghanistan do not know their age and do not perceive the age of 18 years as the end of childhood. The *de facto* authorities have assessed the age of boys and their possible adulthood based on the boys' beard growth and signs of puberty, therefore leaving adolescent children still vulnerable to recruitment.

The NRF and the ISKP have recruited puberty children and used them in direct hostilities; however, the ISKP reportedly sought to recruit university students and focused on recruiting more educated persons.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Child recruitment amounts to persecution, including when recruitment is not induced by coercion.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for the **child** to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:



- **Gender:** the risk of being recruited is higher for boys than for girls.
- **Socio-economic situation:** children from families in poor economic conditions are at higher risk of being recruited.
- **Displacement:** being displaced increases the risk for children to be recruited.
- **Area of origin or residence:** children from rural areas and from areas with presence or in the reach of armed groups are at higher risk of being recruited.
- **Available support network:** the lack of a support network considerably increases the risk for children to be recruited.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

The individual circumstances of the child need to be taken into account to determine whether a nexus to a reason for persecution can be substantiated. For example, in the case of children who refuse to join the Taliban, persecution may be for reasons of **political opinion** and/or **religion** as the refusal may be perceived as opposition to the Taliban rule and/or their interpretation of the *sharia*.

3.15. Persons with diverse SOGIESC

Last update: June 2026

This profile refers to persons who are perceived as not conforming to religious and/or social norms because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics, including the treatment of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or trans-gender, intersex and queer, also commonly referred to as LGBTIQ individuals. Situation of family members is also addressed.



For issues related to the practice of *bacha bazi*, which is not considered homosexuality in the Afghan society, see [3.14.1. Violence against children](#).

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 1.; [Country Focus 2026](#), 4.5.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 4.5.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Having a norm-breaking sexual orientation or gender identity entails taboos and social stigma in the general Afghan society. Already prior to the Taliban takeover, individuals identifying as LGBTIQ+ were in a precarious situation. Persons with diverse SOGIESC have been subjected



to different forms of violence by several actors including by the Taliban or other armed groups, as well as by the family and/or the society in general, as there is a low societal tolerance in Afghanistan for individuals with sexual orientation or gender identities deviating from the 'norm'.

Additionally, in 2026, the *de facto* government issued a 'Criminal Procedure Code for Courts'. Although there is currently no available information about its implementation, it is reported that the law prescribes penalties for homosexual individuals and instructs judges to issue two years' imprisonment to someone who has committed a 'homosexual act', and in the case of a 'habitual homosexual', the person may be sentenced to death if authorised by the state.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Acts to which persons with diverse SOGIESC could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. The 'Morality Law' contains specific prohibitions against 'lesbianism' and anal intercourse and the enabling of 'opportunities and means' for same sex relationships. The *de facto* authorities have been enforcing judicially ordered corporal punishment in public, including stoning, wall crushing and flogging. LGBTIQ+ persons reportedly have been facing arbitrary arrests, sexual violence, extrajudicial killings and torture, including in detention facilities, based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Transgender persons reportedly faced genital mutilation, electric shock therapy, and gang rape while imprisoned as well as abduction and sexual assault. Since February 2023, Taliban have increasingly targeted LGBTIQ+ persons, including collecting intelligence on activists and community members, 'hunting them down' and 'subjecting them to violence and humiliation'.

See also [3.7. Critics of the Taliban including protesters, activists, human rights defenders, and human rights lawyers](#).

Family members of individuals under this profile may also have a well-founded fear of persecution as reprisals against them, as detention, threats, and physical violence, have been documented.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

A well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for persons with diverse SOGIESC in light of the serious and widespread nature of the acts committed against them as well as the criminalisation and specific prohibitions included in the 'Morality Law'.

It has to be noted that an applicant cannot be expected to adapt or his or her behaviour, convictions or identity, or to abstain from certain practices, where such behaviour, convictions or practices are inherent to his or her identity, to avoid the risk of persecution in his or her country of origin ⁽¹⁹⁾.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Art. 10(3) QR: 'When assessing if an applicant has a well-founded fear of being persecuted, the determining authority cannot reasonably expect that applicant to adapt or change his or her behaviour, convictions or identity, or to abstain from certain practices, where such behaviour, convictions or practices are inherent to his or her identity, to avoid the risk of persecution in his or her country of origin', [Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1347](#).



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Persecution of individuals under this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of **membership of a particular social group** ⁽²⁰⁾, based on a shared characteristic or belief that is so fundamental to the identity of the applicant, that he or she should not be forced to renounce it, and based on their distinct identity in Afghanistan, because they are perceived as being different by the surrounding society, as well as **religion**, as having a diverse SOGIESC is considered to contravene Islam.

3.16. Individuals involved in blood feuds and land disputes

3.16.1. Blood feuds

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 4.8.3.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 4.4.8.](#), [Key Socio economic indicators 2019, 3.1.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Blood feuds for revenge-taking can be the result of personal violence or wrong-doing that is seen as being against honour, disputes involving land, or in the context of family conflicts and relationships. Blood feuds in Afghanistan are historically ‘widespread’ among Pashtun tribes but exist, to some extent, among all ethnic groups. These feuds do not have a specific time limit to end and may last for generations. It is reported that ‘shifts in cultural norms’ in Afghan society had led to a noticeable decline in blood feuds and their intensity, but since the Taliban takeover blood feud cases are reportedly re-emerging. However, it is noted that tribal elders, youth and *jirgas* are playing a more active role in mediation and conflict resolution.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

⁽²⁰⁾ Art. 10(1) QR: ‘Depending on the circumstances in the country of origin, the concept of membership of a particular social group as referred to in point (d) of the first subparagraph shall include membership of a group based on a common characteristic of sexual orientation. Gender related aspects, including gender identity and gender expression, shall be given due consideration for the purposes of determining membership of a particular social group or identifying a characteristic of such a group’, [Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1347](#). The existence of criminal laws, which specifically target homosexuals, supports the finding that those persons must be regarded as forming a particular social group. CJEU, judgement of 7 November 2013, [Minister voor Immigratie en Asiel v X and Y and Z](#), Joined Cases C-199/12 to C-201/12, Fourth Chamber, paras. 48-49.

Acts to which individuals involved in a blood feud could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. Blood feuds may last for generations and involve acts such as killings. Related acts may involve the practice of *baad*, which refers to the exchange of girls and women between families or clans.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

For men directly involved in a blood feud, well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated as these feuds may last for generations and involve male family members as they are responsible for the accumulation of honour and reputation.

For children and for men who are farther removed from the feud, the individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for the applicant to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Perception of traditional norms:** blood feuds or revenge killings are closely connected to notions of honour, pride and shame ‘as seen through tribal customs and centuries-old traditions in Afghan society’, therefore individuals from more traditional context may be exposed to higher risk. On the other hand, individuals with access to education, knowledge of other cultures and values and inter-tribal connectivity may be exposed to a lower risk.
- **Availability, accessibility and effectivity of mediation mechanisms:** blood feuds and retaliation killings are mainly resolved through informal *jirga* resolution. Many unresolved conflicts from previous generations had become less violent as tribal elders, youth and *jirgas* were ‘playing a more active role in mediation and conflict resolution’.
- **Open and unresolved nature of a blood feud:** while the absence of recent violent incidents does not necessarily indicate that a blood feud has ceased, the risk may be higher when the feud is actively being fought.
- **Duration of the blood feud:** blood feuds that are not resolved often gradually involve more family members and can expand from family to clan and tribe level, exposing their members to a higher risk.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

The individual circumstances of the applicant need to be taken into account to determine whether or not a nexus to a reason for persecution can be substantiated in relation to the risks related to blood feuds ⁽²¹⁾.

Where there is no nexus to a reason for persecution, (the risk of) being exposed to blood feud may qualify under [Article 15\(a\)](#) and/or [Article 15\(b\) QR](#), depending on the severity of its consequences in the individual case.



Exclusion considerations could be relevant to this profile as individuals involved in blood feuds may have engaged in excludable acts. See [7. Exclusion](#).

3.16.2. Land disputes

Last update: June 2026

This profile refers to conflicts over ownership, control, or use of land that often involves individuals, families, tribes, powerful figures.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 4.8.2., 4.8.3., 4.8.5., 4.8.6., 4.8.7.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 4.6.1., 4.6.3. c.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Land disputes, frequently between different communities or related to fertile land, resources, as well as struggles for power and wealth, ‘have plagued Afghanistan for generations’. They often resurface with each change in power; the Taliban takeover led to an increase in land disputes, as many re-erupted across different areas of the country.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Disputes over land would not in themselves amount to persecution. However, the violence stemming from land disputes, together with the lack of an effective legal system to prevent it, may result in severe violations of basic human rights which would amount to persecution. In particular, it is reported that land disputes often result in threats, violence, forced evictions and displacement especially in rural areas. Several incidents of killings and injuries of individuals

⁽²¹⁾ CJEU, judgement of 27 March 2025, [Bundesamt für Fremdenwesen und Asyl v AN](#), C-217/23, Third Chamber, paras. 38- 39: ‘38 *In the present case, subject to verification to be carried out by the referring court, it is not apparent from the documents before the Court that, in their country of origin, the group made up of the members of a particular family targeted by a blood feud the cause of which is a property dispute is perceived as being different not only by the members of the families involved in that blood feud, but by the surrounding society as a whole.*

39 *It follows from the foregoing that the fact that an applicant for international protection is exposed, in his or her country of origin, to a risk of physical violence extending to homicide as part of a blood feud targeting all or some of his or her family members as a result of a property dispute does not lead to the finding that that applicant belongs to ‘a particular social group’ within the meaning of Article 10(1)(d) of Directive 2011/95 [...].’*

over land disputes were documented. Cases of *de facto* authorities arresting villagers involved in land disputes have been reported.

In the case of forced evictions of communities, the individual assessment of whether the discrimination and mistreatment against these communities could amount to persecution should take into account the severity and/or repetitiveness of the acts or whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures. The lack of an effective remedy for these communities should also be taken into account.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for individuals involved in land disputes to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Ethnic background:** being a member of a minority group (Hazara, Tajik, Turkmen and Uzbek) increases the risk. It was reported that in general the *de facto* authorities support Pashtun communities. Representatives of minority communities involved in land disputes ‘report feeling powerless, distrustful and fearful of the *de facto* authorities, often referring to their alleged bias or close connections with claimants’.
- **Power and influence of the actors involved in the land dispute:** being an individual or belonging to a community with ties to the Taliban decreases the risk.
- **Availability, accessibility and effectivity of (informal) dispute resolution mechanisms:** in cases of land and property disputes many individuals turn to informal dispute resolution methods, including community councils, such as *Shuras* and *Jirgas*.
- **Displacement:** it was reported that minorities and internally displaced persons are disproportionately affected by disputes over land and claims of usurpation.
- **Origin from rural areas:** land disputes often result in violence, especially in rural areas.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

See also [3.12.1. Individuals of Hazara ethnicity and other Shias](#), [3.12.4. Tajiks](#), [3.12.5. Turkmens and Uzbeks](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

The individual circumstances of the applicant need to be taken into account to determine whether or not a nexus to a reason for persecution can be substantiated in relation to the risks related to land disputes (e.g. race in relation to Taliban taking sides based on the ethnic background of the person).



Where there is no nexus to a reason for persecution, (the risk of) being subjected to forced eviction may qualify under [Article 15\(b\) QR](#), depending on the severity of its consequences in the individual case.



Exclusion considerations could be relevant to this profile as individuals involved in land disputes may have engaged in excludable acts. See. [7. Exclusion](#).

3.17. Persons living with mental health issues

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 1.; [Country Focus 2026](#), 3.5., 4.4.6., [Country Focus 2024](#), 1.2.4. e., 3.5., 4.4.6.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Mental health needs have increased in Afghanistan in recent years. Barriers for seeking help include the absence of local mental health services, the lack of specialised professionals as well as the stigma surrounding mental health issues.

Additionally, in 2026, the *de facto* government issued a ‘Criminal Procedure Code for Courts’. Although there is currently no available information about its implementation, it is reported that for *hudud* and blood money crimes, the mental state, capacity and intent of the perpetrator are not to be taken into account.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

The lack of personnel and adequate infrastructure to appropriately address the needs of individuals with (severe) mental health issues fails to meet the requirement of Article 6 QR regarding the existence of an actor that inflicts persecution or serious harm and therefore cannot be qualified as an act amounting to persecution, unless the individual is intentionally deprived of healthcare.

The actor requirement may be satisfied in specific cases of denial of healthcare ⁽²²⁾.

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that persons living with mental disabilities could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should be also considered. More specifically, the ‘Morality law’ explicitly mentions the *de facto* MPVPV’s responsibilities in relation to ‘mentally handicapped’ persons and children committing ‘wrongful acts’, establishing that ‘If a child or a mentally handicapped person commits a wrongful act, then the enforcer is duty-bound to put an end to that wrongful act.’

⁽²²⁾ CJEU, judgement of 18 December 2014, [Mohamed M'Bodj v. État belge](#), C-542/13, Grand Chamber, paras. 35-36. See also CJEU, judgment of 24 April 2018 (MP), [MP v Secretary of State for the Home Department](#), C-353/16, Grand Chamber, paras. 57, 59.



Additionally, in some communities, individuals with mental health issues may be ridiculed, humiliated and ostracised.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for individuals with mental health issues to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Negative perception by the society:** stigma surrounding mental health issues might be an obstacle for seeking help. Possible reactions of communities may force individuals with mental health issues to try to conceal their condition.
- **Nature and visibility of the mental health issue:** in light of the high prevalence of mental health issues among the Afghan population, its seriousness, visibility, and likelihood of leading to behaviours deviating from social and religious norms should be taken in due consideration.



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

With regard to persons living with noticeable mental health issues, where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated, it is highly likely to be for reasons of **membership of a particular social group**, defined by an innate characteristic or a common background and distinct identity linked to their stigmatisation by the surrounding society. Depending on the circumstances, disability could be a characteristic for the purpose of defining a particular social group ⁽²³⁾.

⁽²³⁾ See Recital 40 QR 'It is equally necessary to introduce a common concept of the persecution ground 'membership of a particular social group'. For the purpose of defining a particular social group, issues arising from an applicant's sexual orientation or gender, including gender identity and gender expression, which could be related to certain legal traditions and customs, resulting in, for example, genital mutilation, forced sterilisation or forced abortion, should be given due consideration in so far as they are related to the applicant's well-founded fear of being persecuted. Depending on the circumstances, disability could be a characteristic for the purpose of defining a particular social group'. [Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1347](#).



3.18. Afghans who were born in Iran or Pakistan and/or who lived there for a long period of time

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 1.4.1., 1.4.3.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 1.2.5.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

In general, the treatment faced by individuals under this profile would not amount to persecution. More specifically, the *de facto* authorities have responded to the large-scale return from Pakistan and Iran by making efforts to support returnees. Sources indicate that returnees, despite having faced some discrimination and challenges to fit in, have been generally treated well. Two surveys on the situation of returnees in Afghanistan found that 98 % of respondents had not experienced physical security issues in their communities. However, individuals falling under certain profiles such as [Members of the security institutions of the former government](#), [Critics of the Taliban including protesters, activists, human rights defenders, and human rights lawyers](#), [Journalists and other media workers](#), [Women and girls](#), [Ethnic and religious minorities](#), [Persons with diverse SOGIESC](#), might be exposed to human rights violations upon being involuntarily returned to Afghanistan.

In addition, the hardship faced by returnees from Pakistan and Iran – including accessing adequate shelter, income, food, clean water, and healthcare – fails to meet the requirement of Article 6 QR regarding the existence of an actor that inflicts persecution or serious harm, and therefore cannot be qualified as an act amounting to persecution, unless the individual is intentionally deprived of basic services, access to the labour and housing market.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The mere fact of being an Afghan returning from Iran or Pakistan would in general not substantiate a well-founded fear of persecution. **Should an individual falling under this profile be targeted, it would be related to other circumstances than the mere fact of being an Afghan returning from Iran or Pakistan.**



In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that, in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see [3.13. Women and girls](#).



4. Subsidiary protection

This chapter addresses the EU-regulated status of subsidiary protection. Where the applicant has been found not to qualify as a refugee, they may be eligible for subsidiary protection in accordance with Article 15 QR.



The CJEU ruled in 2023 on **the importance of the personal circumstances when determining if an applicant is eligible for subsidiary protection, before identifying the type of serious harm**, notably ⁽²⁴⁾:

‘Article 15 of Directive 2011/95/EU [...] must be interpreted as meaning that in order to determine whether an applicant for international protection is eligible for subsidiary protection, **the competent national authority must examine all the relevant factors**, relating both to the individual position and personal circumstances of the applicant and to the general situation in the country of origin, **before identifying the type of serious harm** that those factors may potentially substantiate’.

Therefore, where refugee status is not granted, **personal circumstances** (e.g. age, gender, professional and economic background, home area, potential vulnerabilities) **are still to be taken into account in the assessment of Article 15 QR**.



For further information on the **specific personal circumstances** which may be relevant to consider in the assessment of a **real risk of serious harm under Article 15 QR**, see relevant sections below.

4.1. Article 15(a) QR: death penalty or execution

Last update: June 2026



For general guidance on the country guidance approach to this section, see ‘EUA, [Article 15\(a\) QR: death penalty or execution](#) in *Country Guidance: explained*, February 2026’.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 1.; [Country Focus 2026](#), 1.2.8., 2.1., 2.5., 4.1.1., 4.1.2., 4.3.1., 4.3.2., 4.5.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 1.2.6., 4.3.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

⁽²⁴⁾ CJEU, judgment of 9 November 2023, *X and Y v Staatssecretaris van Veiligheid en Justitie*, C-125/22, Fourth Chamber, operative part (Court’s ruling).



After the takeover, the Taliban reopened courts across Afghanistan but replaced former staff with male Taliban judges educated in madrassas. The interpretation of *sharia* has largely been left to individual judges, who enjoy almost complete authority in court proceedings. This has caused great variations in verdicts.

On 14 November 2022, the Taliban Supreme Leader ordered all *de facto* judges to fully implement *sharia*, and to issue so-called *hudud* and *qisas* punishments where applicable. Such punishments include execution, stoning, flogging and amputation. In March 2024, the Taliban Supreme Leader announced that the stoning sentence would be enforced for adultery. Since then, cases of women being sentenced to stoning, including a woman accused of having an 'illegitimate' child, have been recorded. In addition, at least 98 LGBTIQ+ persons were also sentenced to public punishment that included stoning and wall crushing, although only corporal punishments in the form of lashings have been enforced. Even if it was noted that almost no *hudud* sentences have been enforced, as they were pending approval from the Taliban Supreme Leader, executions have been carried out in public, including at sport stadiums.

Since the takeover, public executions of individuals convicted of murder have been recorded in the provinces of Badghis, Farah, Ghazni, Jawzjan, Laghman, Nimroz, and Paktia.

Extrajudicial killings have also been documented, in particular in the months following the takeover. However, former government officials and security personnel have continued to face retaliatory violence, including extrajudicial killings. Other incidents targeting women and children have been linked to Taliban members or unidentified individuals. During the first half of 2025, at least 251 cases of people killed or injured 'in targeted, mysterious, and extrajudicial killings', many of which linked to Taliban members or unidentified individuals, were documented, representing a 30 % increase compared to the same period in the previous year.

Reportedly, individuals accused of cooperating with anti-Taliban groups, such as the NRF and the AFF, are considered as one of the primary targets of extrajudicial killings. In many cases, the Taliban were believed to have been involved in such killings. In their efforts to restrain the ISKP, the *de facto* authorities also targeted Salafi communities with reports of extrajudicial killings, beheadings, and other human rights violations.

Finally, in 2026, the *de facto* government issued a 'Criminal Procedure Code for Courts'. Although there is currently no available information about its implementation, it is reported that death penalty is envisaged in several situations, including as punishment for 'rebels', 'habitual homosexuals', 'spreaders of disorders' and 'wrongdoers'.



As indicated under [3. Refugee status](#), some profiles of applicants from Afghanistan may be at risk of death penalty or execution e.g., former [civilian](#) and [military personnel](#), [individuals perceived to have committed zina](#), [persons with diverse SOGIESC](#), [Individuals perceived as members or supporters of resistance groups](#) and [individuals with \(perceived\) affiliation to the ISKP](#), and if such risk is substantiated, and all the other qualification criteria under refugee status are met, those individuals would qualify for refugee status.



If nexus to a reason for persecution is not substantiated, Article 15(a) QR would apply. In some cases, the death penalty would have been imposed for a serious crime committed by the applicant, or for other acts falling within the exclusion grounds (Article 17 QR) and, therefore, exclusion should be examined (see [7. Exclusion](#)).

4.2. Article 15(b) QR: torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment



For general guidance on the country guidance approach to this section, see 'EUAA, [Article 15\(b\) QR: torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in the country of origin](#) in *Country Guidance: explained*, February 2026'.

4.2.1. Arbitrary arrests, illegal detention and prison conditions

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 4.1.1., 4.1.2., 4.1.3., 4.1.5., 4.3.1., Country Focus 2024, 4.1.2., 4.1.4., 4.3., 4.3.1., 4.4.2.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Arbitrary arrests and illegal detention by the *de facto* authorities have been documented for numerous groups of persons, *inter alia*, former government officials including former ANDSF members and former [civil](#), military and [security personnel](#), [individuals suspected of supporting resistance groups](#) or the [ISKP](#), in the context of [women's](#) peaceful protest against restrictions imposed by the *de facto* authorities, as well as for [Persons with diverse SOGIESC](#), [media professionals](#), [civil society activists and human rights defenders](#), and [individuals being accused of promoting atheism or other religions than Islam](#).

Following the enactment of the 'Morality law', MPVPV enforcers arbitrarily arrested persons perceived as having violated the regulations of the law, including those not complying with the dress codes for women and men. Reportedly, half of all arbitrary arrests made by the *de facto* MPVPV in the six months following the enactment of the law were related to non-compliant beards and hairstyles.

In general, there has been a significant increase in arbitrary arrests. In the first six months of 2025, an organisation recorded 1 509 cases compared to 614 in the same period in 2024 and 222 in 2023.

Human rights organisations do not have access to detention facilities in Afghanistan, but torture and other forms of ill-treatment are reportedly common practice at such sites. Various forms of ill-treatment inflicting severe physical and psychological pain have been documented, including beatings, waterboarding, electrocution, and sexual harassment of women detainees. Such abuses are committed to extract confessions and information, intimidate, punish, and humiliate detainees, as well as to punish protesters and retaliate against former government employees – in particular those considered opponents or critics of the Taliban. Other sources

have also reported on torture of detained persons, as well as rape and sexual violence, especially against detained women.

Detainees are reportedly also being held in inadequate facilities, including kindergartens, district administration buildings, containers, basements, and toilets. Moreover, many facilities lack adequate ventilation and lighting as well as basic amenities for ‘cleanliness, sleeping, washing, and personal hygiene’. Some detainees only receive water and bread during their detention. Other issues such as over-crowding, lack of access to legal aid for vulnerable detainees, including women, and prolonged pretrial detention have also been recorded.



As indicated under [3. Refugee status](#), some profiles of applicants from Afghanistan may be at risk of arbitrary arrest, illegal detention and harsh prison conditions, e.g., [members of the security institutions of the former government](#), [public officials and servants of the former government and judicial system](#), [individuals perceived as members or supporters of resistance groups](#), [human rights defenders, activists, and protesters](#), [journalists](#), [humanitarian workers](#), [individuals perceived to have transgressed religious, moral and/or societal norms](#), [individuals from ethnic and religious minorities](#), and [persons with diverse SOGIESC](#). If such risk is substantiated and all the other qualification criteria under refugee status are met, those individuals would qualify for refugee status.

For other individuals, if conditions of arrest and/or detention amount to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and there is no nexus to a reason for persecution, Article 15(b) QR would apply.

In some cases, the arrest, detention and imprisonment would have been imposed for a serious crime committed by the applicant, or for other acts falling within the exclusion grounds (Article 17 QR) and, therefore, exclusion should be examined. See [7. Exclusion](#).

4.2.2. Corporal punishments

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 1., 2.; [Country Focus 2026](#), 1.2.8.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 1.2.6.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Since the Taliban Supreme Leader ordered all *de facto* judges to fully implement *sharia* and to issue so-called *hudud* and *qisas* punishments where applicable, *de facto* courts have been handing down floggings and amputations of the limbs.

Floggings have been used as supplementary punishments to imprisonment and as punishment for moral crimes such as ‘running away from home’ for women, same-sex sexual relations between men, and extramarital relations, and reportedly also for theft, drinking alcohol and drug trafficking. Moreover, the ‘Criminal Procedure Code for Courts’, issued in February 2026, reportedly provides that ‘those who insult the Taliban leaders’ will be punished with 20 lashes and six months imprisonment. In some cases, large groups have been lashed all at once, and floggings have been carried out in public – including in sport

stadiums. Reportedly, in particular ‘moral crimes’ were punished in public, with *de facto* MPVPV officials and imams advertising these events to attract crowds.

Collected data suggest a significant increase in floggings: namely 326 people were flogged in the first six months of 2025, including 64 women. This represents more than a two-fold increase compared to the same period in 2024, and more than a four-fold increase since 2023. In the period 1 January–30 September 2025, UNAMA recorded corporal punishment against 656 individuals (518 men, 131 women, 5 girls and 2 boys). In the period 1 October–31 December 2025, 287 individuals were flogged according to UNAMA’s records, including 253 men, 30 women, three boys and one girl.



Corporal punishments, such as those described above, would meet the requirements of serious harm under Article 15(b) QR.

Where there is no nexus to a reason for persecution under the refugee definition, and there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for the individual to be subjected to corporal punishment, this risk would qualify under Article 15(b) QR.

In some cases, the corporal punishments would have been imposed for a serious crime committed by the applicant, or for other acts falling within the exclusion grounds (Article 17 QR) and, therefore, exclusion should be examined. See [7. Exclusion.](#)

4.2.3. Criminal violence

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 2.5.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 2.5.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

There are no crime statistics available in Afghanistan, and available reporting on armed crime ‘has not been sufficiently systematic to allow reliable estimates of the scale’.

Following the Taliban takeover, some sources suggested that crime levels increased, and high levels of violent crimes committed by armed groups were reported across the country, including threats, kidnappings and armed robberies. Other sources noted that *de facto* officials had been involved in violent crimes against the population, including kidnappings for ransom, robberies, and crime under the pretext of house searches, while some robberies were allegedly committed by individuals dressed as Taliban or wearing *de facto* security-personnel uniforms.

In 2024 an Afghan analyst reported that the situation concerning violent crime had significantly improved, although it had not been completely suppressed. By contrast, during 2025, some media outlets reported that violent crimes, such as robberies, targeted killings and kidnappings, had increased in many parts of the country, including in Kabul City. Some of these sources attributed this rise to unemployment levels, lack of job opportunities, economic hardship and poverty, as well as to ‘weak law enforcement’. The *de facto* authorities have reportedly carried out arrests for some incidents relating to violent crimes. However,

according to Afghan media in exile, despite claims of combatting violent crime and providing security, the *de facto* authorities did not provide effective protection.

A real risk of a violent crime, such as kidnapping, would meet the requirements under Article 15(b) QR.



Personal circumstances such as the social and economic situation of the applicant and their home area (with those from big urban areas exposed to higher risk) are to be taken into account for the assessment of real risk of criminal violence.

Where there is no nexus to a reason for persecution under the refugee definition, but there is a real risk for such a violent crime, Article 15(b) QR would apply.

4.2.4. Healthcare and socio-economic conditions

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 2.; [Country Focus 2026](#), 3.5.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 3.1., 3.2., 3.3., 3.5.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The Afghan healthcare system, undermined by long-lasting conflict, has been further struck by the cuts to international aid, on which it had become dramatically dependent, and by an insufficient dedicated State budget. The health system is also impacted by outbreaks of infectious diseases and by natural disasters causing severe injuries. About 33 % of the population (over 14 million people) are underserved in terms of healthcare access, in particular rural communities.

Many Afghans face economic barriers to access healthcare and the general ability to pay for healthcare has worsened since the takeover. In addition, *de facto* authorities have introduced fees for public healthcare also in public institutions that are supposed to provide free healthcare. Therefore, patients may have to pay for basic services, including child delivery, surgeries, and medicines, if supplies are short. Women and children (in particular women in poor and rural areas and those with disabilities) have been disproportionately affected by the deterioration in healthcare access. Restrictions on women's travel and the requirement of a *mahram* for both female medical staff and female patients have posed additional barriers to women's access to healthcare. Although the *de facto* Minister of Communications announced that male doctors are to be considered as *mahram* when treating female patients, in many provinces women still needed a *mahram* to be able to be seen by a male doctor.

The prohibition on women taking university courses and medical training furthermore blocks new generations of female doctors, nurses and midwives from graduating, further aggravating the very limited availability of female health professionals.

Moreover, the decades of conflict, the persistent economic crisis, and natural disasters have pushed large parts of the Afghan population into poverty. With unemployment levels rising in recent years, especially among women and youth, the private sector has been one of few alternatives for working women, but restrictions on gender mixing have been excluding women from many jobs and restricted many to home-based self-employment.

Returnees face multiple challenges upon arrival, including accessing adequate shelter, income, food, clean water, and healthcare and are competing with the local population about access to those resources.

Food insecurity is also widespread in the country. In particular, child malnutrition reportedly increased after the Taliban takeover and has continued to increase amid the decreasing foreign aid.



It is important to note that serious harm must take the form of conduct of an actor (Article 6 QR). In itself, unless there is intentional conduct of an actor, the general unavailability of healthcare or other socio-economic elements is not considered serious harm meeting the requirements of inhuman or degrading treatment under Article 15(b) QR ⁽²⁵⁾.

Personal circumstances such as the home area of the applicant as well as his/her gender, being in an IDP situation, and/or belonging to a minority are to be taken into account in the assessment of real risk of inhuman or degrading treatment based on the **socio-economic conditions**. Where there is an intentional conduct of an actor and no nexus to a reason for persecution is substantiated, the treatment may qualify under Article 15(b) QR, depending on the severity of its consequences in the individual case.

4.2.5. Forced evictions

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026, 4.8.4., 4.8.5., 4.8.7.](#); [Country Focus 2024, 4.6.1., 4.6.3.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

After the Taliban takeover, conflict-induced displacement stopped almost completely. Most displacement taking place after 2021 has been induced by climate change and natural disasters. Nevertheless, 4.2 million people were estimated to live in internal displacement due to conflict and violence in 2024, and new movements were recorded in 2025 due to violence along the border with Pakistan, including following clashes between Pakistani security forces and Afghan *de facto* security forces.

Forced evictions and displacement of minority groups, including Hazaras, Tajiks, Uzbeks and Turkmens were reportedly facilitated or tolerated by the *de facto* authorities. Moreover, since 2021, the *de facto* authorities carried out forced evictions affecting in particular Hazaras, including in Kabul City where large areas were razed and many residential properties and informal settlements often inhabited by poorer or displaced families were demolished. Deaths and injuries have been alleged during eviction operations, which left thousands homeless. Other reports indicated that forced evictions and displacement have been carried out by the

⁽²⁵⁾ CJEU, judgement of 18 December 2014, [Mohamed M'Bodj v. État belge](#), C-542/13, Grand Chamber, paras. 35-36.



Taliban in the context of land seizure by groups perceived to be supported by the *de facto* authorities such as Kuchi nomads. See also [3.16.2. Land disputes](#).

Personal circumstances such as the home area and the ethnic background of the applicant as well as their gender and being in an IDP situation are to be taken into account for the assessment of real risk of **forced eviction**.



Where there is no nexus to a reason for persecution, but there is a real risk of being subjected to forced eviction, Article 15(b) QR may apply, depending on the severity of its consequences in the individual case.

4.3. Article 15(c) QR: indiscriminate violence in situations of armed conflict

Last update: June 2026



For general guidance on the country guidance approach to this section, see 'EUAA, [Article 15\(c\) QR: indiscriminate violence in situations of armed conflict](#) in *Country Guidance: explained*, February 2026'.

In armed conflicts, the targeting of civilians may have nexus to one of the reasons for persecution and, therefore, refugee status may be granted.

The assessment for the applicability of Article 15(c) QR is primarily based on the '[Country Focus 2026](#)' COI report, with **reference period 1 October 2024–30 November 2025**. Based on the [COI Update 2026](#), some indicators, mainly referring to data until **25 March 2026**, have been added during the finalisation of the document.



This guidance should be considered valid as long as current events and developments fall within the trends and patterns of violence observed within the reference period of the mentioned COI report. New events and developments that cause substantial changes, new trends or geographical shifts in the violence, may lead to a different assessment. The security situation in a given territory should always be assessed in light of the most up-to-date COI available.

All the below elements have to be fulfilled in order to grant subsidiary protection under Article 15(c) QR.



Figure 1. Article 15(c) QR: elements of the assessment



4.3.1. Armed conflict (international or internal)

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [COI Update 2026](#), 3.; [Country Focus 2026](#), [1.2.1.](#), [2.2.1.](#), [2.2.2.](#), [2.2.3.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

For information on the different state and non-state actors in Afghanistan, see [2. Actors of persecution or serious harm](#).

Several distinct armed conflicts take place in the territory of Afghanistan:

- **Armed conflict between the *de facto* authorities and resistance groups, including the NRF and the AFF:** following the Taliban takeover in 2021, levels of armed violence and civilian harm have declined significantly compared to previous years. Nevertheless, the *de facto* government continued to face armed opposition.
- **Armed conflict between the *de facto* authorities and the ISKP:** hostilities between the *de facto* authorities and the ISKP continued to be reported, although on a lower scale than in previous years. Intelligence-led counter-operations have significantly reduced the operational capacity of the group, whose presence is scattered across northern and northeastern provinces.
- **Armed conflict involving the *de facto* authorities and Pakistan:** *de facto* security forces have clashed with Pakistani border forces, causing casualties on both sides. Although most incidents occurred at (eastern and southeastern) border areas, Pakistan conducted several airstrikes on Kabul since October 2025. Despite the conclusion of temporary ceasefires, hostilities have continued, as of late March 2026.



Afghanistan is currently affected by two internal conflicts, in the meaning of Article 15(c) QR, notably between the *de facto* authorities and resistance groups as well as between the *de facto* authorities and the ISKP. Additionally, the *de facto* authorities are involved in a separate international armed conflict with Pakistan.



These conflicts affect different areas in Afghanistan at different degrees. It should, furthermore, be noted that the COI used as a basis for this assessment cannot be considered a complete representation of the extent of indiscriminate violence and its impact on the life of civilians.

In view of the ongoing conflict with Pakistan, the situation remains volatile and changes in trends may be observed in the future. It should be highlighted that the data is preliminary amid the conflict with Pakistan and that civilian deaths recorded during this period might increase.

See more under [2. Actors of persecution or serious harm](#) and [a\) Security situation in Afghanistan: recent events](#).

4.3.2. Qualification of a person as a ‘civilian’

Last update: June 2026



Being a civilian is a prerequisite in order to be able to benefit from protection under Article 15(c) QR. The purpose of the provision is to protect only those who are not taking part in the conflict. This includes the potential application of Article 15(c) QR to former combatants who have genuinely and permanently renounced armed activity.

Applications by Afghan nationals falling under the following profiles should be examined carefully. Based on an individual assessment, such applicants may be found not to qualify as civilians under Article 15(c) QR. For example:

- members of the Taliban and affiliated armed groups;
- members of resistance armed groups opposing the Taliban;
- members of the ISKP.



See also [2. Actors of persecution or serious harm](#).

Actively taking part in hostilities is not limited to openly carrying arms but could also include substantial logistical and/or administrative support to combatants.



Exclusion considerations may also apply. See [7. Exclusion](#).



4.3.3. Indiscriminate violence

Last update: June 2026



The common analysis regarding the level of indiscriminate violence combines quantitative and qualitative elements in a **holistic and inclusive assessment** which cannot exclusively depend on a minimum number of civilian casualties and deaths in the country of origin.

For more information on the methodology and indicators used to assess the level of indiscriminate violence in country guidance documents, see 'EUAA, [Indiscriminate violence](#) in *Country Guidance: explained*', February 2026'.

The COI used as a basis for this assessment cannot be considered a complete representation of the extent of indiscriminate violence and its impact on the life of civilians. Concerns with regard to underreporting, especially pertinent to the quantitative indicators, should be taken into account.

(a) Security situation in Afghanistan: recent events

Situation in Afghanistan

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI report and query: [COI Update 2026, 3.](#); [Country Focus 2026, 1.1.1, 1.2.1, 2.1, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

This section should be read in conjunction with [1. Recent developments](#)

UN sources have described the situation in the country following the Taliban's power seizure in 2021 as marked by a 'relative absence of armed conflict'. A comparison of ACLED data covering the same January–November period in 2024 and 2025 suggests a further decrease in violence levels. More specifically, violence related to insurgence groups, such as the NRF and the AFF, has generally decreased, after peaking in 2022. With regard to the ISKP, it is reported that its capabilities have weakened after operations of the *de facto* authorities against the group. The number of ISKP attacks decreased significantly since 2023.

Cross-border clashes, including airstrikes, with Pakistan have taken place along the shared eastern and southeastern border, and both sides have significantly increased troop presence along the border. In March 2026, the situation escalated significantly, as hostilities intensified and spread geographically. At least 10 provinces, including major urban centres, were affected by Pakistani attacks.

Presence, methods and tactics of actors

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI report and query: [COI Update 2026, 3.](#); [Country Focus 2026, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.3, 2.4.](#) Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

For a general overview of the main actors of persecution or serious harm please refer to [2. Actors of persecution or serious harm.](#)



Armed conflicts in Afghanistan involve a range of state and non-state actors employing distinct but sometimes overlapping tactics. **The Taliban**, as the *de facto* authorities, primarily rely on conventional security operations, such as checkpoints, intelligence-led arrests, targeted raids, and the use of specialised units. Their methods also include intimidation, detention, as well as restrictions on movement and communication in areas of interest. In the ongoing conflict, the Taliban have carried out retaliatory operations against Pakistani military positions, conducted airstrikes and engaged in armed clashes with Pakistani military forces.

Resistance groups in Afghanistan, primarily the AFF and the NRF, generally operate through asymmetric tactics, including hit-and-run attacks, ambushes, small-arms fire, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and targeted assassinations, conducted both in urban and rural areas. Their attacks are directed against the *de facto* security forces; nevertheless, these groups have been involved also in events in which civilians were harmed. Their presence is typically fragmented and geographically limited, and they rely on local support networks rather than sustained territorial control.

The **ISKP**, in its sporadic attacks, has mainly targeted the *de facto* authorities, but also religious minorities, including the Hazara community. It employs high-impact asymmetric violence aimed at maximising casualties and publicity. Typical tactics include suicide bombings, targeted killings, and attacks against civilian gatherings, religious minorities, and symbolic or high-profile locations.

Pakistan's involvement is primarily cross-border and state-based, centred on air and artillery capabilities rather than sustained ground presence inside Afghanistan. Reported tactics include airstrikes, drone strikes, mortar and artillery fire, and border-area shelling in response to security incidents or perceived militant threats. Armed confrontations, although usually concentrated near the eastern and southeastern border, have also affected targets further into Afghanistan. Amid heightened hostilities, in March 2026, Pakistan has launched multiple airstrikes across the country, including on Kabul City (for more information see [4.3.3. \(b\) Assessment of indiscriminate violence per province](#)).

Security incidents and geographical scope

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI reports and query: [COI Update 2026](#), 3., Annex 1.; [Country Focus 2026](#), [2.1.](#), [2.2.1.](#), [2.2.2.](#), [2.2.3.](#), [2.3.](#); [Country Focus 2024](#), 2.1.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.



Data concerning this indicator are based on ACLED reporting from **1 October 2024 to 20 March 2026** ⁽²⁶⁾. For more information on the methodologies of data collection see [Afghanistan: Country Focus 2026](#), [Sources](#).

According to ACLED data, **in total 971 security incidents** occurred across Afghanistan during the 14 months period **1 October 2024–30 November 2025** (compared to 799 incidents during the previous 12-months). Of these incidents, 336 were coded as battles, 168 as

⁽²⁶⁾ [Country Focus 2026](#) provides data for the reference period 1 October 2024–30 November 2025. [COI Update 2026](#) provides data for the reference period 1 December 2025–20 March 2026, as well as data on events codified as 'violence against civilians' in the provinces of Kabul, Badakhshan, Baghlan, Kunduz, and Takhar within the longer reference period 1 October 2025–20 March 2026.



explosions/remote violence and 467 as instances of violence against civilians. In this last category, it is noted that at least 80 % of incidents involved *de facto* security forces as the perpetrating actor (e.g. arrests and use of excessive violence).

Additionally, according to ACLED, **in total 347 security incidents** occurred across Afghanistan during the period **1 December 2025–20 March 2026**: 108 were coded as battles, 156 as explosions or remote violence, and 83 as instances of violence against civilians.

- **1 October 2024–30 November 2025:**

The highest numbers of security incidents were recorded by ACLED in **Kabul province** (155), followed by **Kunduz** (71), **Herat** (69), **Takhar** (65), **Nangarhar** (63) and **Badakhshan** (54).

Armed resistance groups were featured as perpetrating actors in ‘battles’ and ‘explosions/remote violence’ across several provinces, including Kabul (61), Kunduz (59), Herat (33), and Takhar (25). Sources, including UNAMA, indicate that in a few incidents some civilians were injured and killed, while ACLED reports that resistance groups were only targeting the *de facto* security forces.

Within the same reference period, the **ISKP** was the apparent perpetrating actor in 13 events, most of which involved the provinces of Baghlan (3), Nangarhar (3), and Kabul (2).

Moreover, ACLED recorded 107 events involving **Pakistani and Afghan *de facto* security forces** - almost half of which took place in October 2025 - mainly along the eastern and southeastern border.

According to ACLED the ***de facto* security forces** were the main perpetrator of acts of ‘violence against civilians’. These incidents are not necessarily linked to an armed conflict.

- **1 December 2025–20 March 2026:**

By contrast, in the most recent reference period, the majority of the security incidents, according to ACLED, were recorded in **provinces bordering Pakistan along the Durand line**, as well as in **Kabul**. Event details suggest that the **Pakistani and Afghan *de facto* military forces** were behind the majority of recorded events (105 out of 115), and in 94 events civilians were being targeted.

Perpetrating actors included also **unidentified armed groups** (30 events), **as well as the AFF** (15), and **the NRF** (13). The above-mentioned actors were responsible for events categorised as ‘battles’ and ‘explosion/remote violence’ in various provinces, including Kunduz (13), Kabul (6), Herat (5), Nangarhar (2), Badakhshan (2), and Takhar (2). They were also involved in acts of ‘violence against civilians’, particularly in Kabul (4), Badakhshan (3), and Kandahar (3).

Within the same reference period, six or seven civilian deaths were attributed to an attack involving the ISKP. This entailed an explosion at a restaurant in Kabul City on 19 January 2026.



Figure 2: Breakdown by province of number of security events recorded by ACLED, between 1 October 2024 and 30 November 2025

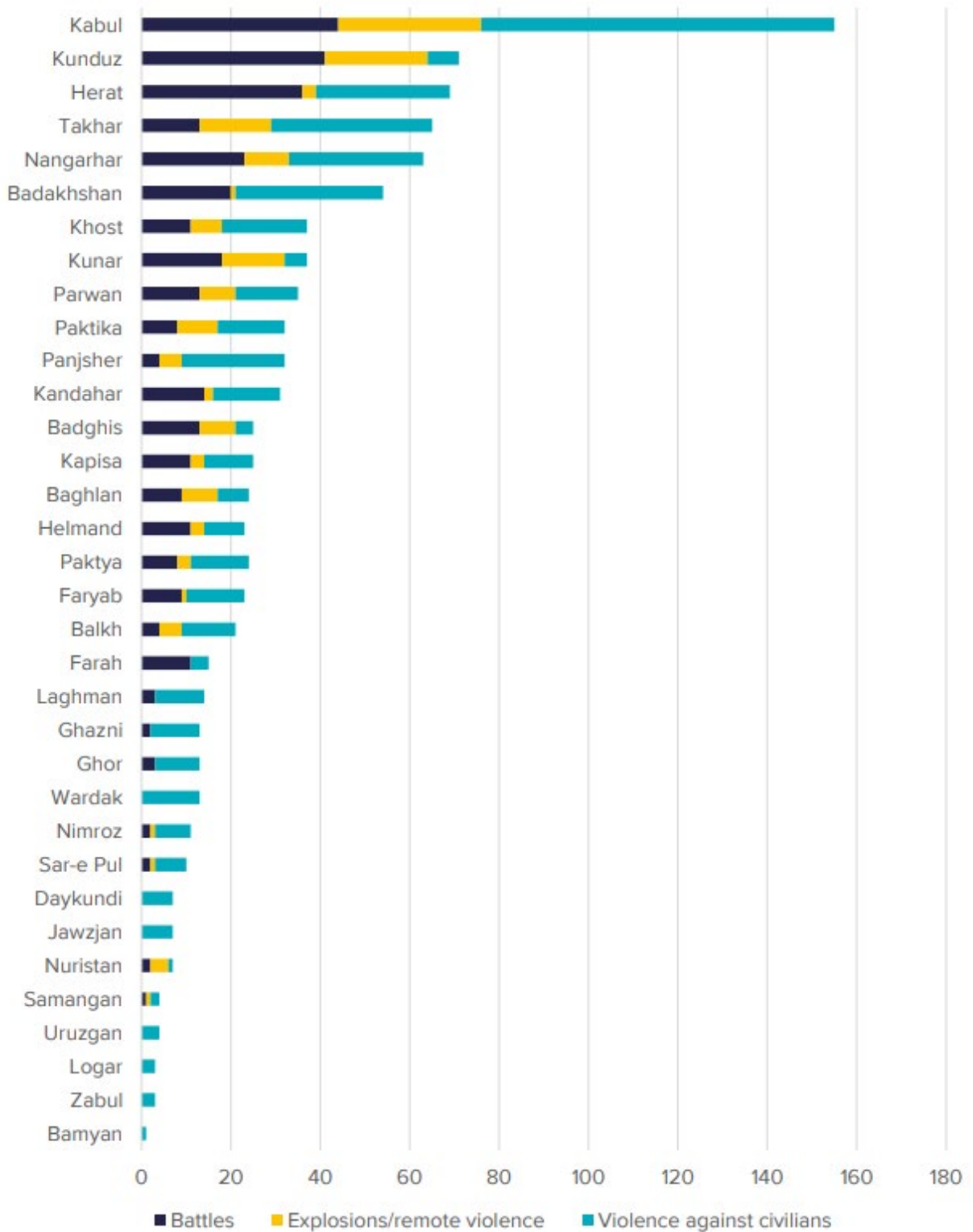
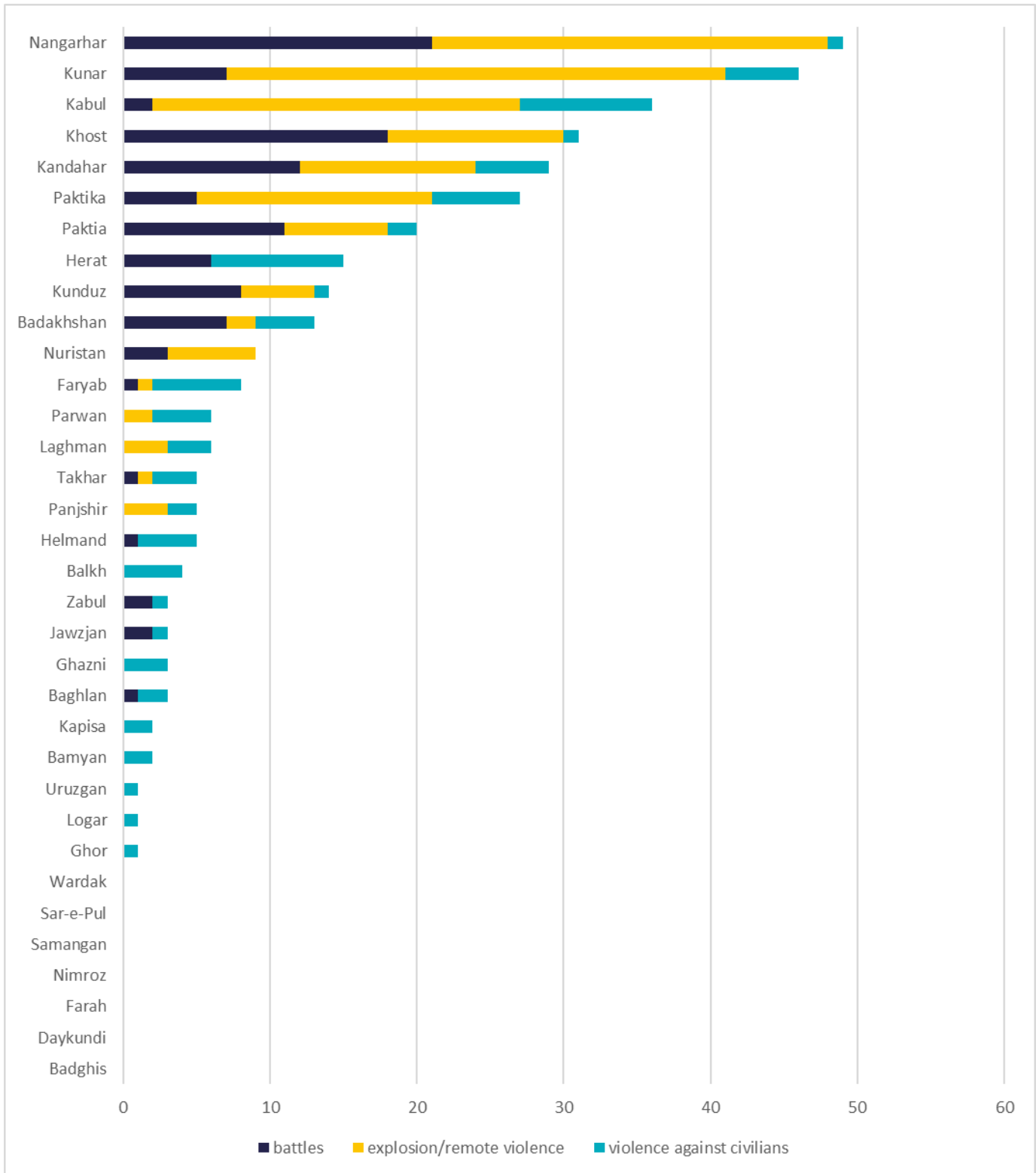


Figure 3: Breakdown by province of number of security events recorded by ACLED, between 1 December 2025 and 20 March 2026





Civilian deaths

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI report: [COI Update 2026](#), 3., Annex 1.; [Country Focus 2026](#), [2.1.](#), [2.2.1.](#), [2.2.2.](#), [2.2.3.](#), [2.3.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.



Data concerning this indicator are primarily based on UCDP (data collection project for civil war) reporting from **1 October 2024 to 20 March 2026**.

UCDP provides an estimate of the number of civilian deaths. According to UCDP, 'it is quite likely that there are more fatalities than given in the best estimate, but it is very unlikely that there are fewer'. For more information on the methodologies of data collection see [Country Focus 2026](#), [Sources](#).

Amid the ongoing conflict with Pakistan, and regarding the data for the period 1 December 2025–20 March 2026, as referenced in the [COI Update 2026](#), caution should be given to the fact that the data is preliminary and that the records of civilian deaths recorded during this period might increase.

During the period **1 October 2024–30 November 2025**, UCDP recorded **in total 412 civilian deaths** (including 13 which could not be attributed to a specific province), caused by security incidents across Afghanistan. The highest numbers were recorded in Paktika (67), Kandahar (48), Badakhshan (37) and Kabul (26).

As regards **violence against civilians**, UCDP data covering 2025 (as of November), compared to data covering the same period in 2024 suggest a 33 % decrease in civilian deaths (down to 287 from 426 deaths).

Another source similarly noted a decline in civilian casualties from '**explosive and suicide attacks**', with 11 civilian deaths and 35 injured recorded in the **first six months of 2025**, constituting respectively a 33.3 % and 50 % decrease from the same period in 2024 and 2023.

During the period **1 October 2024 - 30 November 2025**, UCPD documented 37 civilian deaths caused by events involving Pakistan, 32 of which were recorded in Kandahar province. UN sources further noted 503 civilian casualties, with 50 killed and 453 injured due to air strikes and cross-border shelling.

Moreover, UCDP attributed 20 civilian deaths to events involving the ISKP, and five civilian deaths to events involving the *de facto* government and resistance groups.

In comparison, during the period **1 December 2025–20 March 2026**, UCDP recorded in total **360 civilian deaths**, mainly as a result of the renewed conflict with Pakistan which included, *inter alia*, some high-casualty attacks such as the attack in Kabul City's drug rehabilitation centre on 16 March 2026. Additionally, 33 civilian deaths were caused by events involving resistance groups and unidentified armed groups. Six civilian deaths were attributed to an attack involving the ISKP.



Figure 4: Breakdown by province of number of civilian deaths recorded by UCDP, between 1 October 2024 and 30 November 2025

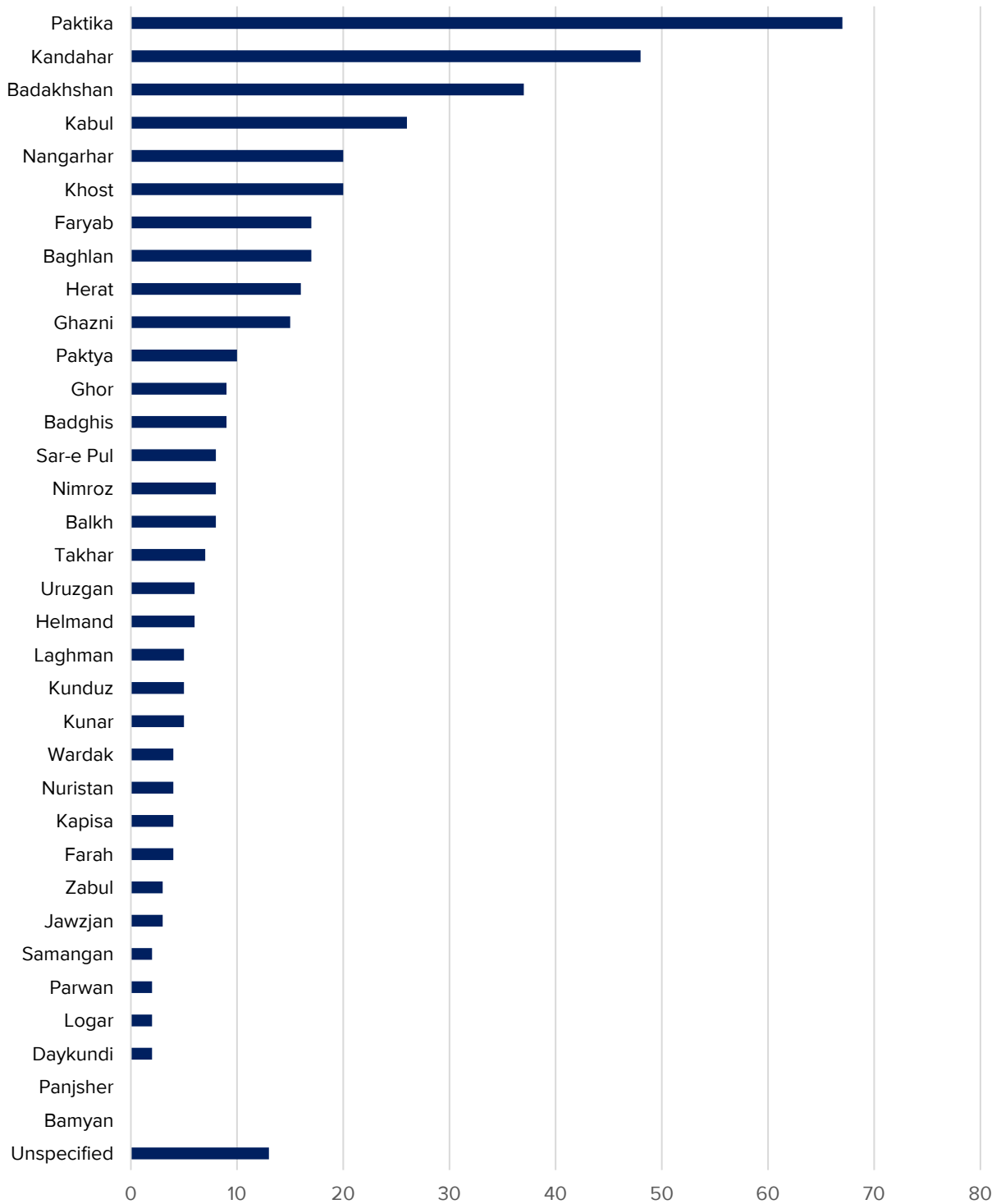
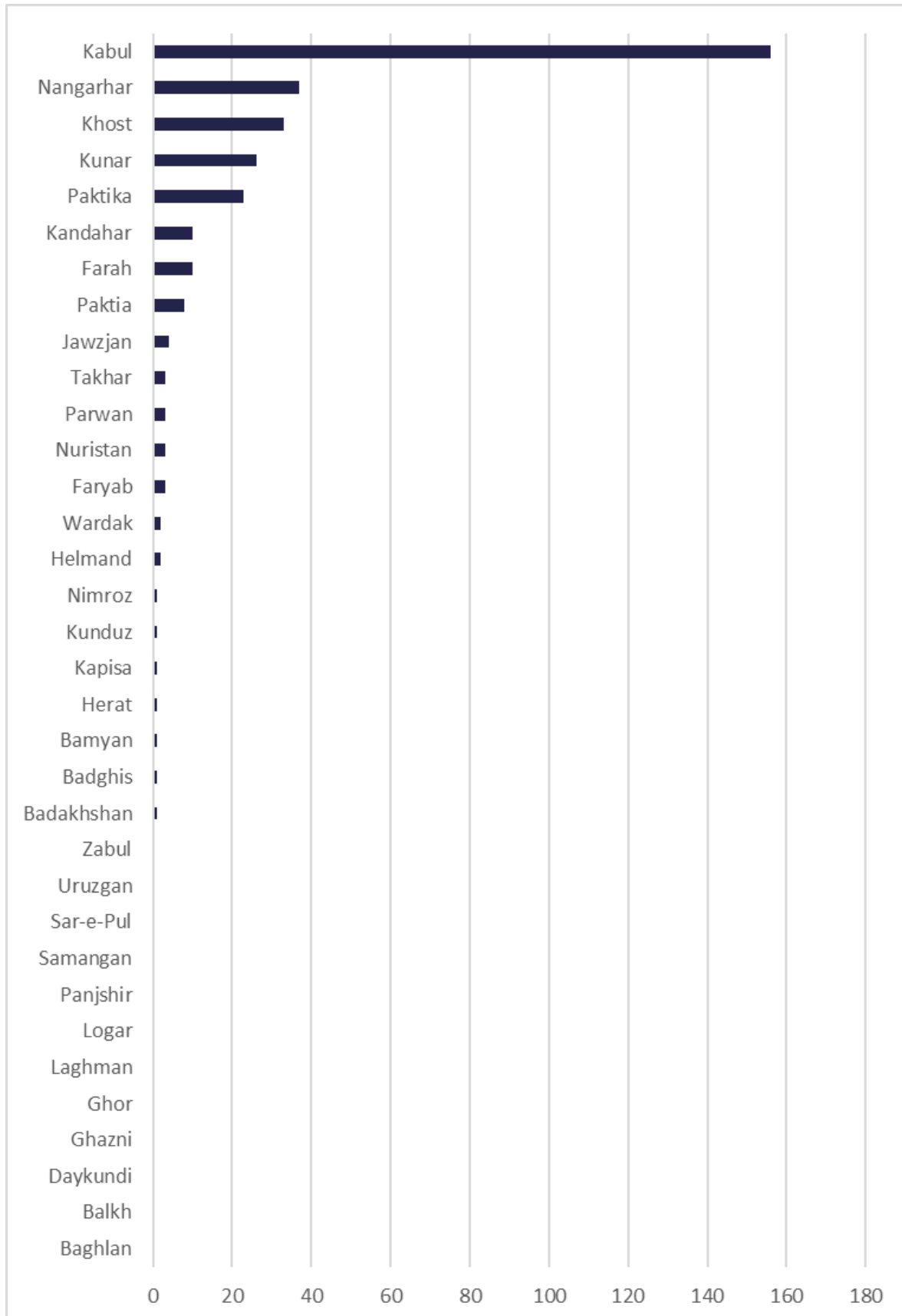




Figure 5: Breakdown by province of number of civilian deaths recorded by UCDP, between 1 December 2025 and 20 March 2026



Conflict-related displacement

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI report: [COI Update 2026](#), 3.; [Country Focus 2026](#), [2.2.3.](#), [2.3.](#), [2.3.1.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The conflict between the Taliban and the former government has caused large displacements. Following the Taliban takeover, many of the internally displaced persons had returned to their place of origin, although an estimated 4.2 million people were still living in internal displacement in 2024. According to IDMC (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre), conflict-induced displacement has almost entirely stopped. Although most displacement taking place after 2021 has been induced by climate change and natural disasters, 3 200 displacement movements were recorded in 2024 due to violence along the border with Pakistan, mainly in Khost province. In 2025, UNOCHA recorded 7 467 conflict-induced displacements in the provinces of Nangarhar and Kunar. It was also stated that 20 000 families have been displaced from Spin Boldak (Kandahar) following Pakistani airstrikes in October 2025.

Amid hostilities between Pakistan and the Afghan *de facto* authorities, in the period **26 February–3 March 2026**, UN OCHA recorded families being displaced in the following provinces: Paktia (7 000), Kunar (3 000), Khost (2 500), Nangarhar (2 500), Paktika (470), and Nuristan (400). Approximately 163 590 people lived in displacement in the provinces of Paktia, Kunar, Khost, Nangarhar, Paktika, and Nuristan, including 7 000 families that were displaced after the earthquake in Kunar in late August 2025. According to IOM, nearly 66 000 people were displaced in eastern and southeastern Afghanistan due to the conflict with Pakistan. In the following weeks, UN OCHA further noted that displacement continued, as reports indicated that 115 000 people had been displaced.

Further impact on civilians

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI report: [COI Update 2026](#), 3., 4.; [Country Focus 2026](#), [2.1.](#), [3.1.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Years of conflict have resulted in significant damage to infrastructure. Despite reconstruction efforts, the need for humanitarian assistance persists in Afghanistan, particularly for those returning to their home villages.

Afghanistan is highly contaminated with landmines and explosive remnants of war, especially in the countryside. Children account for the majority of victims. In the year preceding 5 September 2025, the UN recorded 49 civilian deaths due to unexploded ordnances.

The ongoing conflict with Pakistan has further damaged civilian infrastructure, including health facilities, humanitarian sites, an IOM transit centre, a telecommunications tower, border crossings and shops in their proximity. The closing of the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan in October 2025 has halted trade exchanges and prevented many Afghans from buying ‘basic medicine’, as over 70 % of medicines used in Afghanistan was imported from Pakistan.

Furthermore, movement restrictions and the ongoing conflict with Pakistan have suspended humanitarian operations providing food assistance in Helmand, Kandahar, Khost, Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar, Nuristan, Paktika, Paktia and Zabul. Analogously, education as well as health and nutrition services have been disrupted or suspended.

(b) Assessment of indiscriminate violence per province

Last update: June 2026

The map below summarises and illustrates the assessment of the level of indiscriminate violence per province:

Figure 6: Level of indiscriminate violence in Afghanistan (based on information up to 25 March 2026)



Mere presence

Areas where the degree of **indiscriminate violence reaches such an exceptionally high level** that substantial grounds are shown for believing that a civilian, returned to the relevant area, would, **solely on account of their presence there**, face a real risk of being subject to the serious threat referred to in Article 15(c) QR.

Accordingly, additional individual elements are not required in order to substantiate subsidiary protection needs under Article 15(c) QR.

No such areas were identified in Afghanistan.

High level of indiscriminate violence

Areas where 'mere presence' would not be sufficient to establish a real risk of serious harm under Article 15(c) QR, but where, **indiscriminate violence reaches a high level**. Accordingly, a **lower level of individual elements** (See [4.3.4. Serious and individual threat](#)) is required to



show substantial grounds for believing that a civilian, returned to the area, would face a real risk of serious harm in the meaning of Article 15(c) QR.

No such areas were identified in Afghanistan

Indiscriminate violence not at a high level

Areas where indiscriminate violence is taking place, however **not at a high level**.

Accordingly, a **higher level of individual elements** (See [4.3.4. Serious and individual threat](#)) is required in order to show substantial grounds for believing that a civilian, returned to the area, would face a real risk of serious harm in the meaning of Article 15(c) QR.

The areas assessed as belonging to this category as well as the main elements leading to this assessment are highlighted below.

Kabul

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI report and query: [COI Update 2026, 3.](#), Annex 1., Annex 2.; [Country Focus 2026, 2.1.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

In Kabul province, **indiscriminate violence takes place, however not at a high level**. Notably, the situation is characterised by volatility in the context of the conflict with Pakistan, the absence of conflict-induced displacement, and a relatively moderate number of security incidents and civilian deaths.

In particular, Kabul City since August 2021 remains the most affected area by security incidents, largely due to its population size (over 6 million inhabitants in Kabul City and province) and concentration of high-profile *de facto* authorities. The security situation in Kabul has been characterised by incidents mainly involving the *de facto* security forces targeting civilians, and the NRF and AFF targeting the *de facto* security forces, as well as by the ongoing conflict with Pakistan.

During **1 October 2024–30 November 2025**, ACLED reported **155 security incidents** (44 battles, 32 remote violence/explosions, 79 instances of violence against civilians, representing 2.6 security incidents per week), mainly involving the *de facto* security forces targeting civilians, and the NRF and AFF targeting the *de facto* security forces. UCDP recorded **26 civilian deaths** in Kabul province, representing 0.4 civilian deaths per 100 000 inhabitants.

In the same period, perpetrating actors in security incidents included **armed resistance groups** in 'battles' and 'explosions/remote violence' in 61 events. Moreover, **ISKP** may have been responsible for two events. The **de facto GDI and security forces** conducted several operations killing alleged **ISKP** members in Kabul City.

During **1 December 2025–20 March 2026**, ACLED documented **36 security events** (2 battles, 25 remote violence/explosions, 9 instances of violence against civilians, amounting to 2.3 incidents per week). UCDP recorded **156 civilian deaths**, representing 3 civilian deaths per 100 000 inhabitants.





According to ACLED across both reference periods, Afghan *de facto* military or security forces and MPVPV were the main perpetrator of acts of ‘violence against civilians’ (88 events). These incidents were not necessarily linked to an armed conflict. A few incidents involved also unidentified armed groups.

No displacement from Kabul was observed.

Kabul was among the provinces impacted by airstrikes between **Pakistan** and the Afghan *de facto* authorities. Following the breach of a ceasefire, Pakistani airstrikes were reported in Kabul City since 27 February 2026, while the city was also hit by ‘drone strikes, anti-aircraft gunfire and explosions’ in March 2026. As of 20 March 2026, Pakistan had bombed Kabul city five times since October 2025, and hostilities appeared to have abated after the latest incident. However, UN OCHA reported that, as of 18 March 2026, there were no clear signs of de-escalation in the conflict.

Kandahar, Khost, Kunar, Nangarhar, Paktika, Paktia

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI report and query: [COI Update 2026](#), 3., Annex 1., Annex 2.; [Country Focus 2026](#), 2.1., 3.1.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

In the eastern and southeastern provinces bordering with Pakistan, namely **Kandahar, Khost, Kunar, Nangarhar, Paktika, Paktia**, **indiscriminate violence takes place, however not at a high level**. In particular, the situation is characterised by a relatively moderate number of security incidents and civilian deaths, mostly resulting from the volatile conflict between the *de facto* security forces and Pakistani forces, as well as by reported low numbers of conflict-induced displacement.

In the provinces of **Kandahar, Khost, Kunar, Nangarhar, Paktika**, and **Paktia**, a large share of events during the period **1 October 2024–20 March 2026** involved *de facto* security forces targeting civilians but also, increasingly, fighting against the Pakistani security forces. These provinces, located along the border with Pakistan, were affected by airstrikes and cross-border violence, contributing to an increase in security incidents and civilian deaths throughout the reference period.

Between **1 October 2024** and **30 November 2025**, in **Kandahar** perpetrating actors in security incidents mostly involved Pakistani security forces targeting civilians and the *de facto* security forces. Also, several events involved the *de facto* security forces targeting civilians. In a few events ISKP attacked *de facto* security forces in **Nangarhar** and **Kunar**, while in the same provinces the *de facto* intelligence and security forces had carried out several operations killing alleged ISKP members. A large share of civilian deaths was caused by Pakistani airstrikes in **Kandahar** and **Khost**, as well as in **Paktika**, where Pakistani airstrikes also caused damage to several shops in a civilian market.

In early 2026, hostilities between Pakistan and the Afghan *de facto* authorities escalated. On 21 February 2026, the ceasefire broke down, and Pakistan conducted airstrikes in Afghanistan against alleged TTP positions. In the first 12 days of March 2026, there were close to daily reports of airstrikes and cross border clashes. For example, between 1–2 March 2026, cross-border fire was reported from 25 different locations in 24 hours, along the shared borders in the provinces of **Kunar, Nangarhar** and **Khost**, highlighting the continued impact of cross-



border activity. Moreover, the Spin Boldak and Takta Pul areas in **Kandahar** were described as ‘high-risk areas’ for humanitarian staff. Airports have been also hit by the airstrikes, such as a civilian airport in **Kandahar**, and the Jalalabad airport in **Nangarhar**. The intensity of attacks was high in March 2026; **Kunar**, based on information by local *de facto* authorities, experienced an additional 124 rocket attacks in a timeframe of 24 hours.

Amid hostilities in the period 26 February–3 March 2026, UN OCHA recorded the displacement of 16 370 families, including in Paktia (7 000), Kunar (3 000), Khost (2 500), Nangarhar (2 500), and Paktika (470).

Scale and trends of violence:

In **Kandahar**, during **1 October 2024–30 November 2025** ACLED recorded 31 security incidents (14 battles, 2 explosions/remote violence incidents and 15 incidents of violence against civilians, representing 0.5 security incidents per week). UCDP recorded 48 civilian deaths, representing 3.1 civilian casualties per 100 000 inhabitants. During **1 December 2025–20 March 2026**, ACLED registered 29 security incidents (12 battles, 12 explosions/remote violence, 5 instances of violence against civilians, representing 1.9 security incidents per week). UCDP recorded 10 civilian deaths, representing 1 civilian death per 100 000 inhabitants.

In **Khost**, during **1 October 2024–30 November 2025** ACLED recorded 37 security incidents (11 battles, 7 explosions/remote violence incidents, and 19 instances of violence against civilians, representing 0.6 security incidents per week). UCDP recorded 20 civilian deaths, representing 2.9 civilian deaths per 100 000 inhabitants. During **1 December 2025–20 March 2026**, ACLED documented 31 security incidents (18 battles, 12 explosions/remote violence, 1 instance of violence against civilians, representing 2 security incidents per week). UCDP recorded 33 civilian deaths, which amounted to 5 civilian deaths per 100 000 inhabitants.

In **Kunar**, during **1 October 2024–30 November 2025** ACLED recorded 37 security incidents (18 battles, 14 explosions/remote violence incidents and 5 incidents of violence against civilians, representing 0.6 security incidents per week). UCDP recorded 5 civilian deaths, representing 0.9 civilian casualties per 100 000 inhabitants. During **1 December 2025–20 March 2026**, ACLED documented 46 security incidents (7 battles, 34 explosions/remote violence, 5 instances of violence against civilians, representing 3 security incidents per week). UCDP recorded 26 civilian deaths, amounting to 5 civilian deaths per 100 000 inhabitants.

In **Nangarhar**, during **1 October 2024–30 November 2025** ACLED recorded 63 security incidents (23 battles, 10 explosions/remote violence incidents and 30 incidents of violence against civilians, representing 1 security incident per week). UCDP recorded 20 civilian deaths, representing 1.1 civilian casualties per 100 000 inhabitants. During **1 December 2025–20 March 2026**, ACLED reported 49 security incidents (21 battles, 27 explosions/remote violence, 1 instance of violence against civilians, representing 3.1 security incidents per week). UCDP recorded 37 civilian deaths, corresponding to 2 civilian deaths per 100 000 inhabitants.

In **Paktia**, during **1 October 2024–30 November 2025** ACLED recorded 24 security incidents (8 battles, 3 explosions/remote violence incidents and 13 incidents of violence against civilians, representing 0.4 security incident per week). UCDP recorded 10 civilian deaths, representing 1.5 civilian casualties per 100 000 inhabitants. During **1 December 2025–20 March 2026**, ACLED reported 20 security incidents (11 battles, 7 explosions/remote violence,

2 instances of violence against civilians, representing 1.3 security incidents per week). UCDP recorded 8 civilian deaths, amounting to 1 civilian death per 100 000 inhabitants.

In **Paktika**, during **1 October 2024–30 November 2025** ACLED recorded 32 security incidents (8 battles, 9 remote violence/explosions, 15 instances of violence against civilians, representing 0.5 security incidents per week). UCDP recorded 67 civilian deaths, representing 7.9 civilian deaths per 100 000 inhabitants. During **1 December 2025–20 March 2026**, ACLED reported 27 security incidents (5 battles, 16 explosions/remote violence, 6 incidents of violence against civilians, representing 1.7 security incidents per week). UCDP recorded 23 civilian deaths, corresponding to 3 civilian deaths per 100 000 inhabitants.

No real risk

Areas where, **there is no real risk** for a civilian to be personally affected within the meaning of Article 15(c) QR.

This may be because the criteria for an armed conflict within the meaning of this provision are not met, or because no indiscriminate violence is taking place.

The areas assessed as belonging to this category as well as the main elements leading to this assessment are highlighted below.

In the remaining provinces the reference period was marked by a general decrease in violence after a peak in 2022 (mostly linked to violence between the *de facto* authorities and resistance groups as well as the ISKP) and by a relative stability ever since.

Namely, most of the provinces have not been impacted by the conflict with the Pakistani military. The recorded violence mostly involved resistance groups, the ISKP and the *de facto* military and police forces and caused a very low number of incidents and of civilian deaths. Events recorded as ‘violence against civilians’ were mostly perpetrated by the *de facto* security forces; these included arrests based on various motives, and the use of excessive violence in various situations, including in combatting crime, implementing *sharia* as well as exploiting their position to exert violence. Finally, conflict-induced displacement was not recorded.

Considering all the elements not indicative of indiscriminate violence in the context of an armed conflict, it can be concluded that there is no real risk for a civilian to be personally affected within the meaning of Article 15(c) QR in the following provinces: **Badakhshan, Badghis, Baghlan, Balkh, Bamyan, Daikundi, Farah, Faryab, Ghazni, Ghor, Helmand, Herat, Jowzjan, Kapisa, Kunduz, Laghman, Logar, Nimruz, Nuristan, Panjshir, Parwan, Samangan, Sar-e Pul, Takhar, Uruzgan, Wardak and Zabul.**



Please note that in areas where there would be ‘no real risk’ for a civilian to be affected by indiscriminate violence within the meaning of Article 15(c) QR, depending on personal circumstances, an applicant may still be exposed to a risk of persecution (see [3. Refugee status](#)) or a risk of serious harm under [4.1. Article 15\(a\) QR: death penalty or execution](#) or [4.2. Article 15\(b\) QR: torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment](#). Hence, this assessment of ‘no real risk’ should in no way be misconstrued as the designation of ‘safe areas’ for return or any other purposes.

4.3.4. Serious and individual threat

Last update: June 2026

In the context of the ‘sliding scale’, each case should be assessed individually, taking into account the applicant’s personal circumstances together with the nature and intensity of the violence in their home area (see also [4.3.3. Indiscriminate violence](#)

). It is not feasible to provide exhaustive guidance as to what the relevant personal circumstances could be and how those should be assessed. Individual elements can exist in combination. Other factors may also be relevant.

Below are some examples of personal circumstances to be taken into account, where the ‘mere presence’ threshold is not reached, in the context of Afghanistan:

- **Age:** incidents of children becoming victims of explosive remnants of war continued to be documented, as Afghanistan is among the countries most contaminated with landmines and explosive remnants of war. Children may also not be in a position to quickly assess a changing situation and avoid the risks it entails. In some cases, elderly age may also impact the person's ability to assess and avoid risks associated with an armed conflict.
- **Gender:** men may be at higher risk of violence targeting public places, as men are the ones mainly being outside the home and visiting such locations. On the other hand, the gender norms in Afghanistan suggest that women may have less information regarding the current security situation and the associated risks. Moreover, if the violence moves closer to the residence of people, e.g. in the case of ground engagements in populated areas, women would have a more limited ability to avoid it. In the cases when they do have the ability to assess and anticipate the risk, women and girls may also be limited in their ability to avoid the violence, as they need to be accompanied by a close male relative in order to travel within the country.
- **Health condition and disabilities, including mental health issues:** indiscriminate attacks in Afghanistan have taken place in public spaces. People with disabilities related to mobility may not be able to move without help. Furthermore, people with mental health issues might not be able to quickly assess and avoid risky situations. Therefore, some persons with health conditions may be more susceptible to indiscriminate violence.
- **Economic situation:** the economic situation in Afghanistan is difficult. People in dire economic situation may be forced to expose themselves to risks, such as working in areas which are affected by indiscriminate violence.
- **Knowledge of the area:** some Afghans were born or have lived for an extensive period of time outside Afghanistan or in another part of the country. Such individuals may not have knowledge of the area and experience of local violence patterns; therefore, they may be more susceptible to indiscriminate violence.
- **Profession and/or place of residence:** indiscriminate attacks in Afghanistan have taken place in public spaces. Persons who, due to their place of residence or



professional activity, are frequently in the vicinity of such places (e.g. living or working near the Pakistani border) may be more susceptible to indiscriminate violence.

- **Family members or support network:** some Afghans were born or have lived for an extensive period of time outside Afghanistan. Such individuals may not have knowledge of the area and experience of local violence patterns; they may also lack the support network to inform them on such issues or provide them with assistance. Therefore, they may be more susceptible to indiscriminate violence.

In some cases, these personal circumstances may be cumulative, leading to enhanced exposure to indiscriminate violence.

4.3.5. Qualification of the harm as a ‘threat to (a civilian’s) life or person’

Last update: June 2026

Some of the commonly reported types of harm to a civilian’s life or person in Afghanistan are killings, injuries, including due to explosions, and destruction of infrastructures.

Additionally, as a consequence of the conflict between the Taliban and Pakistan, in October 2025 the latter has closed all border crossings with Afghanistan, including for trade. Civilians and humanitarian actors were instructed to evacuate on the Afghan side. Also, medicine import has been impacted as the Afghan *de facto* authorities have urged importers to stop importing medicine from Pakistan. Many Afghans reportedly struggle to buy ‘basic medicine’ as over 70 % of medicines used in Afghanistan was imported from Pakistan.

A real risk of such serious harm would qualify as a threat to a (civilian’s) life or person in accordance with the provision of Article 15(c) QR.

4.3.6. Nexus/‘by reason of’

Last update: June 2026

The interpretation of the causation ‘by reason of’ may not be limited to harm which is directly caused by the indiscriminate violence or by acts that emanate from the actors in the conflict. To a certain extent, it may also include the indirect effect of indiscriminate violence in situations of armed conflict. As long as there is a demonstrable link to the indiscriminate violence, such elements may be taken into account in the assessment, for example: destruction of the necessary means to survive, destruction of infrastructures, criminality.



5. Actors of protection



For general guidance on this section, see 'EUAA, [Actors of protection](#) in *Country Guidance: explained*, February 2026'.

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI reports and query: COI Update 2026, 1; [Country Focus 2026](#), 1.1, 1.2.1., 1.2.2., 1.2.4., 1.2.5., 1.2.8., 1.3.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 1.1.1., 1.2.1., 1.2.3., 2.6.. Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The Taliban *de facto* government is the sole authority exercising effective control over Afghanistan through an all-male administration composed predominantly of Taliban members. Since their takeover in 2021, the Taliban have maintained territorial control despite facing armed opposition from resistance groups and the ISKP.

The Taliban have used the **former government's state structures** but abolished some previous ministries, departments and commissions, such as those responsible for parliamentary affairs, elections, and overseeing human rights.

The Taliban have also built-up *de facto* **security institutions**, such as a national army – recruitment to which is said to be on a voluntary basis – the intelligence service GDI, a police force and the MPVP.

The *de facto* administration has been described as moving towards **a theocratic police state**, operating in arbitrary and unpredictable ways through repressive bodies such as the General GDI and the MPVPV, alongside other *de facto* institutions.

The *de facto* authorities have ruled without a constitution since abolishing the one of 2004. **No formal legal framework** has been enacted; instead, the Taliban have asserted that *sharia* provides 'a comprehensive legal framework' for governance. The Taliban do not frame their role as protecting individual civil rights, but as ensuring compliance with *sharia*. Few decrees have ostensibly sought to protect personal rights, while the overall human rights situation has further deteriorated. Rule is largely exercised through decrees issued by the Taliban Supreme Leader. On 4 January 2026, the *de facto* government issued a 'Criminal Procedure Code for Courts', consisting of 119 articles, several ones of which appear to violate international human rights standards (for more information see [1. Recent developments](#)). The absence of a clear legal framework and uncertainty regarding the status of prior legislation have resulted in legal inconsistency and uncertainty. Following the takeover, former judicial personnel were replaced with male Taliban judges educated in madrassas. In line with instructions from the Taliban Supreme Leader, judges apply *sharia* and impose *hudud* and *qisas* punishments, including execution, stoning, flogging, and amputation. Judicial discretion is extensive, with limited accountability, resulting in significant variations in verdicts.

Torture and other forms of ill-treatment are reportedly widespread in detention facilities operated by *de facto* authorities, including the GDI and the Ministries of the Interior and Defence.



Vaguely formulated instructions have enabled divergent interpretations by local enforcers. Although enforcement has become more uniform over time, regional variations persist due to local interpretations and contexts. MPVPV enforcers (*muhtasibin*) have frequently been reported to act beyond their advisory mandate, committing abuses including physical violence, arrests, harassment, and intimidation.

Taliban governance has been widely described as non-inclusive and discriminatory. Human rights violations and discriminatory measures have been documented against, among others, [Ethnic and religious minorities](#), [Women and girls](#), [Individuals associated with former security institutions](#), and [human rights activists](#).

For death penalty or execution see also [4.1. Article 15\(a\) QR: death penalty or execution](#); for torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment see also [4.2. Article 15\(b\) QR: torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment](#).



The Taliban *de facto* government, which is currently the sole entity exercising effective control over all parts of Afghanistan, does not meet the criteria of an actor of protection under Article 7 QR who is able and willing to provide effective, non-temporary and accessible protection. The lack of due process, the nature of the punishments issued, and the unaccountability of the judiciary would not qualify the justice mechanism operated by the Taliban as a legitimate form of protection. Additionally, in numerous cases, the Taliban represent the main actor of persecution or serious harm and, therefore, they cannot be considered as an actor of protection.

No other actors are currently found to be in control of a significant part of the territory and able to provide protection within the meaning of Article 7 QR.



6. Internal protection alternative



For general guidance on the country guidance approach to this section, see 'EUAA, [Internal protection alternative](#) in *Country Guidance: explained*, February 2026'.

This guidance document examines the availability of an internal protection alternative within the whole territory of Afghanistan.

In order to determine that internal protection is available, three cumulative criteria have to be met: 'safety', 'travel and admittance' and 'reasonableness to settle'.

6.1. Safety

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI report and query: [Country Focus 2026, 11, 2.1, 2.3, 2.5, 4.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

- **General security situation in relation to indiscriminate violence**

The general security situation should be assessed in accordance with the analysis under the section on [4.3.3. Indiscriminate violence](#).

- **Actor of persecution or serious harm and their reach**

The **Taliban** are currently in control of all the country's 34 provinces. Since the takeover, there have been reports of violation of human rights and excessive use of force by the *de facto* authorities, including extrajudicial killings and different forms of torture and ill-treatment. The majority of the profiles addressed in this common analysis are subjected to persecution or serious harm by the Taliban who do not qualify as an actor of protection (Article 7 QR). Therefore, in cases where the person fears persecution or serious harm by the Taliban, there is a presumption that IPA would not be available; see [5. Actors of protection](#).



The safety criterion under Article 8 QR would in general not be met. In exceptional cases, such as when the well-founded fear of persecution or real risk of serious harm is linked to a non-State actor (such as clan, tribe, (locally) powerful individual, family member) who would not have the capacity to trace and target the applicant in the area of relocation, the safety criterion may be satisfied. See [2.4. Other actors](#).



6.2. Travel and admittance

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI report and query: [COI Update 2026, 3.](#); [Country Focus 2026, 4.4.3.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The decline in armed conflict in the country from August 2021 onwards improved physical accessibility across the country, with intercity travel generally occurring without significant impediment. Due to the ongoing conflicts with Pakistan and in the region, airport traffic has reportedly been affected by security-related disruptions.

There are currently no known formal restrictions on travel and admittance within Afghanistan for men. In contrast, under the Taliban rule, women's freedom of movement is constrained by social and formal restrictions requiring male consent or a male chaperone (See also [3.13. Women and girls](#)).



The requirement of safety and legality of travel is not met for women and girls who are not accompanied by a male relative due to the restrictions posed on their freedom of movement. For other individuals, the travel and admittance requirement under Article 8 QR is likely to be satisfied subject to security-related disruptions.

6.3. Reasonableness to settle

Last update: June 2026

If the criteria of safety and travel and admittance are met, the next step in assessing the existence of an IPA is to consider the reasonableness to settle in light of the general situation and the individual circumstances of the applicant. According to Article 8(1) QR, IPA can only apply if the applicant 'can reasonably be expected to settle' in the area of internal protection under consideration.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI report and query: [COI Update 2026, 3.](#); [Country Focus 2026, 3.1.](#), [3.2.](#), [3.3.](#), [3.4.](#), [3.5.](#), [3.6.](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

- **Means of basic subsistence and employment**

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world. UNDP noted 'significant deteriorations' of the population's ability to afford adequate housing, healthcare, cooking items, food, and winter clothing, and reported on 75 % of the population being 'subsistence-insecure'. Unemployment is widespread, and in urban areas poverty is driven by the lack of job opportunities. A UNDP household survey in 2024 reported a great discrepancy, with most men (84 %) having a job, in contrast to 7 % of female household members, indicating the gender disparity in access to economic opportunities. A drop in average household incomes was observed in 2024, from 10 712 AFN (apr. USD 136) to 9 004 AFN (apr. USD 115). The high



number of returnees has intensified job competition, and as people return from abroad, many families lose the economic support received through remittances.

- **Food security**

According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classifications (IPC), 27 % of the Afghan population experienced high levels of food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and 4) in March–April 2025 and were in ‘urgent need of humanitarian food assistance’. The WFP reported that 78 % of Afghans was unable to afford nutritious food, highlighting that Afghanistan was experiencing an unprecedented hunger crisis in 2025, representing one of the most severe nutrition crises globally. Food insecurity has disproportionately affected female-headed households, persons with lower education, persons with disabilities as well as returnee households. Food insecurity is more prevalent in rural areas; however, the prices of food are generally cheaper in these areas, and many households can rely on their own food production and livestock. Nevertheless, the persistent droughts in 2021-2023 and in 2025 highly affected the agricultural sector. Urban households generally rely on wage labour, which is also volatile given the lack of job opportunities. While there is a greater availability of food products in urban areas, food is generally more expensive, and many households struggle to afford even basic food items. In the framework of the ongoing clashes with Pakistan, and according to WFP, humanitarian needs in Afghanistan remain critically high as of February 2026, estimating that 17.4 million people are in urgent need of food assistance, while resources may only reach around 2 million. Humanitarian organisations, including WFP, have been affected by movement restrictions along the Durand Line, leaving 160 000 people without food assistance in the provinces Helmand, Kandahar, Khost, Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar, Nuristan, Paktika, Paktia and Zabul. The ongoing cross-border tensions with Pakistan, alongside wider regional conflicts involving Iran and the Middle East, have further strained supply chains, reduced availability of basic goods, and risen prices, based on information from the Afghanistan Center for Policy Studies (ACAPS). Although no data is yet available, the source projects that the closure of the Durand line for trade will impact food prices nationwide in Afghanistan and further worsen national food insecurity levels, particularly given that Pakistan has been the primary source of 60 % of Afghan staple food imports. In this context, eastern and southern regions are particularly vulnerable due to limited alternative trade routes and low purchasing power.

- **Housing and shelter**

A 2022 survey indicated that 61 % of Afghan households lived in mud houses, many of which were partially damaged from rainfalls and provided limited protection from natural disasters such as earthquakes. Many of the poorest segments of the population, including disaster-affected individuals and returnees, lived in tents. By 2024, overall housing adequacy had deteriorated. The large influx of returnees has added pressure on the urban ‘housing crisis’. In some city areas, rents reportedly more than doubled in 2025.

- **Water and sanitation**

The majority of households is facing challenges in relation to water and energy, lacking access to piped water and heating devices for cooking, as well as sanitation facilities and hygiene supplies. Kabul City is facing a water resource crisis due to plummeting groundwater levels. Moreover, most of the limited groundwater available to the city population is dangerous



to consume, with 80 % of the groundwater being contaminated by dangerously high levels of chemicals, sewage and toxins.

- **Basic healthcare**

Afghan healthcare has been impeded by decades of war, making it heavily reliant on international aid for the provision of basic health services. The country is experiencing a deepening healthcare crisis, exacerbated by declining international aid and minimal state budget allocation on health by the *de facto* authorities. Approximately one third of the population (over 14 million people) lack access to healthcare, with rural communities being particularly affected. The number of operative health facilities had declined to 1 500 by 2024. An additional 422 health facilities have been suspended by 31 August 2025, due to the cuts in US foreign aid. Remaining facilities face challenges, such as poor infrastructure and a lack of medical equipment and medicines. Moreover, a notable shortage of healthcare staff is reported, exacerbated by the departure and resignation of many healthcare professionals, following the Taliban takeover. Additionally, the ongoing conflict with Pakistan has led to the destruction or damage of healthcare facilities, resulting in the disruption or suspension of health services.

For further information see the [1.2. Humanitarian situation](#) and [4.2.4. Healthcare and socio-economic conditions](#).



The dire humanitarian situation in the country has a significant impact on all elements considered under the requirement of reasonableness to settle in a different part of the country, including food security, housing and shelter, basic healthcare, and means of basic subsistence. Therefore, **the reasonableness to settle criterion under Article 8 QR would generally not be met.**

6.4. General conclusion on the applicability of IPA



Taking into account the assessment with regard to the three criteria under Article 8 QR, it is found that **IPA would in general not be applicable to any part of Afghanistan.**



7. Exclusion

Last update: June 2026



For general guidance on Exclusion, see 'EUAA, [Practical Guide: Exclusion](#), January 2017' and 'EUAA, [Practical Guide on Exclusion for Serious \(Non-Political\) Crimes](#), December 2021'.

For general guidance on the country guidance approach to this section, see 'EUAA, [Exclusion](#) in *Country Guidance: explained*, February 2026'.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: [Country Focus 2026](#); [COI Update 2024](#); [Country Focus 2023](#); [Taliban strategies – Recruitment](#); Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

In the context of Afghanistan, various circumstances may require consideration of the potential applicability of exclusion grounds. The QR does not set a time limit for the application of the grounds for exclusion. Applicants may be excluded in relation to events which occurred in the current as well as in past conflicts.

Proper consideration should be paid to relevant ongoing situations – such as those involving Taliban *de facto* security forces, resistance armed groups and ISKP, on the one hand, and Taliban *de facto* security forces and Pakistani security forces, on the other hand - as well as to situations which have ended. For example, relevant situations from the past could include: the Taliban-led insurgency against the former Afghan government (2001), the Taliban regime and conflict between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance (1996–2001), the Afghan 'Civil War' (1992 - 1996), the Soviet Union invasion (1979) and the armed conflict between the Afghan government (supported by Soviet troops) and the '*mujahideen*' (e.g. secret services of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) regime, commanders or fighters from the anti-Soviet jihad *tanzeem*) (1979 - 1992), the 'Saur' Revolution of 1978, subsequent purges and the 1979 crackdown of the uprising. Afghan nationals have also been involved in conflicts outside Afghanistan, such as via the *Fatemiyoun* Brigade in Syria, which may be of relevance in the examination of exclusion grounds.

In terms of qualifying the relevant acts as war crimes, armed conflicts ⁽²⁷⁾ in Afghanistan can be characterised as follows:

- armed conflict between the Taliban and Pakistani forces (ongoing): international;
- armed conflict between the Taliban and NRF and AFF (2021–ongoing): non-international ⁽²⁸⁾;

⁽²⁷⁾ Note that the assessment under Article 12(2)(a) QR and Article 17(1)(a) QR refer to the relevant international instruments defining the terms. Therefore, the assessment of whether or not an armed conflict takes place, as well as its nature, is based on international humanitarian law and may differ from the assessment in the context of Article 15(c) QR as defined in the *Diakité* judgment of the CJEU.

⁽²⁸⁾ For non-international armed conflicts in Afghanistan, see [WAR WATCH - World Assessment and Tracking of Civilian Harm](#).



- armed conflict between the Taliban and ISKP (2015–ongoing): non-international;
- Taliban-led insurgency against the (former) Afghan government (after 11 September 2001–August 2021): non-international with the continued involvement of the US-led coalition ⁽²⁹⁾;
- armed conflict between the Taliban and the United Front (1996-2001): non-international;
- armed conflict between ‘*mujahideen*’ forces and the government (1989-1996): non-international;
- Soviet-Afghan War from December 1979 until February 1989: international;
- armed conflict between PDPA government and armed opponents from the summer of 1979 until the Soviet invasion on 24 December 1979: non-international.

More specifically, the need to examine possible exclusion issues in the context of Afghanistan may arise, for example, in cases of applicants being former or current members of the groups cited below. This list is non-exhaustive:

- the former Afghan government and pro-government forces;
- the Taliban;
- the ISKP;
- other non-State armed groups (e.g NRF, AFF and ALM, the Turkestan Freedom Tigers, the National Resistance Council, the National Liberation Front of Afghanistan (NLFA), the Unknown Soldiers of Hazaristan, the allegedly Hazara-centred Freedom and Democracy Front and the Freedom Corps, etc).

Other groups such as the Haqqani Network, and Al Qaida are often linked with either the Taliban or the ISKP and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish their acts from those of the Taliban or the ISKP.



Given the serious consequences that exclusion may have for the individual, the exclusion grounds should be interpreted restrictively and applied with caution.

The examples mentioned in this chapter are non-exhaustive and non-conclusive. Each case should be examined on its own merits.

⁽²⁹⁾ [Armed conflicts in Afghanistan - WAR WATCH.](#)



7.1. Exclusion based on the commission of international crimes

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI reports: [Country Focus 2026](#), 1.1., 4.4.1.; [Anti-government elements](#), 2.5., 2.6.1., 2.6.2.; [Criminal law and customary justice](#), 1.8.; 2.3.3.; [KSEI 2022](#), 8.2.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The ground **crime against peace** is not found to be of particular relevance in the cases of applicants from Afghanistan.

According to COI, Taliban, members of the ISKP and other armed groups, former ANDSF and militias affiliated with the former government, as well as civilians in Afghanistan, can be implicated in acts that would qualify as **war crimes** or **crimes against humanity**. Reported violations of international humanitarian law by parties in the conflicts in Afghanistan could amount to war crimes.

It can be noted that, in November 2017, the Prosecutor of the ICC requested authorisation from Pre-Trial Chamber III to initiate an investigation into alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in relation to the situation in Afghanistan since 1 May 2003. The preliminary examination focused on crimes listed in the Rome Statute allegedly committed in the context of the armed conflict between pro-government forces and anti-government forces. It includes the **crimes against humanity** of murder and imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty, and the **war crimes** of murder, cruel treatment, outrages upon personal dignity, the passing of sentences and carrying out of executions without proper judicial authority, intentional attacks against civilians, civilian objects and humanitarian assistance missions, and treacherously killing or wounding of an enemy combatant. The preliminary examination also focused on the existence and genuineness of national proceedings in relation to these crimes. On 31 October 2022, Pre-Trial Chamber II of the ICC authorised the Prosecution to resume investigation, following a previous request for deferral by the (former) government of Afghanistan⁽³⁰⁾. On 23 January 2025, ICC Prosecutor announced that his Office filed two applications for warrants of arrest for the **crime against humanity of persecution on gender grounds**, under article 7(1)(h) of the Rome Statute, against the Supreme Leader of the Taliban, Haibatullah Akhundzada, and the Chief Justice of the 'Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan', Abdul Hakim Haqqani. The warrants of arrest were subsequently issued by Pre-Trial Chamber II on 8 July 2025.

⁽³⁰⁾ For further information, see ICC, Afghanistan, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/afghanistan>.



7.2. Exclusion based on the commission of a serious (non-political) crime

Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI reports: [Country Focus 2026](#), 1.2.8., 2.4., 2.5., 4.4.7.; [Country Focus 2024](#), 2.5.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

In the context of Afghanistan, widespread criminality and breakdown in law and order make the ground of 'serious (non-political) crime' particularly relevant. Violence against women and children (for example, in relation to the practice of *bacha bazi*, in the context of child marriage, child recruitment, honour killings, sexual violence or some forms of domestic violence, etc.), which is widespread in Afghanistan, could also potentially amount to a serious (non-political) crime. Moreover, in addition to murder related to family and other private disputes, some examples of particularly relevant serious crimes may include drug trade and trafficking, trafficking in arms, trafficking in human beings, corruption, embezzlement and other economic crimes, illegal taxation, illegal extraction, trade or smuggling of minerals, gemstones, archaeological artefacts, etc.

Some serious (non-political) crimes could be linked to an armed conflict (e.g. if committed in order to finance the activities of armed groups) or could amount to fundamentally inhumane acts committed as a part of a systematic or widespread attack against a civilian population, in which case they should instead be examined under Article 12(2)(a)/Article 17(1)(a) QR.

In relation to exclusion from refugee status, a crime could fall under the ground of a serious (non-political) crime if committed in Afghanistan or any third country (for example, while the applicant resided in Pakistan or Iran, or in countries of transit, etc.). In relation to subsidiary protection, serious crimes committed by Afghan applicants in the host country may also lead to exclusion.

7.3. Exclusion based on acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations

Last update: June 2026

In the context of Afghanistan, (former) membership in the Taliban or in armed groups such as the ISKP, could trigger relevant considerations and require an examination of the applicant's activities under Article 12(2)(c)/Article 17(1)(c) QR in addition to the considerations under Article 12(2)(a)/Article 17(1)(a) QR or Article 12(2)(b)/Article 17(1)(b) QR.

Membership alone is not sufficient to substantiate exclusion, however, participation in the activities of a terrorist group, undertaken with knowledge of the fact that such participation will contribute to the criminal activities of the terrorist group, should be given significant weight in





the exclusion assessment ⁽³¹⁾. The application of exclusion should be based on an individual assessment of the specific facts in the context of the applicant's activities within that organisation. The position of the applicant within the organisation would constitute a relevant consideration and a high-ranking position could justify a (rebuttable) presumption of individual responsibility. Other engagement with a group, such as the aforementioned, could also trigger exclusion considerations. Nevertheless, it remains necessary to examine all relevant circumstances before an exclusion decision can be made.

Where the available information indicates possible involvement in crimes against peace, war crimes or crimes against humanity, the assessment would need to be made in light of the exclusion grounds under Article 12(2)(a)/Article 17(1)(a) QR.

7.4. Exclusion based on constituting a danger to the community or to national security

Last update: June 2026

In the examination of the application for international protection, the exclusion ground under Article 17(1)(d) QR (danger to the community or to national security) is only applicable to persons otherwise eligible for subsidiary protection.

Unlike the other exclusion grounds, the application of this provision is based on a forward-looking assessment of risk. Nevertheless, the examination takes into account the past and/or current activities of the applicant, such as association with certain groups considered to represent a danger to the security of the Member States or criminal activities of the applicant.

⁽³¹⁾ Directive (EU) 2017/541 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on combating terrorism and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA and amending Council Decision 2005/671/JHA





Annex: COI references

The main COI sources used in the common analysis are the following (listed alphabetically by reference used in the text)

Anti-government elements	<p>EUAA Country of Origin Information Report: Afghanistan - Anti-Government Elements (AGEs) (August 2020)</p> <p>Available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2020_08_EASO_COI_Report_Afghanistan_Anti_Government_Elements_AGEs.pdf</p>
COI update 2026	<p>EUAA COI Query – Response: Major legislative, security-related, and humanitarian developments (March 2026)</p> <p>Available at: https://www.euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2026-03/2026_01_EUAA_COI_Query_Response_Q16_Afghanistan_Major_Legislative_security_related_and_humanitarian_developments.pdf</p>
COI Update 2024	<p>EUAA Country of Origin Information Query: Afghanistan - Major legislative, security-related, and humanitarian developments (January 2024)</p> <p>Available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2024_02_EUAA_COI_Query_Response_Q13_Afghanistan_Major_legislative_security_related_and_humanitarian_developments.pdf</p>
Country Focus 2026	<p>EUAA Country of Origin Information Report: Afghanistan - Country Focus(January 2026)</p> <p>Available at: https://www.euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2026-01/2026_01_Afghanistan_COI_Report_Country_Focus.pdf</p>
Country Focus 2024	<p>EUAA Country of Origin Information Report: Afghanistan - Country Focus (November 2024)</p> <p>Available at: https://www.euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2024-11/2024_11_EUAA_COI_Report_Afghanistan_Country_Focus_0.pdf</p>
Country Focus 2023	<p>EUAA Country of Origin Information Report: Afghanistan - Country Focus (December 2023)</p> <p>Available at:</p>



	https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2023_12_EUAA_COI_Report_Afghanistan_Country_Focus.pdf
Criminal law and customary justice	<p>EUAA Country of Origin Information Report: Afghanistan - Criminal law, customary justice and informal dispute resolution (July 2020)</p> <p>Available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2020_07_EASO_COI_Report_Afghanistan_Criminal_Law_Customary_Justice_Dispute_Resolutions.pdf</p>
KSEI 2022	<p>EUAA Country of Origin Information Report: Afghanistan, Key socio-economic indicators in Afghanistan and in Kabul city (August 2022)</p> <p>Available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2022_08_EUAA_COI_Report_Key_socio_economic_indicators_in_Afghanistan_and_in_Kabul_city.pdf</p>
Security 2022	<p>EUAA Country of Origin Information Report: Afghanistan - Security Situation (August 2022)</p> <p>Available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2022_08_EUAA_COI_Report_Afghanistan_Security_situation.pdf</p>
Taliban strategies - Recruitment	<p>EUAA Country of Origin Information Report: Afghanistan - Taliban strategies - Recruitment (July 2012)</p> <p>Available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/EASO_COI_Report_AFG_Taliban_Recruitment.pdf</p>
Targeting 2022	<p>EUAA Country of Origin Information Report: Afghanistan - Targeting of Individuals (August 2022)</p> <p>Available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2022_08_EUAA_COI_Report_Afghanistan_Targeting_of_individuals.pdf</p>



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