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Home Office

Country Policy and Information Note

Pakistan: Security and humanitarian situation, including fear of militant groups

Version 2.0

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Preface

Purpose

This note provides country of origin information (COI) and analysis of COI for use by Home Office decision makers handling particular types of protection and human rights claims (as set out in [the basis of claim](#) section). It is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of a particular subject or theme.

It is split into two main sections: (1) analysis and assessment of COI and other evidence; and (2) COI. These are explained in more detail below.

Assessment

This section analyses the evidence relevant to this note – i.e. the COI section; refugee/human rights laws and policies; and applicable caselaw – by describing this and its inter-relationships, and provides an assessment on whether, **in general**:

- A person is reasonably likely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm
- A person is able to obtain protection from the state (or quasi state bodies)
- A person is reasonably able to relocate within a country or territory
- Claims are likely to justify granting asylum, humanitarian protection or other form of leave, and
- If a claim is refused, it is likely or unlikely to be certifiable as ‘clearly unfounded’ under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

Decision makers **must**, however, still consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case’s specific facts.

Country of origin information

The country information in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), dated April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation’s (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual, 2013](#). Namely, taking into account the COI’s relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

The structure and content of the country information section follows a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to this note.

All information included in the note was published or made publicly available on or before the ‘cut-off’ date(s) in the country information section. Any event taking place or report/article published after these date(s) is not included.

All information is publicly accessible or can be made publicly available and is from generally reliable sources. Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion.

Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information, and
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources.

Multiple sourcing is used to ensure that the information is accurate, balanced and corroborated, so that a comprehensive and up-to-date picture at the time of publication is provided of the issues relevant to this note.

Information is compared and contrasted, whenever possible, to provide a range of views and opinions. The inclusion of a source, however, is not an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a brief footnote; full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

Feedback

Our goal is to continuously improve our material. Therefore, if you would like to comment on this note, please email [the Country Policy and Information Team](#).

Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The [Independent Advisory Group on Country Information](#) (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support him in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the [gov.uk website](#).

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Assessment

Updated: 7 December 2018

1. Introduction

1.1 Basis of claim

- 1.1.1 Fear of persecution and/or serious harm by non-state actors (i.e. militant groups) operating in Pakistan; and/or
- 1.1.2 That the general humanitarian situation in Pakistan is so severe as to make removal a breach of Articles 15(a) and 15(b) of European Council Directive 2004/83/EC of 29 April 2004 (the Qualification Directive (QD)) / Articles 2 and 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights; and/or
- 1.1.3 That the security situation presents a real risk to a civilian's life or person such that removal would be in breach of Article 15(c) (serious and individual threat to a civilian's life or person by reason of indiscriminate violence) of the QD.

1.2 Points to note

- 1.2.1 Where the person qualifies under the Refugee Convention, decision makers do not need to go on to assess the need for Humanitarian Protection. It is only if the person does not qualify under the Refugee Convention that decision makers need to assess the need for protection firstly under Articles 15(a) and 15(b) of the Qualification Directive/ Articles 2 and 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and, if that is unsuccessful, under Article 15(c) of the Qualification Directive.
- 1.2.2 For guidance on Articles 2 and 3 ECHR / Articles 15(a), (b) and (c) of the QD, see the [Asylum Instruction on Humanitarian Protection](#).

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2. Consideration of issues

2.1 Credibility

- 2.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).
- 2.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).
- 2.1.3 Decision makers should also consider the need to conduct language analysis testing (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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2.2 Exclusion

- 2.2.1 If there are serious reasons for considering that the person has been involved with a militant group (see [Annex A](#) for a list of organisations proscribed by Pakistan, but this should not be seen as an exhaustive list of militant groups), decision makers must consider whether one (or more) of

the exclusion clauses is applicable. Each case must be considered on its individual facts and merits.

- 2.2.2 For further guidance on the exclusion clauses and restricted leave, see the [Asylum Instruction on Exclusion: Article 1F of the Refugee Convention](#) and the [Asylum Instruction on Restricted Leave](#).

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2.3 Convention reason

- 2.3.1 Where decision makers conclude that the person has a well founded fear of persecution from militant groups it may be for a Convention reason, most likely religion and/or (imputed) political opinion.
- 2.3.2 A state of civil instability and/or where law and order has broken down does not of itself give rise to a well-founded fear of persecution for a Convention reason.
- 2.3.3 Claims on the basis of the general humanitarian and/or security situation in Pakistan are not generally likely to demonstrate a well-founded fear of persecution for a Convention reason.
- 2.3.4 In the absence of a link to one of the 5 Convention reasons, the question to be addressed in each case will be whether the particular person will face a real risk of serious harm sufficient to qualify for Humanitarian Protection.
- 2.3.5 For further guidance on Convention grounds see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#) and for guidance on humanitarian protection see the [Asylum Instruction on Humanitarian Protection](#).

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2.4 Risk

a. Non-state actors

- 2.4.1 Insurgent, separatist and sectarian militant groups remain active across Pakistan and continue to carry out terrorist attacks – including gun violence, suicide attacks and bomb explosions – particularly against security personnel but also targeting civilians including political activists, journalists, teachers and students (especially female), and faith-based communities. Balochistan experiences the highest rate of militant and sectarian violence, followed by the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Sindh and Punjab (see Security situation – [Overview](#) and Nature and levels of violence – [Security incidents](#), [Targeted groups](#) and [Impact on Women and children](#), Actors in the Conflict – [Non-state armed groups](#) and [Annex A](#) for a list of proscribed organisations).
- 2.4.2 There are several militant groups active in Pakistan and their aims and capabilities may vary. The main cause of militant violence is the instability in the north-west of the country (Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)) after the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2001 (see [Actors in the conflict](#) and [Nature and levels of violence](#)).
- 2.4.3 Simply living in an area where militant groups are active is unlikely to give rise to a protection need. The level of risk will depend on the particular profile

of the person, the nature of the threat and how far it would extend. Decision makers must consider whether there are particular factors specific to the person which would place them at real risk. Each case must be considered on its facts with the onus on the person to show that they would be at risk of being targeted by militant groups if returned to Pakistan.

- 2.4.4 For information on the situation for religious/ethnic minority groups, see the Country Policy and Information Notes on [Pakistan: Ahmadis; Christians and Christian converts; Hazaras; and Shia Muslims](#).
- 2.4.5 For further guidance on assessment of risk see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#) and, in regard to women, [Gender issues in the asylum claim](#).

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b. Humanitarian situation

- 2.4.6 From an approximate total of 5.3 million people who have been internally displaced in Pakistan due to internal conflict and subsequent military operations in the 9 years since 2008, up to 250,000 people remain displaced, predominantly in Pakistan's tribal areas, living in host communities. Although displacement continued in the tribal areas in 2017 and 2018, thousands of IDPs have returned to their areas of origin following improvements in the security situation, with over 83,000 returning in the first 9 months of 2018; however, many people have lost access to their homes and livelihoods. Humanitarian aid is provided for many affected by conflict and natural disasters but recurring disasters, combined with chronic poverty, limit the ability of vulnerable persons to recover and result in additional displacement and humanitarian needs (see Humanitarian situation – [General conditions](#) and [Internally displaced persons \(IDPs\)](#)).
- 2.4.7 For general information on Pakistan's economic situation, see the [Country Policy and Information Note on Pakistan: Background information, including actors of protection and internal relocation](#).
- 2.4.8 The general humanitarian situation in Pakistan is not such that it represents a real risk of treatment contrary to Article 3 of the ECHR or contrary to Articles 15(a) and 15(b) of the QD. However, decision makers must consider whether there are particular factors relevant to the person's individual circumstances which might nevertheless place them at risk. Women and children IDPs are particularly vulnerable.
- 2.4.9 For general guidance on consideration of Article 3 ECHR / Articles 15(a) and (b) of the QD, see [Asylum Instruction on Humanitarian Protection](#).

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c. Security situation

- 2.4.10 Article 15(c) of the Qualification Directive applies only to civilians, who must be genuine non-combatants, and not those who are party to the conflict. This could include former combatants who have genuinely and permanently renounced armed activity.
- 2.4.11 The security situation varies across Pakistan and is influenced by factors such as political violence, insurgent, separatist and sectarian militant groups.

In 2017, the overall security situation improved compared to previous years. Between 2014 and 2017, the total number of violence-related fatalities declined by over 73%, from 7,655 fatalities in 2014 to 2,057 in 2017; the number of fatalities in the first 3 quarters of 2018 (930) compared to the same period in 2017 (1,585) decreased by 41%. The western provinces bordering Afghanistan, Balochistan and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), remained the areas where most militant and sectarian violence (suicide attacks and targeted killings) occurred, with Sindh (outside of Karachi), and Punjab experiencing the least. Karachi and Quetta were the most violent cities in Pakistan (see Security situation – [Overview](#) and [Nature and levels of violence](#)).

- 2.4.12 For information on the situation for religious/ethnic minority groups, see the Country Policy and Information Notes on [Pakistan: Ahmadis; Christians and Christian converts; Hazaras; and Shia Muslims](#).
- 2.4.13 The government and security forces retain control of almost all areas of Pakistan, including all major towns and cities. Most casualties are the result of clashes between insurgent groups and the armed forces, rather than indiscriminate, open warfare. The levels of casualties are low compared to the size of local and country-wide population (estimated at over 200 million). In general, the nature and levels of violence and overall security environment are not such that Article 15c applies. In general, an ordinary civilian is unlikely to be at risk of harm – solely by being present in areas affected by militant violence – that would breach Article 15(c).
- 2.4.14 Even where there is no general Article 15(c) risk, decision makers must consider whether there are particular factors relevant to the person's individual circumstances which might nevertheless place them at risk.
- 2.4.15 For guidance on Article 15(c), including consideration of enhanced risk factors, see the [Asylum Instruction on Humanitarian Protection](#).

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2.5 Protection

- 2.5.1 Where the person's fear is of persecution and/or serious harm from non-state actors, decision makers must assess whether the state can provide effective protection.
- 2.5.2 Pakistan's security and armed forces generally maintains control across the country. The Government of Pakistan has undertaken counter-terrorism strategies, including numerous military operations, to confront the insurgent threat. These strategies have brought a significant reduction in insurgent activities and terrorist-related incidents although militant groups retain the capability to carry out mass-casualty attacks. The Pakistani armed forces have also been involved in serious human rights violations as part of their counter-terrorism operations (see [Counter-terrorism strategies](#) and Security situation – [Overview](#) and [Nature and levels of violence](#), as well as the Country Policy and Information Note on [Pakistan: Background information, including Actors of protection and internal relocation](#) for information on the efficacy of the police and judiciary.

- 2.5.3 The reported case of [AW \(sufficiency of protection\) Pakistan \[2011\] UKUT 31\(IAC\) \(26 January 2011\)](#), heard on 11 November 2010, found that there is 'systemic sufficiency of state protection' in Pakistan. However, the judgment also noted that notwithstanding this, a person may still have a well founded fear of persecution if authorities know or ought to know of circumstances particular to his/her case giving rise to the fear, but are unlikely to provide the additional protection the particular circumstances reasonably require (Headnote 2). Decision makers must assess whether effective protection is available in relation to the particular circumstances and profile of the person.
- 2.5.4 The country evidence available since [AW](#) was heard indicates that, in general, the state appears both willing and able to offer effective protection. A person's reluctance to seek protection does not necessarily mean that effective protection is not available. It should be noted that protection does not need to eliminate the risk of discrimination and violence. Decision makers must consider each case on its facts. The onus is on the person to demonstrate why they would not be able to seek and obtain state protection.
- 2.5.5 For general information and analysis on actors of protection see the Country Policy and Information Note on [Pakistan: Background information, including Actors of protection and internal relocation](#).
- 2.5.6 For further guidance on assessing the availability of state protection, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#) and, in regard to women, [Gender issues in the asylum claim](#).

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2.6 Internal relocation

- 2.6.1 Where the person fears persecution and/or serious harm at the hands of non-state actors, in general they will be able to relocate to escape that risk.
- 2.6.2 The law provides for freedom of movement within the country, although violence in some areas restricts this in practice. Decision makers must give careful consideration to the relevance and reasonableness of internal relocation taking full account of the individual circumstances of the particular person and the security situation in the area of relocation.
- 2.6.3 Internal location for a woman may be reasonable in some cases depending on their family, social and educational situation (see the Country Policy and Information Note on [Pakistan: Women fearing gender-based harm/violence](#)).
- 2.6.4 For general information and analysis on internal relocation see the Country Policy and Information Note on [Pakistan: Background information, including Actors of protection and internal relocation](#).
- 2.6.5 For further guidance on internal relocation and the factors to be considered, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#) and, in regard to women, [Gender issues in the asylum claim](#).

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2.7 Certification

- 2.7.1 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

- 2.7.2 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

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Country information

Section 3 updated: 7 December 2018

3. Point to note

- 3.1.1 At the end of May 2018 the merger of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) took place through a constitutional amendment. The process of transition is still under progress and this Note continues to refer to the FATA and KP¹.

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Section 4 updated: 7 December 2018

4. Humanitarian situation

- 4.1.1 For the most up-to-date country information on the humanitarian situation in Pakistan consult:

[Reliefweb - Pakistan](#)

[Humanitarian Response - Pakistan](#)

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4.2 General conditions

- 4.2.1 Ongoing conflict in the north-west tribal areas, and recurring natural disasters, including drought and floods in the south-east of Sindh province, have contributed to the need for humanitarian assistance in Pakistan^{2 3 4}. USAID reported in its July 2018 fact sheet that 'Recurring disasters, combined with chronic poverty, limit the ability of vulnerable households to recover and result in additional displacement and humanitarian needs.'⁵
- 4.2.2 UNICEF noted in its mid-year report for 2018 that the vulnerability of the population in FATA and KP was '[A]ggravated by limited access to basic services, protracted instability and access challenges which negatively impact service delivery and infrastructure. According to the FATA Vulnerability Assessment 2017, it was estimated that 4.4 million people, of whom 2.5 million are children, were in need of humanitarian assistance in Pakistan.'⁶
- 4.2.3 The European Commission's European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations noted in September 2018:
- 'Pakistan is one of the world's most disaster-prone countries and frequently experiences multiple disasters in a given year. In recent years, the province of Sindh has been repeatedly affected by both floods and drought, further affecting the food security and livelihood opportunities. High levels of malnutrition, coupled with limited access to water, sanitation and medical

¹ Dawn, 'PM reiterates govt's resolve to complete Fata-KP merger', 13 October 2018, [url](#).

² UNICEF, 'Pakistan Mid-Year Humanitarian Situation Report', 30 June 2018, [url](#).

³ USAID, 'Pakistan - Complex Emergency', 6 July 2018, [url](#).

⁴ European Commission, 'Pakistan', 12 September 2018, [url](#).

⁵ USAID, 'Pakistan - Complex Emergency', 6 July 2018, [url](#).

⁶ UNICEF, 'Pakistan Mid-Year Humanitarian Situation Report', 30 June 2018, [url](#).

services, have compromised the health and coping capacities of the most vulnerable communities.’⁷

- 4.2.4 The Government of Pakistan, alongside the United Nations and non-government organisations, provided relief and humanitarian assistance to vulnerable persons displaced by conflict and natural disasters⁸. CPIT was not able to find information on the level, quality and longevity of the assistance provided at the time of writing in the sources consulted in compiling this note – see [Bibliography](#) for a list of sources.
- 4.2.5 For general information on Pakistan’s economic situation, see the [Country Policy and Information Note on Pakistan: Background information, including actors of protection and internal relocation](#).

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4.3 Internally displaced persons (IDPs)

- 4.3.1 According to UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOHCA) figures, between 2008 and 2017, approximately 5.3 million people were displaced in Pakistan; during the same period 5.05 million have returned to their home areas⁹. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) noted whilst there were 249,000 registered IDPs the true figure might be underestimated as it ‘excludes unregistered IDPs living in KP and FATA, and those living elsewhere in the country, whose situation has not been highlighted in the media. Other challenges include the shifting conflict along the border and Line of Control, the fluid nature of returns, and the limited systematic monitoring of displacement outside of KP and FATA.’¹⁰ The IDMC further noted that in 2017 there were 75,000 new conflict induced displacements, mainly in the north-western parts of Pakistan, particularly in KP and FATA¹¹. Conflict-induced internal displacement took place predominantly from FATA, whilst KP also hosted thousands of IDPs^{12 13}. USAID reported in its July 2018 fact sheet that ‘more than 29,400 households remained displaced in KP, including former FATA.’¹⁴
- 4.3.2 As of September 2018, over 83,000 IDPs had returned to their areas of origin in Pakistan since 1 January 2018¹⁵, although damage to physical infrastructure and services has led to many IDPs losing their homes and livelihoods¹⁶. Cash grants were provided to returnees by the Pakistan government¹⁷. USAID reported in its July 2018 fact sheet that ‘Although both spontaneous and GoP [Government of Pakistan] assisted returns to areas of origin continue amid improved security conditions, the overall security situation in Pakistan remains volatile, with security incidents and sectarian

⁷ European Commission, ‘Pakistan’, 12 September 2018, [url](#).

⁸ USAID, ‘Pakistan - Complex Emergency’, 6 July 2018, [url](#).

⁹ UNOCHA, ‘Pakistan: Displacements and returns’, 30 September 2017, [url](#).

¹⁰ IDMC, ‘Pakistan – GRID 2018’, 2018, [url](#).

¹¹ IDMC, ‘Pakistan – GRID 2018’, 2018, [url](#).

¹² HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2017’, (page 264), [url](#).

¹³ UNOCHA, ‘Pakistan: KP and FATA’, 31 May 2018, [url](#).

¹⁴ USAID, ‘Pakistan - Complex Emergency’, 6 July 2018, [url](#).

¹⁵ UNHCR, ‘Pakistan Factsheet - September 2018’, (page 5), 30 September 2018, [url](#).

¹⁶ The World Bank, ‘Restoring Hope to Pakistans FATA’, 26 October 2018, [url](#).

¹⁷ UNHCR, ‘Pakistan Factsheet - September 2018’, (page 5), 30 September 2018, [url](#).

violence, as well as limited livelihood opportunities and services available in areas of return, contributing to continued humanitarian needs.’¹⁸

4.3.3 The CRSS NAP report noted regarding IDPs:

‘With 0.25 million IDPs remaining at the end of 2017 and rehabilitation efforts underway, it is expected and hoped that these individually will be successfully returned to their homes. However, two factors threaten this process. First, the military continues to flush out remnant pockets of militants in the border regions, which inevitably displaces population. Second, returning home for many is no longer a viable option, as they have no mechanism to support their families.’¹⁹

4.3.4 The UNOCHA noted that as of 31 May 2018, 29,442 families remained displaced²⁰. The European Commission noted that, according to UNHCR, as of June 2018, there were over 176,000 registered internally displaced people (IDPs)²¹. UNHCR stated in its Protection Cluster Strategy for 2017-2019, published in October 2017, ‘IDPs and returning displaced women continue to be exposed to grave risks of abuse and different forms of gender-based violence.’²²

4.3.5 For further information on IDPs, including the regional situation, see the October 2018 EASO [COI Report on Pakistan: Security Situation](#)²³.

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4.4 Afghan refugees

4.4.1 As of 30 September 2018, Pakistan hosted nearly 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees²⁴, 74% of whom were reported to be second or third generation (either born in Pakistan or the children of refugees born in Pakistan)²⁵. A further 1 million undocumented Afghans were reported to be living in Pakistan²⁶. According to UNHCR, as of 30 September 2018, 32% of refugees lived in refugee villages and 68% resided among the urban population. The majority of refugees lived in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa²⁷. On 5 October 2018, the Pakistan Government extended Proof of Registration (PoR) cards to registered Afghan refugees valid until 30 June 2019²⁸. The UN continued to facilitate the repatriation of Afghans back to Afghanistan²⁹ ³⁰.

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¹⁸ USAID, ‘Pakistan - Complex Emergency’, 6 July 2018, [url](#).

¹⁹ CRSS, ‘The NAP Tracker - Third Year Audit’, (page 161), 14 June 2018, [url](#).

²⁰ UNOCHA, ‘Pakistan: KP and FATA’, 31 May 2018, [url](#).

²¹ European Commission, ‘Pakistan’, 12 September 2018, [url](#).

²² UNHCR, ‘Pakistan – Protection cluster strategy’, n.d., [url](#).

²³ EASO, ‘COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation’, (Sections 1.4.3 and 2), October 2018, [url](#).

²⁴ UNOCHA, ‘Pakistan: Afghan Refugees’, 18 October 2018, [url](#).

²⁵ UNHCR, ‘Afghan refugees share hopes and fears’, 9 September 2018, [url](#).

²⁶ Al Jazeera, ‘Deadline looms for Afghan refugees in Pakistan’, 31 January 2018, [url](#).

²⁷ UNHCR, ‘Afghan Refugees in Pakistan’, 30 September 2018, [url](#).

²⁸ UNHCR, ‘UNHCR welcomes Pakistan’s decision to extend stay’, 5 October 2018, [url](#).

²⁹ UNOCHA, ‘Pakistan: Afghan Refugees’, 18 October 2018, [url](#).

³⁰ UNHCR, ‘Pakistan Factsheet - September 2018’, (page 2), 30 September 2018, [url](#).

5. Security situation

For updated country information on the security situation in Pakistan, see:

[Armed Conflict Location & Event Data \(ACLED\) - Pakistan](#)

[Center for Research & Security Studies \(CRSS\) – Pakistan Conflict Tracker](#)

[Pak Institute of Peace Studies \(PIPS\)](#)

[Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies \(PiCSS\)](#)

[South Asia Terrorism Portal \(SATP\)](#)

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5.1 Overview

5.1.1 The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) Country of Origin Information Report on the security situation in Pakistan, which presented information available in the public domain from 1 June 2017 to 15 August 2018, based on a wide range of sources, stated 'The security situation in Pakistan is complex and influenced by factors such as political violence, insurgent violence, ethnic conflicts and sectarian violence. The domestic security situation is also influenced by disputes with neighbouring countries India and Afghanistan that occasionally turn violent.'³¹

5.1.2 The EASO report added:

'Militant violence in Pakistan is mainly caused by the instability in the north-west of the country resulting from the 2001 toppling of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The Afghan Taliban settled in the FATA and in the North Western Frontier Province (NWFP, currently Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), having fled the invasion of an international coalition led by the United States (US) in Afghanistan. Under their influence, several Pakistani groups with a similar ideology continued working together in what developed into a federation of armed groups. This resulted in the so-called Talibanisation of the region according to the consulted sources. Taliban policies included a strict application of conservative Islamic principles and resulted in violence against civilians and eventually the Pakistani authorities. As a result, Pakistan had to forsake the support for a number of Islamist groups in the country. Since 2007, the Pakistani army carried out several military operations in the FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa aimed at breaking the power of the Pakistani Taliban and their affiliated organisations. Especially from 2009 onwards, operations against the Pakistani Taliban have been one of the main sources of insecurity, causing a large-scale displacement from the region.'³²

5.1.3 The Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) noted in its report on Pakistan, dated September 2017, that:

'Pakistan continues to face security threats from insurgent, separatist and sectarian militant groups. The security situation varies across the country. While militant attacks can occur anywhere, Punjab province tends to experience fewer incidents than other areas. Sindh province is also relatively

³¹ EASO, 'COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation', (Section 1.1), October 2018, [url](#).

³² EASO, 'COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation', (Section 1.1.1), October 2018, [url](#).

free from major terrorist activity outside of Karachi, although rural Sindh has a high incidence of crime and kidnapping and some large-scale terrorist attacks have occurred in rural Sindh. Gilgit-Baltistan tends to experience less sectarian violence, in part because of its relatively sparse population and mountainous terrain, and its status as the only Shi'a-majority area in Pakistan. In contrast, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas] experience relatively higher rates of militant and sectarian violence.'³³

- 5.1.4 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Human Rights and Democracy Report for 2017 noted, in regard to Pakistan, 'The downward trajectory of terrorist attacks since 2014 continued, with a total of a little under 400 terrorist incidents leading to around 1,000 deaths in 2017.' However, the FCO report also noted 'There was an increased number of major terrorist attacks against civilians and faith targets in Pakistan. Although the majority of terrorist attacks targeted the security forces, other notable incidents included attacks against Sufi shrines in Sindh and Balochistan, Shia areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and a Methodist church in Balochistan.'³⁴
- 5.1.5 The US Department of State (USSD) noted in its human rights report for 2017 (USSD HR Report 2017) 'Militant and terrorist activity continued, and there were numerous suicide and bomb attacks in all four provinces and FATA. [...] A low-intensity separatist insurgency continued in Balochistan. Security forces reportedly committed extrajudicial killings in the fight against militant groups.'³⁵
- 5.1.6 The Freedom House report, Freedom in the World 2018, covering 2017 events, noted '[...] extremist groups devoted largely to attacks on Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir operate from AJK [Azad Jammu and Kashmir] and GB [Gilgit-Baltistan] and have links with similar factions based in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The threat of death and destruction from intermittent shelling across the LOC [Line of Control] persisted in 2017. AJK officials reported that 46 civilians were killed and 262 injured during the year.'³⁶
- 5.1.7 See also [Nature and levels of violence](#).
- 5.1.8 For information on the situation for religious/ethnic minority groups, see the Country Policy and Information Notes on [Pakistan: Ahmadis; Christians and Christian converts; Hazaras; and Shia Muslims](#).

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³³ DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (paragraph 2.30), 1 September 2017, [url](#).

³⁴ FCO, 'Human Rights Report 2017', (page 45), July 2018, [url](#).

³⁵ USSD, 'Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2017', (Section 1g), 20 April 2018, [url](#).

³⁶ Freedom House, 'Freedom in the World 2018 – Pakistan Kashmir', (Section F3), 28 May 2018, [url](#).

6. Actors in the conflict

6.1 State armed forces

- 6.1.1 Pakistan's security and armed forces generally maintained control across Pakistan^{37 38 39} (see also [Counter-terrorism strategies](#)).
- 6.1.2 For information on Pakistan's security forces see the Country Policy and Information Note on [Pakistan: Background information, including actors of protection and internal relocation](#).
- 6.1.3 For further information on armed forces, including paramilitary groups and pro-government militia, including the state's ability to secure law and order in the context of the security situation, see the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) [Country of Origin Information \(COI\) Report on Pakistan: Security Situation](#)⁴⁰.

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6.2 Non-state armed groups

- 6.2.1 Cyril Almeida, assistant editor and journalist at Pakistan's English-language newspaper, Dawn, stated at the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) conference on Pakistan in October 2017, that armed groups in Pakistan can broadly be divided into five major categories:
 - Anti-Pakistan militants: groups that have taken up arms against the state and carry out attacks inside Pakistan, primarily the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and its splinter groups;
 - India-centric militants: mainly the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM);
 - Afghan-centric militants: Afghan Taliban, the Haqqani network and affiliated ethnic-Pashtun militants fighting in Afghanistan against the Afghan government and foreign forces;
 - Sectarian groups: including the Punjabi Taliban, Sipah-e Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) and Lashkar-e Jhangvi (LeJ);
 - Foreign groups: such as al Qaeda, Arab militants, Uzbeks and Chechens⁴¹.
- 6.2.2 The DFAT report noted:

'Militant groups such as Tehreek-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Lashkar-e Jhangvi (LeJ) continue to operate across Pakistan despite government and military operations disrupting their activities. The TTP – effectively an umbrella organisation for predominantly Pashtun Sunni militant groups – splintered into a number of separate groups following the beginning of the

³⁷ BBC News, 'North Waziristan: What happened after militants lost the battle?', 8 March 2017, [url](#).

³⁸ USSD, 'Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2017', (Section 1g), 20 April 2018, [url](#).

³⁹ Jane's, 'Sentinel Security Assessment', (Pakistan – Army), 31 August 2018, subscription only.

⁴⁰ EASO, 'COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation', (Sections 1.2.1 and 1.5), October 2018, [url](#).

⁴¹ EASO, 'COI Meeting Report – Pakistan', (Section 1.3), 16-17 October 2017, [url](#).

crackdown. In early 2017, a number of these splinter groups re-joined the TTP, however, or pledged support for its leader, Mullah Fazlullah. The TTP and its splinter groups maintain a separate identity from the Afghan Taliban, although they remain ideologically aligned.¹⁴²

- 6.2.3 For more detailed information on non-state armed groups and their activity in Pakistan, including the different actors operating in the provinces, see the EASO [COI Report on Pakistan: Security Situation](#)⁴³.
- 6.2.4 For a list of organisations proscribed by Pakistan's Ministry of Interior, see [Annex A](#). The Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) an independent research institute based in Pakistan, reported that 'According to research conducted by CRSS in its own Annual Security Reports from 2015, 2016, and 2017, this list [of proscribed organisations] does not contain names of several groups that have carried out and claimed responsibility for terror attacks in the country. These groups include splinter factions of the TTP and can be found in the [CRSS Annual Security Reports](#).'⁴⁴
- 6.2.5 According to an article in the Express Tribune, dated June 2016, 'The government is struggling to keep a lid on banned organisations which continuously resurface under pseudonyms and new aliases all the while challenging the state's authority.'⁴⁵ The CRSS stated 'Banned organizations seem to be exceptionally prolific in the online space, hold public events, and members contest elections without consequence.'⁴⁶
- 6.2.6 In April 2017, The Diplomat reported on the increased incidences of women's participation in terrorist activities⁴⁷. As noted in the EASO report 'In August 2017, the TTP launched a magazine for women which specifically designed to recruit them. According to Tore Hamming, a researcher on militant Islam, quoted by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) it is an attempt of the TTP to catch up with other extremist groups when it comes to female recruitment.'⁴⁸

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Section 7 updated: 7 December 2018

7. Nature and levels of violence

For updated country information on the security situation in Pakistan, see:

[Armed Conflict Location & Event Data \(ACLED\) - Pakistan](#)

[Center for Research & Security Studies \(CRSS\) – Pakistan Conflict Tracker](#)

[Pak Institute of Peace Studies \(PIPS\)](#)

[Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies \(PiCSS\)](#)

⁴² DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (paragraph 2.40), 1 September 2017, [url](#).

⁴³ EASO, 'COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation', (Sections 1.2.2 and 2.2), October 2018, [url](#).

⁴⁴ CRSS, 'The NAP Tracker - Third Year Audit', (page 44), 14 June 2018, [url](#).

⁴⁵ The Express Tribune, 'Banned groups continue to resurface under new names', 8 June 2016, [url](#).

⁴⁶ CRSS, 'The NAP Tracker - Third Year Audit', (page 65), 14 June 2018, [url](#).

⁴⁷ The Diplomat, 'Pakistan's Women Jihadis', 6 April 2017, [url](#).

⁴⁸ EASO, 'COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation', (Section 1.2.2), October 2018, [url](#).

7.1 Security incidents

- 7.1.1 The EASO [COI Report on Pakistan: Security Situation](#) noted ‘According to sources systematically collecting information on terrorist and anti-state violence in Pakistan, the overall security situation improved in 2017 compared to previous years.’⁴⁹ The report of the UN Secretary General (UNSG) on Children and armed conflict, dated 16 May 2018, noted a progressive decrease in attacks by armed groups since 2009⁵⁰.
- 7.1.2 The UNSG report noted that in 2017, ‘More than half of all incidents were attributed to Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and splinter groups, predominantly in Balochistan and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Reports indicate an increasing presence of ISIL-KP, particularly in Balochistan and northern Sindh.’⁵¹
- 7.1.3 However, as reported by the CRSS in its report on the 2nd quarter of 2018, militants continued to undertake attacks, particularly targeting security personnel. Balochistan remained the most violent province, followed by the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Sindh and Punjab. Karachi and Quetta were the most violent cities in Pakistan and civilians were the largest group affected by the violence⁵².
- 7.1.4 Although Karachi was reported as one of Pakistan’s most violent cities, the CRSS stated in its National Action Plan (NAP) audit report (CRSS NAP report), dated June 2018:
- ‘A major source for decline in violence in Pakistan has been the improving situation in Karachi. Although the city was once considered a hub for political/religious militancy and urban crime, Karachi’s security situation has improved dramatically since 2014. Data collected by the CRSS Annual Security Report of 2017 confirms these trends. Target killing alone fell from 1,671 fatalities in 2013 to 84 in 2017. Meanwhile, terrorism incidents have also reduced drastically in the last two years.’⁵³
- 7.1.5 Challenges in the Pakistan security situation also included the emergence of self-radicalised individuals and small terrorist cells, growing religious radicalism including on educational campuses, cross-border attacks by Pakistani militants based in Afghanistan and the growing footprint of Islamic State⁵⁴ (see also [Non-state armed groups](#)).
- 7.1.6 The CRSS NAP report noted ‘The primary sources of violence that resulted in fatalities included encounters with law enforcement (495), gun violence (399), suicide attacks (298), and bomb explosions (144). Despite the overall decrease, sectarian violence escalated dramatically, with a 32% increase

⁴⁹ EASO, ‘COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation’, (Section 1.3), October 2018, [url](#).

⁵⁰ UNSG, ‘Children and armed conflict’, (paragraph 235), 16 May 2018, [url](#).

⁵¹ UNSG, ‘Children and armed conflict’, (paragraph 235), 16 May 2018, [url](#).

⁵² CRSS, ‘Quarterly Security Report – Q2, 2018’, (pages 3, 4 and 7), 1 June 2018, [url](#).

⁵³ CRSS, ‘The NAP Tracker - Third Year Audit’, (page 74), 14 June 2018, [url](#).

⁵⁴ PIPS, ‘Pakistan Security Report 2017’, (Foreward), 6 January 2018, [url](#).

overall. A total of 319 individuals lost their lives to sectarian violence in 2017, as opposed to 241 in 2016.’⁵⁵

See also [Civilian casualties](#).

- 7.1.7 The Austrian Centre for Country of Origin & Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD) compiled updates on conflict incidents using data collected by the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED). The following reproduced table shows the number of reported incidents and fatalities during 2017⁵⁶.

Province ⁵⁷	No. of incidents	No. of incidents with fatalities	No. of fatalities
Azad Kashmir	76	0	0
Baluchistan	329	120	346
F.A.T.A.	214	92	555
F.C.T.	114	2	3
N.W.F.P.	502	62	203
Northern Areas	13	0	0
Punjab	837	56	215
Sind	2,244	82	279

- 7.1.8 For information on the situation for religious/ethnic minority groups, see the Country Policy and Information Notes on [Pakistan: Ahmadis; Christians and Christian converts; Hazaras; and Shia Muslims](#).
- 7.1.9 For further information, the [EASO Report](#) provided an overview of recent conflicts in Pakistan; information on recent security trends and armed confrontations; and a geographical overview of regional violence in the period 1 June 2017 to 15 August 2018⁵⁸.

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7.2 Drone strikes

- 7.2.1 Information on drone strikes, most of which take place in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), was provided in the EASO [COI Report on Pakistan: Security Situation](#) as documented between 1 June 2017 and 15 August 2018⁵⁹. Whilst the number of strikes and resulting casualties varied

⁵⁵ CRSS, ‘The NAP Tracker - Third Year Audit’, (page 71), 14 June 2018, [url](#).

⁵⁶ ACCORD, ‘Pakistan, year 2017’, 18 June 2018, [url](#).

⁵⁷ F.C.T – Federal Capital Territory; N.W.F.P – now known as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

⁵⁸ EASO, ‘COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation’, (Sections 1.1, 1.3, and 2.1), October 2018, [url](#).

⁵⁹ EASO, ‘COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation’, (Section 1.3.6), October 2018, [url](#).

according to the sources consulted by EASO, overall, strikes have generally decreased since their height in 2010^{60 61}.

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7.3 Targeted groups

7.3.1 The USSD HR Report 2017 noted:

‘Militants and terrorist groups, including the Pakistani Taliban (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, or TTP), Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, and the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) targeted civilians, journalists, community leaders, security forces, law enforcement agents, and schools, killing hundreds and injuring thousands with bombs, suicide attacks, and other forms of violence. Militant and terrorist groups often attacked religious minorities...

‘The terrorist groups TTP, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, and related factions bombed government buildings and attacked and killed female teachers and polio vaccination workers. During the year [2017] there were two reported cases of fatal attacks against health-care workers associated with a polio vaccination campaign. Both incidents took place in KP, the first on May 24 in Bannu and the second on July 2 in Peshawar.’⁶²

7.3.2 The UNSG report noted ‘Attacks on health-care facilities and staff by armed groups continued in 2017, including 113 direct attacks (three personnel killed) or threats against polio vaccinators.’⁶³

7.3.3 According to the English-language United Arab Emirates-based news source, The National, reporting in October 2018, the TTP released a 12-page ‘operations manual’ aimed at ‘giving fighters detailed new instructions about when to use suicide bombings, how to resolve internal quarrels and what to do with spies...’. The National added:

‘The group’s new manual stresses that suicide bombings, which it calls martyrdom operations, should only be carried out “on very important targets” and “not be wasted on worthless targets”. It said that a centralised regional office to oversee the preparation and training of these should be established.

‘Permission for such attacks can only be given at the highest level and “if ever martyrdom operation is carried out on an inappropriate target, then the brothers responsible for the attack shall be punished”.

‘Suicide bombs should also avoid killing and harming members of the public, the guidance claims, despite TTP attacks regularly killing civilians.’⁶⁴

7.3.4 For information on the targeting of religious/ethnic minority groups, see the Country Policy and Information Notes on [Pakistan: Ahmadis; Christians and Christian converts; Hazaras; and Shia Muslims](#).

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⁶⁰ EASO, ‘COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation’, (Section 1.3.6), October 2018, [url](#).

⁶¹ FDD’s Long War Journal, ‘US airstrikes in Pakistan’, September 2018, [url](#).

⁶² USSD, ‘Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2017’, (Section 1g), 20 April 2018, [url](#).

⁶³ UNSG, ‘Children and armed conflict’, (paragraph 239), 16 May 2018, [url](#).

⁶⁴ The National, ‘Stop hitting “worthless targets” with suicide bombings’, 30 October 2018, [url](#).

7.4 Civilian casualties

- 7.4.1 The EASO [COI Report on Pakistan: Security Situation](#) compared the number of civilian casualties using 4 research institutes that presented figures about the situation in 2016/2017, based on different definitions and variables. The institutes are: the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS); the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS); the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP); and the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS). Overall, the number of fatalities declined in 2017 compared to 2016⁶⁵.
- 7.4.2 According to the CRSS, between 2014 and 2017, the total number of violence-related fatalities (including civilians, security forces and militants) declined by over 73%, from 7,655 fatalities in 2014 to 2,057 in 2017⁶⁶.
- 7.4.3 Despite the overall decline in violence-related mortalities, since 2013 the death toll has increased in Punjab province, particularly in relation to religious and sectarian violence in Southern Punjab. However, according to the CRSS NAP report '[...] the overall situation in Punjab is relatively peaceful as compared to other regions.'⁶⁷
- 7.4.4 According to the CRSS, casualties of violence increased in the third quarter of 2018 compared to the previous quarter, up from 521 to 964 (397 dead, 567 wounded). More than 50% of these casualties were recorded in Balochistan alone, followed by KP, Sindh, FATA, and Punjab⁶⁸. However, compared to the previous 3 quarters in 2017, the total number of fatalities during the same period in 2018 declined by 41% (1,585 in 2017 and 930 in 2018)⁶⁹.
- 7.4.5 The Freedom House report, Freedom in the World 2018, noted that the reduction in terrorist-related fatalities was largely due to '[...] the military's suppression of an Islamist insurgency in KPK and the FATA and the pacification of unrest in Karachi. Nevertheless, a separatist insurgency continued in Baluchistan, and Islamist militants were still able to stage high-profile attacks elsewhere in the country.'⁷⁰ (see also [Security incidents](#) and [Counter-terrorism strategies](#))
- 7.4.6 The EASO report provided data on casualties during the first half of 2018⁷¹.
- 7.4.7 The [EASO Report](#) also provided information on the impact of violence on the civilian population within each province, including violence-related fatalities by district in 2017⁷².

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⁶⁵ EASO, 'COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation', (Section 1.4), October 2018, [url](#).

⁶⁶ CRSS, 'The NAP Tracker - Third Year Audit', (pages 69-70), 14 June 2018, [url](#).

⁶⁷ CRSS, 'The NAP Tracker - Third Year Audit', (pages 114-115), 14 June 2018, [url](#).

⁶⁸ CRSS, 'Quarterly Security Report 2018 Third Quarter, 2018', 18 October 2018, [url](#).

⁶⁹ CRSS, 'Quarterly Security Report 2018 Third Quarter, 2018', 18 October 2018, [url](#).

⁷⁰ Freedom House, 'Freedom in the World 2018 – Pakistan', (Section F3), 5 January 2018, [url](#).

⁷¹ EASO, 'COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation', (Section 1.4), October 2018, [url](#).

⁷² EASO, 'COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation', (Section 2), October 2018, [url](#).

7.5 Impact on women and children

- 7.5.1 Human Rights Watch (HRW) noted in its report covering 2017 events that ‘Attacks on schools and the use of children in suicide bombings by the Taliban and affiliated armed extremist groups continued during the year.’⁷³

See also [Child soldiers](#).

- 7.5.2 The UNSG report on Children and armed conflict noted:

‘Age-disaggregated data on civilian casualties are limited, but incidents of children killed and injured in attacks by armed groups continued to be reported. In February, at least 75 people, including 20 children, were reportedly killed in a suicide attack in Sehwan, Sindh Province. In April, 14 persons, including 4 children, were reportedly killed when a passenger vehicle struck a roadside bomb in the Gudar area, FATA. ISIL-KP and TTP-Jamaat-ul-Ahrar both claimed the attack.

‘Eight attacks on educational facilities and students were reported, four targeting girls’ education. For example, in March, unidentified individuals vandalized the Oxford Public School, located in Ghizer Valley, Gilgit-Baltistan, and threatened to bomb the school if female teachers did not cover themselves. In the same month, a girls’ school located in Qila Abdullah in Balochistan Province was damaged in an attack, through the use of improvised explosive devices.’⁷⁴

- 7.5.3 For further information on attacks against educational facilities, staff and students, see the [Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack \(GCPEA\)](#) Pakistan profile for 2018.
- 7.5.4 For further information on the impact on children see section 1.4.2 of the 2018 EASO [COI Report on Pakistan: Security Situation](#).

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7.6 Child soldiers

- 7.6.1 The report of the UN Secretary General (UNSG) on Children and armed conflict, dated 16 May 2018, noted ‘The United Nations continued to receive reports of the recruitment and use of children, including from madrasas, and allegations of the use of children by armed groups for suicide attacks. In January [2017], TTP released a video showing children, including girls, being instructed in how to perpetrate suicide attacks.’⁷⁵

- 7.6.2 According to the USSD human rights report for 2017:

‘Nonstate militant groups kidnapped boys and girls and used fraudulent promises to coerce parents into giving away children as young as 12 to spy, fight, or die as suicide bombers. The militants sometimes offered parents money, often sexually and physically abused the children, and used psychological coercion to convince the children the acts they committed

⁷³ HRW, ‘World Report 2018’, (Women and children’s rights), 18 January 2018, [url](#).

⁷⁴ UNSG, ‘Children and armed conflict’, (paragraphs 237-238), 16 May 2018, [url](#).

⁷⁵ UNSG, ‘Children and armed conflict’, (paragraph 236), 16 May 2018, [url](#).

were justified. The government operated a center in Swat to rehabilitate and educate former child soldiers.’⁷⁶

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Section 8 updated: 7 December 2018

8. Counter-terrorism strategies

8.1 Military operations

- 8.1.1 The USSD Country Report on Terrorism for 2017 noted in regard to Pakistan that ‘Military, paramilitary, and civilian security forces conducted counterterrorism operations throughout Pakistan’. The report added:

‘The Government of Pakistan continued to implement the Antiterrorism Act (ATA) of 1997, the National Counterterrorism Authority Act (NACTA), the 2014 Investigation for Fair Trial Act, and 2014 amendments to the ATA, all of which allow enhanced law enforcement and prosecutorial powers for terrorism cases. The law allows for preventive detention, permits the death penalty for terrorism offenses, and creates special Anti-Terrorism Courts. On March 31, however, the government renewed for two more years a constitutional amendment allowing military courts to try civilians on terrorism charges. Critics argued the military courts were not transparent and were being used to silence civil society activists.’⁷⁷

- 8.1.2 Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment noted in its section on security in Pakistan, dated 5 October 2018:

‘Terrorism risks have declined markedly since the military launched counter-militancy operations against Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) strongholds in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in 2014. According to Jane’s Terrorism and Insurgency Centre, total militant attacks in Pakistan fell to 367 in 2017 from 414 in 2016, marking a year-on-year decrease of 12% and the third consecutive year of declining attacks in the country, although militant operations have arguably stabilised following significantly larger decreases of 42% and 38% in 2015 and 2016, respectively. The operations disputed [sic] the TTP’s supply chain of fighters, arms, and explosives, reducing the group’s capability to carry out sophisticated attacks against targets with enhanced security measures.’⁷⁸

- 8.1.3 The CRSS NAP report of June 2018 noted, in its conclusion on counter-terrorism, that whilst further reforms were required to maintain Pakistan’s counter-terrorism strategies ‘Overall there seems to be significant progress on the counterterrorism front. The kinetic operations conducted across the country seem to have gained a lot of ground. While other mechanisms, such as choking finances and communications seem to have mixed results. Undoubtedly, the noose has been tightened around armed militias and terror outfits, and a prime example of this is multiple groups clamoring to take responsibility for terror attacks.’⁷⁹

⁷⁶ USSD, ‘Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2017’, (Section 1g), 20 April 2018, [url](#).

⁷⁷ USSD, ‘Country Reports on Terrorism 2017’, (Pakistan), 19 September 2018, [url](#).

⁷⁸ Jane’s, ‘Sentinel Security Assessment’, (Pakistan – Security), 5 October 2018, subscription only.

⁷⁹ CRSS, ‘The NAP Tracker - Third Year Audit’, (page 88), 14 June 2018, [url](#).

- 8.1.4 In its overview of Pakistan's attempts to address regional conflicts, the CRSS NAP report stated:

'Conflict resolution in FATA is being sought through a combination of driving out militants under Operation Zarb-e-Azb, and a FATA Reforms Committee which has recommended judicial reforms and merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

'Although Punjab, for the most part, remained free of any major local conflicts, a string of attacks in early 2017 prompted the state to address growing concerns regarding militancy safe havens in Punjab, and Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad was also launched in the same month.

'The Karachi operation, previously under Zarb-e-Azb and now under Raddul-Fasaad, is also continuing and there has been a documented, dramatic decline in violence. However, concerns are emerging over the issue of extrajudicial killings as an accepted part of the sprawling metropolis' law enforcement regime.

'The state is attempting to control the security situation in Balochistan, particularly the Baloch insurgents, and addressing the many grievances of the historically neglected Baloch people, with mixed results. Violence in the province also declined considerably during 2017.'⁸⁰

- 8.1.5 The USSD HR Report 2017 noted 'There were reports that government security forces caused civilian casualties and engaged in extrajudicial killings during operations against militants. Security forces killed militants throughout the country. There were numerous media reports of police and security forces killing terrorist suspects in "police encounters." Some observers believed security forces orchestrated at least some of these killings.'⁸¹
- 8.1.6 For further information on military operations launched by Pakistan's armed forces, aimed at eradicating militant violence, see the EASO [COI Report on Pakistan: Security Situation](#)⁸².
- 8.1.7 For information on state protection, including human rights abuses committed by state security forces, see the Country Policy and Information Note on [Pakistan: Background information, including actors of protection and internal relocation](#).

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⁸⁰ CRSS, 'The NAP Tracker - Third Year Audit', (page 110), 14 June 2018, [url](#).

⁸¹ USSD, 'Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2017', (Section 1g), 20 April 2018, [url](#).

⁸² EASO, 'COI Report Pakistan: Security Situation', (Sections 1.1.1 and 1.3.1), October 2018, [url](#).

Annex A: Proscribed organisations in Pakistan

List of organisations proscribed by the Ministry of Interior⁸³

#	Organisation	Proscription date
1.	Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ)	14 August 2001
2.	Sipah-i-Muhammad Pakistan (SMP)	14 August 2001
3.	Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM)	14 January 2002
4.	Laskar-e-Tayyiba (LeT)	14 January 2002
5.	Sipah-i -Sahaba Pakistan (SSP)	14 January 2002
6.	Tehrik-e-Jaffria Pakistan (TJP)	28 January 2002
7.	Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammad (TNSM)	14 January 2002
8.	Tehreek-e-Islami	14 January 2002
9.	Al-Qa'ida	17 March 2003
10.	Millat-e-Islamia Pakistan (Ex SSP)	15 November 2003
11.	Khuddam-ul-Islam (Ex JeM)	15 November 2003
12.	Islami Tehreek Pakistan (Ex TJP)	15 November 2003
13.	Jamat-ul-Ansar	20 November 2003
14.	Jamat-ul-Furqan	20 November 2003
15.	Hizb-ul-Tahreer	20 November 2003
16.	Khair-un-Naas International Trust	27 October 2004
17.	Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)	7 April 2006
18.	Islamic Students Movement of Pakistan	21 August 2006
19.	Lashkar-e-Islami	30 June 2008
20.	Ansar-ul-Islam	30 June 2008
21.	Haji Namdaar Group	30 June 2008
22.	Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)	25 August 2008
23.	Balochistan Republican Army (BRA)	8 September 2010
24.	Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF)	8 September 2010
25.	Lashkar-e-Balochistan (LeB)	8 September 2010
26.	Balochistan Liberation United Front (BLUF)	8 September 2010
27.	Balochistan Musalla Defah Tanzeem (BMDT)	8 September 2010
28.	Shia Tulaba Action Committee, Gilgit	10 October 2011
29.	Markaz Sabeel Organization, Gilgit	10 October 2011
30.	Tanzeem Naujawana-e-Ahle Sunnat (TNA), Gilgit	10 October 2011
31.	Peoples Aman Committee (Layari)	10 October 2011
32.	Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamat (ASWJ) Ex-SSP	15 February 2012
33.	Al Harmain Foundation	6 March 2012
34.	Rabita Trust	6 March 2012
35.	Anjuman-e- Imamia Gilgit Baltistan	24 April 2012

⁸³ MoI, NACTA, 'Proscribed Organizations', 5 September 2018, [url](#).

36. Muslim Students Organization (MSO) Gilgit	24 April 2012
37. Tanzeem Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamat, Gilgit	5 June 2012
38. Balochistan Bunyad Parast Army	4 August 2012
39. Tehreek Nafaz-e-Aman	4 August 2012
40. Tahafuz Hadudullah	4 August 2012
41. Balochisan Waja Liberation Army	4 August 2012
42. Baloch Republican Party Azad	4 August 2012
43. Balochistan United Army	4 August 2012
44. Islam Mujahidin	4 August 2012
45. Jaish-e-Islam	4 August 2012
46. Balochistan National Liberation Army	4 August 2012
47. Khana-E-Hikmat Gilgit Baltistan, Gilgit	13 March 2013
48. Tehrik-e- Taliban Swat (TTS)	15 March 2013
49. Tehrik-e- Taliban Mohmand (TTM)	15 March 2013
50. Tariq Geedar Group (TGG)	15 March 2013
51. Abdullah Azam Brigade	15 March 2013
52. East Turkmenistan Islamic Movement (ETIM)	15 March 2013
53. Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)	15 March 2013
54. Islamic Jihad Union (IJU)	15 March 2013
55. 313 Brigade	15 March 2013
56. Tehrik-e- Taliban Bajaur (TTB)	15 March 2013
57. Amar bil Maroof Wa Nahi Anil Munkir	15 March 2013
58. Baloch Student Organization Azad (BSO-A)	15 March 2013
59. United Baloch Army(UBA)	15 March 2013
60. Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMM)	15 March 2013
61. Daish/ISIL/IS/ISIS	15 July 2015
62. Jamat Ul Ahrar (JuA)	11 November 2016
63. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi Al-Almi (LeJA)	11 November 2016
64. Ansar-ul-Hussain	30 December 2016
65. Tehreek-e-Azadi-Jammu & Kashmir (TAJK)	8 June 2017
66. Jundullah	31 January 2018

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Terms of Reference

A 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) is a broad outline of what the CPIN seeks to cover. They form the basis for the [country information section](#). The Home Office's Country Policy and Information Team uses some standardised ToRs, depending on the subject, and these are then adapted depending on the country concerned.

For this particular CPIN, the following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Security situation
 - Overview
- Actors in the conflict
 - State armed forces
 - Non-state armed groups
- Nature and levels of violence
 - Security incidents
 - Drone strikes
 - Casualties/impact on civilians
- Counter-terrorism strategies
 - Military operations
- Humanitarian situation
 - Internally displaced persons
 - Refugees

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Version control

Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **2.0**
- valid from **4 January 2019**

Changes from last version of this note

Updated country information and assessment on the security and humanitarian situation and incorporating fear of the Taliban and other militant groups.

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