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Serious and individual threat

This section presents a general framework regarding the individual elements which may be relevant to consider in the assessment of a serious and individual threat in territories where the ‘mere presence’ threshold is not reached.

Certain personal circumstances could contribute to an enhanced risk of being subjected to indiscriminate violence, including its direct and indirect consequences.

It is important to differentiate these individual elements from the individual elements taken into account at other stages in the analysis:

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In the context of the ‘sliding scale’, each case should be assessed individually, taking into account the nature and intensity of the violence in the area, along with the combination of personal circumstances present in the applicant’s case. It is not feasible to provide exhaustive guidance about what the relevant personal circumstances could be and how those should be assessed.

Some examples of personal circumstances that could affect the level of risk under Article 15(c) QD, depending on the specificities of each country of origin, may include:

- **Age**: when assessing the risk of indiscriminate violence, this personal circumstance may be of particular importance in relation to the ability of the person to assess the risks. Children may not be in a position to quickly assess and avoid risks related to a volatile security situation or associated risks, such as those of unexploded remnants of war. In some cases, elderly age may also impact the person’s ability to assess and avoid risks associated with an armed conflict.
- **Gender**: when assessing the applicability of Article 15(c) QD, the respective role of men and women in society and the perceptions of it may expose them to a differentiated level of risk and should be assessed accordingly. Their vulnerability to armed confrontations and targeted attacks may also differ.
- **Health condition and disabilities, including mental health issues**: serious illnesses and disabilities may result in restricted mobility for a person, making it difficult for them to avoid immediate risks and, in the case of mental illnesses, it can make them less capable of assessing risks. In other cases, such conditions may require frequent visits to a healthcare facility. Depending on the road security and the potential targeting of healthcare facilities, the latter may have additional implications related to the assessment

of the risk under Article 15(c) QD.

- **Occupation and/or place of residence**: the occupation and/or place of residence the person is likely to have when they return to their home area may also be relevant to assess the risk under Article 15(c) QD. It may, for example, be linked to the need for the applicant to travel through areas where road incidents are often reported, or to frequent locations known to be particularly targeted in the conflict.
- **Economic situation**: applicants in a particularly dire economic situation may be less able to avoid the risks associated with indiscriminate violence. They may be forced to expose themselves to risks such as working in areas which are affected by violence in order to meet their basic needs. They may also have less resources to avoid an imminent threat by relocating to a different area.
- **Knowledge of the area**: when assessing the risk of indiscriminate violence under Article 15(c) QD, the relevant knowledge of the area concerns the patterns of violence it is affected by. Different elements may contribute to a person's knowledge of the area. It can relate to their experience in the area or in areas similarly affected by indiscriminate violence. For example, being born or having lived for many years outside the country can impact the applicant's ability to assess the risks in the home area.
- **Family members or support network**: the lack of family members or a support network could affect the applicant's economic situation and place of residence/occupation and may also prevent them from being informed on risks relevant to the indiscriminate violence in a situation of an armed conflict.

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For further general guidance on Article 15(c) QD, including the remaining elements of the examination, see the section 'Serious and individual threat to a civilian's life or person by reason of indiscriminate violence in situations of international or internal armed conflict', p.30, of the EUAA **Practical guide: Qualification for international protection**.

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