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2.4. Individuals (perceived as) contravening religious or social norms

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: August 2023

This profile refers to individuals whose actions, behaviours, or practices are seen as transgressing religious, moral and/or societal norms. Practices perceived as a transgression of these norms depend on several factors such as local context, actors involved and their interpretation of these norms.

COI summary

Treatment by society

Customs and customary law also continue to play an important role in Belgravian society. There are reports that persons who transgress cultural, social or religious norms could face punishment by their families or communities. Adultery or extra-marital relationship, may lead to honour-based violence, especially but not exclusively against women. Honour killings are rarely investigated and punished. Additionally, for example, been reported that behaviour on social media and adoption of a more western lifestyle could lead to stigma and threats.

Treatment by Blestil

Blestil is targeting people that show signs of deviating morality according to their interpretation of religious norms. Men and especially women face pressure to conform to conservative standards on personal appearances. Women have been targeted for assassination by members of the group, for example, due to wearing the ‘wrong’ clothes, or (allegedly) being connected to prostitution. Individuals’ presence on social media can be also perceived as ‘amoral’. Death threats and incidents of severe physical violence have been widely reported.

Conclusions and guidance

Do the acts qualify as persecution under Article 9 QD?

Acts reported to be committed against individuals under this profile are of such severe nature that they amount to persecution (e.g. killing, severe physical violence).

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: area of origin and operational capacity of Blestil, the moral and/or societal norm transgressed, gender (the risk is higher for women), conservative environment, perception of traditional gender roles by the family and society, etc.



What is the level of risk of persecution (well-founded fear)?

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: area of origin and operational capacity of Blestil, the moral and/or societal norm transgressed, gender (the risk is higher for women), conservative environment, perception of traditional gender roles by the family and society, etc.



Are the reasons for persecution falling within Article 10 QD (nexus)?

Available information indicates that persecution of this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of religion. In some cases, persecution may be for reasons of membership of a particular social group. For example, individuals seen as transgressing moral norms may have a well-founded fear of persecution based on their common background which cannot be changed (perceived past behaviour) or a shared characteristic or 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). They may also be considered to have a distinct identity in Belgravia, as they may be viewed as being different from the surrounding society.

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