News Published: 18 June 2024

Afghanistan: Latest EUAA guidance confirms on-going protection needs



The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) has published an updated common analysis of the situation in Afghanistan. The newly published Country Guidance, unanimously endorsed by the 27 EU Member States, confirms that Afghan women and girls and other vulnerable groups remain at risk of persecution in their country.

According to the EUAA's most recent figures, Afghanistan remains the country with the second most applicants for international protection in the EU. In this context, the 'Country Guidance: Afghanistan' is a key instrument to foster convergence in the assessment of such applications by EU asylum policy-makers and case officers.

The Country Guidance is based on up-to-date country of origin information (COI) and also reflects the latest jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union. In the assessment of EU Member States as well as associated countries; due to the persistent denial of their human rights and fundamental freedoms by the Taliban de facto government, **Afghan women and girls** remain at risk of persecution in their home country.

The 2024 Country Guidance also confirms the ongoing protection needs of a wide range of other profiles targeted by the Taliban, such as **former Afghan government officials, persons affiliated with foreign forces, (perceived) anti-Taliban resistance groups, human rights defenders**, and **individuals perceived**

to have transgressed religious, moral and/or societal norms. A number of religious and ethnic minorities also are exposed to risks of persecution or serious harm, either by the Taliban or the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP).

Finally, due to the **enduring dire humanitarian situation**, along with **severe restrictions of movements** and **security concerns**, the Guidance concludes that in general, there is at present no internal protection alternative in any part of Afghanistan.

Asylum Situation for Afghan nationals

In 2023, **Afghan nationals lodged just under 118 000 asylum applications** in the EU+ countries; which, while making them the 2nd highest applicant group last year; was nevertheless a 12 % decrease year-over-year. During the year, just over **one fifth of all applicants were female**. **Germany** remained the main destination country, with **over a third of Afghan applications** being lodged there.In 2023, Afghan citizens were issued over **90 000 first instance decisions in EU+ countries**, almost three fifths of which were taken by Germany and France. The **recognition rate stood at 55 %** (half of whom were granted refugee status). At the end of January 2024, around 72 000 Afghan cases were pending a first instance decision in the EU+.

Background

The country guidance documents provide country-specific, common analysis and guidance in relation to the assessment criteria of international protection needs established in the Qualification Directive. They are developed together with senior policy officials from EU+ countries.

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

Download Country Guidance Afghanistan.

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