News Published: 11 November 2024

Afghanistan: An update on the Taliban's new "Morality law"



The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) has just published a Country-of-Origin Information (COI) report on Afghanistan. It provides information on the political context and human rights situation in the country, as well as an update on the general security situation and the treatment of selected profiles.

Over three years have passed since the Taliban took power in Afghanistan. Islamic law (sharia) serves as the legal framework in the country, and the still unrecognised de facto authorities have issued a series of instructions limiting the personal rights and freedoms of the Afghan population. On 21 August 2024, the Taliban announced a new 'Morality law', **imposing restrictions including on general dress codes, women's voices**, a prohibition of featuring animate objects in the media (e.g., pictures of humans and animals), and congregational prayer.

The EUAA's latest report provides detailed information on the so-called "Morality Law" and on how sharia is being enforced across Afghanistan, **noting the vague nature of the instructions**, sometimes impossible to implement, and outlines the **inconsistent enforcement across provinces** and communities. Although enforcement is less stringent than during the Taliban's rule from 1996 to 2001, women and girls continue to **experience limitations in access to education, employment, health and justice**, as well as in freedom of

movement and freedom of expression. The Taliban believe in a one-party system of governance and have **cracked down harshly on armed and political opposition**. The civic space has shrunk significantly and Afghanistan now ranks as the third worst country in the world in terms of press freedom, according to Reporters Without Borders (RSF).

Conflict-related violence has continued to decrease, as no resistance group poses a realistic threat to the Taliban's hold on power. However, this comes as many households are facing food insecurity and malnutrition. The **humanitarian situation remains precarious**, therefore. In addition, and as gender-segregation is central to the Taliban's enforcement of sharia, many decisions impact women and girls' access to public spaces. In fact, **women-headed households struggle especially**, as they cannot travel certain distances or access some services without a male relative accompanying them.

EU Asylum situation for Afghan nationals

Between January–August 2024, **Afghans were the second largest nationality** applying for international protection in the EU+, with a total of **60 000 asylum applications lodged**. However, this constitutes a decrease by a fifth compared to the same period in 2023. Monthly applications in 2024 have not surpassed 9 000 since and have been at the lowest levels in over three years. Germany remained the main destination country, with over two fifths of Afghan applications being lodged there.

In the same period, Afghan applicants were issued over **66 000 first instance decisions in the EU+ countries**, almost two fifths of them in Germany. The recognition rate for Afghan applicants stood at 65%, just slightly above that of 2023 (61 %). At the end of August 2024, around 63 000 Afghan cases were pending at first instance in the EU+, which was stable compared to previous months, but significantly lower than in 2023.

Background

The EUAA regularly updates its Country-of-Origin Information reports, which aim to provide accurate and reliable up-to-date information on third countries to support EU+ national asylum and migration authorities involved in migration and international protection procedures.

The report was prepared in accordance with the EUAA COI Report Methodology and was drafted by EUAA COI Sector's researchers. The report was reviewed by several COI Units in EU+ countries. This information is a crucial component when assessing individual protection needs.

Download COI Report, Afghanistan - Country Focus.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Union Agency for Asylum's Press Office at the following email addresses:

- Press Office: press@euaa.europa.eu
- Andrew McKinlay, Press Officer: andrew.mckinlay@euaa.europa.eu
- Anis Cassar, Spokesperson: anis.cassar@euaa.europa.eu

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu