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Pakistan: EUAA publishes first Country Focus report



The EUAA has just published a Country-of-Origin Information (COI) report on Pakistan. It provides an overview of the political and security context of the country, the treatment of certain profiles and groups of the population and the situation of Afghan refugees in the country.

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) has just published a new Country Focus on Pakistan, a Country-of-Origin Information report. This new report outlines **the political and security context** in Pakistan, the main actors involved in shaping it, the role of the judiciary, as well as the **treatment of certain profiles** and groups of the population in the country.

Violence in Pakistan has escalated since October 2023 particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, with groups such as the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) intensifying their insurgent activities. The Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP) has also intensified its activities and the dissemination of propaganda, the latter **by using artificial intelligence (AI)** to spread its narratives.

The former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, and his party, the **Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), have faced significant legal challenges** and political setbacks following their defeat in 2022. The former Prime Minister's imprisonment as well as the crackdown on PTI by the authorities have sparked nationwide protests, underscoring the **deepening political turmoil** in the country.

Media censorship, repression and human rights abuses intensified ahead of the 2024 elections. **Ethnic minorities**, including Pashtuns and Baloch **faced widespread discrimination and violence**. Sectarian violence has further affected groups such as **Shia Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians**, and **Ahmadis**. Women and children **faced discrimination**, **violence**, and **legal barriers**, with high rates of child labour and forced marriages. Transgender individuals continued to experience violence, despite legal protections.

Pakistan's economy struggled in 2023, with rising poverty, inflation, and unemployment, all of which have been worsened by the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) austerity measures. By September 2024, there were **over 3 million Afghans residing in Pakistan**. The government's 'Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan (IFRP)', initiated in September 2023, has led to the return of 738 583 Afghans and has also resulted in arrests, harassment, and an increasingly hostile environment.

Asylum situation for Pakistani nationals in the EU+

Between October 2023 and October 2024, Pakistani nationals lodged 28 000 applications for international protection in the EU+. After reaching a peak in October 2023, when Pakistanis lodged around 3 400 applications, the monthly figures have followed a downward trend, standing at 1 900 in October 2024. **Italy was the main receiving country for Pakistani applications**, followed at a distance by France, Greece and Germany.

Over the same period, EU+ countries issued around 20 000 decisions at first instance on Pakistani applications, with just 12 % of granting refugee status or subsidiary protection. At the end of October 2024, there were nearly 34 000 decisions pending at first instance.

Download Pakistan - 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

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