

Please cite as: EUAA, 'Civilian' in *Country Guidance: Explained*, February 2026.

Civilian

Being a civilian is a prerequisite in order to be able to benefit from protection under Article 15(c) QD/QR. The purpose of the provision is to protect only those who are not taking part in the conflict. This includes the potential application of Article 15(c) QD/QR to former combatants who have genuinely and permanently renounced armed activity.

Country-specific guidance usually provides a non-exhaustive list of profiles which may not qualify as civilians under Article 15(c) QD/QR.

It should be noted that actively taking part in hostilities is not limited to openly carrying arms but could also include substantial logistical and/or administrative support to combatants.

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