

Please cite as: EUAA, '4.6. Persons with perceived links to ISIL' in *Country Guidance: Syria*, December 2025.

4.6. Persons with perceived links to ISIL

COMMON ANALYSIS | Last update: December 2025

This profile refers to persons with perceived links to ISIL, to family members of such persons, and to persons who have resided in a territory previously controlled by ISIL. It should be noted that a very careful examination of international protection needs and possible exclusion issues should be conducted in relation to those with actual affiliation to ISIL. For example, applications from individuals formerly detained in SDF-managed camps Al-Hol and Al-Roj and other detention facilities in Northeast Syria should be examined carefully in relation to their potential actual affiliation to ISIL as well as their individual responsibility.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI reports: COI Update, 4.; Country Focus July 2025, 2.3., 5.1.3.; Country Focus March 2025, 1.1., 1.3.5., 2.5.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

In itself, the prosecution of the criminal acts of the insurgents and their targeting in accordance with the rules of international humanitarian law do not amount to persecution.

However, other acts to which persons falling under this profile could be exposed are of such a severe nature that they would amount to persecution, such as extrajudicial killings, arbitrary and mass detentions and abusive treatment in detention facilities.

Persons with perceived links to ISIL have been targeted by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and the General Security Services (GSS) of the Transitional Government. Between March 2025 and May 2025, the SDF carried out mass raids and arrests against civilians under the pretext of combating ISIL cells. There are reports that the Transitional Government also carried out security operations against ISIL, resulting in the death of ISIL fighters and persons accused of being affiliated with ISIL. Around 9 000 male ISIL suspects are detained without due process in northeast Syria and around 42 500 individuals, mainly women and children, including family members and ISIL associates, are held in camps such as Al-Hol and Al-Roj. Civilians suspected of being ISIL affiliates continued to be targeted at least until end of September 2025.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

Given the severity of treatment they are subjected to by the SDF and the GSS of the Transitional Government, **for persons with perceived links to ISIL and the family members of such persons, well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated.**

Additionally, **there is no available information substantiating that, in itself, the mere fact of having resided in a territory previously controlled by ISIL is sufficient to establish perceived links to ISIL.**

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Persecution of applicants under this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of **(imputed) political opinion**, as being affiliated with ISIL is perceived as a political opinion.



Exclusion considerations are particularly relevant to this profile, as members of ISIL may have been involved in excludable acts. See 8. Exclusion.

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