3.5. Individuals with (perceived) affiliation to the Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP)

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: June 2026

This profile refers to a) persons wrongly perceived as supporting or being affiliated to the ISKP (e.g. for the mere fact of residing in the group's area(s) of operations/control), b) former members as well as other persons who participated in the activities of the ISKP.

Exclusion cases should be detected as early as possible. An applicant shall be excluded from being a refugee where there are serious reasons for considering that they have committed or have incited or otherwise participated in the commission of the crimes or acts referred to in Article 12(2) QR.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA products: COI Update 2026, Annex II; Country Focus 2026, 4.3.2.; Country Focus 2024, 2.2., 2.3.; Country Focus 2023, 1.1.1.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The ISKP has opposed the Taliban rule with armed force. The *de facto* authorities responded with intense counteroperations efforts, which targeted also prominent members of the Salafi communities and other civilians without actual links to ISKP in the provinces of Nangarhar and Kunar. After significantly weakening ISKP operational capacity, the *de facto* authorities shifted to a different approach, with 'less frequent but more targeted detentions'. Suspected ISKP affiliates were still reported to be targeted in 2024 and 2025.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Acts to which individuals under this profile could be exposed are of a such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. Notably, in 2024, young Salafis without actual links to ISKP were kidnapped, beheaded and killed in extrajudicial killings in Nangarhar province, although in lower numbers than in previous years due to most targets having been

killed or having relocated to other provinces. Targeting of suspected ISKP affiliates was reported also in 2025, in particular against those who did not pledge allegiance to the Taliban. In Takhar province, during the period 1 December 2025–20 March 2026, one person was arrested on accusations of being a member of the ISKP.

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that individuals under this profile could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should be considered. Due to general suspicion against Salafis, Salafi elders reported discrimination from the Taliban, also in areas where ISKP activity had ceased.

See also 3.12.3. Salafis.

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

A well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for individuals under this profile, as they continue to be targeted by the *de facto* authorities, owing to their alleged allegiance with the group.

If there are indications of an applicant's association with acts or groups considered to be of a 'terrorist' nature, this is a strong indication that exclusion should be explored.

In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see 3.13. Women and girls

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Persecution of individuals under this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of **political opinion** and/or **religion** as ISKP is considered being an opponent of the political and religious agenda of the Taliban.

Former membership and/or participation in the activities of the ISKP should trigger exclusion considerations. An individual assessment of the specific facts must always be conducted.

In the case of a minor, grounds negating individual responsibility, including duress, should be carefully assessed. In the case of an applicant who has been a member of the leadership of that group, there is no need to establish that himself or herself instigated a terrorist act or otherwise participated in it[7]. See also 7. Exclusion

- [7]

  CJEU, Mostafa Lounani v Commissaire général aux réfugiés et aux apatrides, C-573/14, Grand Chamber, judgment of 31 January 2017.

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