

3.12.3. Salafis

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: COI Update 2026, 1.; Country Focus 2026, 1.2.1., 4.3.2., 4.8.1., 4.8.9.; Country Focus 2024, 4.3.2.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The Afghan Salafis, of whom there are several hundred thousands in the country, reside mainly in the eastern provinces of Nangarhar, Kunar, and Nuristan. In the first years after the takeover, the Taliban have reportedly been cracking down on Salafis perceived as associated with the ISKP. Hostility towards the community in general is reported, with pressure on some Salafi madrassas to conform with Hanafi doctrines. The *de facto* authorities have closed multiple Salafi madrassas and reportedly also Salafi mosques.

Additionally, in 2026, the *de facto* government issued a 'Criminal Procedure Code for Courts'. Although there is currently no available information about its implementation, it is reported that the law refers to those following Muslim branches other than the Hanafi school of thought or other religions as 'heretics'.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Some acts to which Salafis could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. More specifically, it is mentioned that some people have been arrested for praying 'Salafi-style', as well as Salafi women and children have been arrested without charges. Additionally, young Salafis, believed to work for or being part of the ISKP, have been kidnapped from their homes, beheaded and killed in extrajudicial killings in the province of Nangarhar.

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that Salafis could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should be also considered. For example, it was noted that persons were not allowed to enter mosques and pray Salafi-style.

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

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for Salafis to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Visibility**: individuals advocating for Salafi or non-Hanafi practicing of Islam may be exposed to higher risk.
- **Role and function**: Salafis having more prominent roles such as Imam and teachers may be exposed to higher risk; for example a Salafi religious scholar was shot dead in Badakhshan Province.
- **Affiliation with pro-Taliban groups**: Salafis under Jamaat al-Dawah (which involves most Salafis in Kunar, and some Salafis in Nangarhar) have not been targeted by the Taliban as they pledged allegiance to the Taliban in 2020.

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

For further guidance on the targeting of the Salafi community linked to their perceived support and affiliation to ISKP, see 3.5. Individuals with (perceived) affiliation to the Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP).

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for an applicant under this profile it is highly likely to be for reasons of **political opinion** and/or **religion**, as being perceived as supportive of the ISKP would be seen as political dissent and being an adherent of Salafi religion could be seen as conflicting with the Taliban's version of Islam.

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