

3.16.1. Blood feuds

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: June 2026

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: Country Focus 2026, 4.8.3.; Country Focus 2024, 4.4.8., Key Socio economic indicators 2019, 3.1.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Blood feuds for revenge-taking can be the result of personal violence or wrong-doing that is seen as being against honour, disputes involving land, or in the context of family conflicts and relationships. Blood feuds in Afghanistan are historically ‘widespread’ among Pashtun tribes but exist, to some extent, among all ethnic groups. These feuds do not have a specific time limit to end and may last for generations. It is reported that ‘shifts in cultural norms’ in Afghan society had led to a noticeable decline in blood feuds and their intensity, but since the Taliban takeover blood feud cases are reportedly re-emerging. However, it is noted that tribal elders, youth and jirgas are playing a more active role in mediation and conflict resolution.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Acts to which individuals involved in a blood feud could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. Blood feuds may last for generations and involve acts such as killings. Related acts may involve the practice of baad, which refers to the exchange of girls and women between families or clans.

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

For men directly involved in a blood feud, well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated as these feuds may last for generations and involve male family members as they are responsible for the accumulation of honour and reputation.

For children and for men who are farther removed from the feud, the individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for the applicant to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Perception of traditional norms:** blood feuds or revenge killings are closely connected to notions of honour, pride and shame ‘as seen through tribal customs and centuries-old traditions in Afghan society’, therefore individuals from more traditional context may be exposed to higher risk. On the other hand, individuals with access to education, knowledge

of other cultures and values and inter-tribal connectivity may be exposed to a lower risk.
- **Availability, accessibility and effectivity of mediation mechanisms:** blood feuds and retaliation killings are mainly resolved through informal *jirga* resolution. Many unresolved conflicts from previous generations had become less violent as tribal elders, youth and *jirgas* were 'playing a more active role in mediation and conflict resolution'.
- **Open and unresolved nature of a blood feud: w**hile the absence of recent violent incidents does not necessarily indicate that a blood feud has ceased, the risk may be higher when the feud is actively being fought.
- **Duration of the blood feud: b**lood feuds that are not resolved often gradually involve more family members and can expand from family to clan and tribe level, exposing their members to a higher risk.

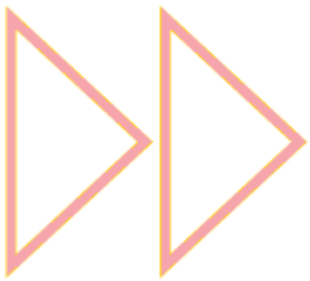
In the case of a female applicant under this profile, it is reminded that in light of the current situation, a well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated for Afghan women and girls.

For additional information, see 3.13. Women and girls

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

The individual circumstances of the applicant need to be taken into account to determine whether or not a nexus to a reason for persecution can be substantiated in relation to the risks related to blood feuds21.

Where there is no nexus to a reason for persecution, (the risk of) being exposed to blood feud may qualify under Article 15(a) and/or Article 15(b) QR, depending on the severity of its consequences in the individual case.



Exclusion considerations could be relevant to this profile as individuals involved in blood feuds may have engaged in excludable acts. See 7. Exclusion.

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CJEU, Bundesamt für Fremdenwesen und Asyl v AN, C-217/23, Third Chamber, judgment of 27 March 2025, paras 38 - 39: *38 In the present case, subject to verification to be carried out by the referring court, it is not apparent from the documents before the Court that, in their country of origin, the group made up of the members of a particular family targeted by a blood feud the cause of which is a property dispute is perceived as being different not only by the members of the families involved in that blood feud, but by the surrounding society as a whole.*

39 It follows from the foregoing that the fact that an applicant for international protection is exposed, in his or her country of origin, to a risk of physical violence extending to homicide as part of a blood feud targeting all or some of his or her family members as a result of a property dispute does not lead to the finding that that applicant belongs to a 'particular social group' within the meaning of Article 10(1)(d) of Directive 2011/95 […].

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