4.3.2. Qualification of a person as a ‘civilian’

COMMON ANALYSIS | Last update: June 2026

Being a civilian is a prerequisite in order to be able to benefit from protection under Article 15(c) 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) QR to former combatants who have genuinely and permanently renounced armed activity.

Applications by Afghan nationals falling under the following profiles should be examined carefully. Based on an individual assessment, such applicants may be found not to qualify as civilians under Article 15(c) QR. For example:

- members of the Taliban and affiliated armed groups;
- members of resistance armed groups opposing the Taliban;
- members of the ISKP.

See also 2. Actors of persecution or serious harm

Actively taking part in hostilities is not limited to openly carrying arms but could also include substantial logistical and/or administrative support to combatants.

Exclusion considerations may also apply (see 7. Exclusion).

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