



5.3. Applicable laws (including Sharia)

Laws enacted during the reference period include the Prevention of Electronic Crimes (Amendment) Act, 2025,[1105](#) the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Act, 2025,[1106](#) the National Commission for Minority Rights Bill, 2025,[1107](#) the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill, 2026,[1108](#) and the ICT Child Marriage Restraint Act, [2025.1109](#)

The Prevention of Electronic Crimes (Amendment) Act, 2025, enacted in January 2025, inserted the new section 26A into the existing Prevention of Electronic Crimes, 2016, making the dissemination of ‘false or fake’ information a crime punishable by up to three years’ imprisonment or a fine.[1110](#) It uses vague language when referring to ‘false or fake’ information,[1111](#) describing it as information ‘likely to cause or create a sense of fear, panic or disorder or unrest in general public or society’.[1112](#) The amendments also provide for the creation of four new government bodies for the regulation of online content.[1113](#) Among them, the Social Media Protection and Regulation Authority was granted powers to remove and block various types of content, including information containing ‘aspersions against any person including members of Judiciary; Armed Forces, Majlis-e Shoora (Parliament) or a Provincial Assembly’.[1114](#) The term ‘aspersion’ is described as ‘spreading false and harmful information which damages the reputation of a person’.[1115](#) However, the amended act lacks a precise definition of what constitutes ‘false’ and ‘harmful’ information.[1116](#)

In the security realm, the reference period saw the enactment of the controversial federal Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Act 2025[1117](#) and the Anti-Terrorism (Balochistan Amendment) Act, 2025, for Balochistan.[1118](#) For more information, see section [5.5. Anti-Terrorism Acts.](#)

Meanwhile, late December 2025 saw the adoption of the National Commission for Minority Rights Bill, 2025, that provides for the creation of a statutory body mandated to protect the rights of minorities and investigate violations.[1119](#) Another piece of legislation, the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill, 2026, enacted in January 2026, defines domestic violence as abuse (physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, or economic) occurring in a domestic setting that causes fear or physical/psychological harm. It specifies that acts already constituting an offence under the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) will be prosecuted under that code, while relevant acts not falling under the PPC’s provisions will be treated as domestic violence under the new law, punishable by imprisonment ranging from six months to three years as well as a fine and compensation to be paid to the victim.[1120](#) For further information, see sections [6.1.4. Women and girls](#) and [6.1.5. Children.](#)

In the capital territory, the ICT Child Marriage Restraint Bill, 2025, was enacted in May 2025. It repeals the federal Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, as far as the ICT is concerned. It defines ‘child’ as a male or female person under 18 years of age and stipulates that a male adult (over

the age of 18) who marries a child faces between two and three years in prison and a fine. It also prohibits *Nikah* [Islamic marriage contract] registrars from registering marriages where one or both parties are below the age of 18. The Council of Islamic Ideology, a constitutional advisory body on issues relating to Sharia law, has criticised the ICT Child Marriage Restraint Bill as 'un-Islamic'[1121](#) and also contrary to traditions and societal values.[1122](#) For further information on Sharia law, see section 5.6. Punishments under the law of this report and section 5.2. Applicable laws (including *Sharia*) of the previous EUAA COI report Pakistan - Country Focus (December 2024).

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- [1112](#)

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- [1114](#)

Pakistan, Prevention of Electronic Crimes (Amendment) Act, 2025, 29 January 2025, [url](#), section 2Rh

- [1115](#)

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Pakistan, Prevention of Electronic Crimes (Amendment) Act, 2025, 29 January 2025, [url](#); Zafar, P. and Ali, S., The PECA Amendment 2025: A Critical Analysis, 16 November 2025, [url](#), p. 2

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- [1122](#)

Dawn, Clerics warn president against signing child marriage bill, 29 May 2025, [url](#)