

6. Treatment of certain profiles and groups of population

6.1. Overview of human rights situation

Despite the June 2024 Pakistan National Assembly resolution that ‘strongly urge[d] the Federal and Provincial governments to ensure the safety and security of all […] citizens including religious minorities and other segments of the society’,1189 human rights violations continued in the country in 2025.1190 By 25 March 2026, ‘widespread human rights abuses’ continued in Pakistan, including enforced disappearances, torture, and the misuse of blasphemy laws, while the military maintained significant influence over state institutions and suppressed dissent.1191 Sources reported that the State has fallen short in protecting minorities from violence.1192 For more background information, see section 6 of the EUAA COI Country Report on Pakistan (December 2024).

While the state of civic space in Pakistan continued to remain ‘repressed’,1193 anti-terrorism, and sedition laws led to restrictions on peaceful assembly and to detention of protestors.1194 These measures also affected human rights defenders, activists, political opponents, and ethnic and religious minorities,1195 who were subjected to enforced disappearances (commonly referred to as missing persons in Pakistan1196), intimidation, excessive force, and arbitrary arrests.1197 According to Human Rights Watch, ‘the space for free expression and dissent in Pakistan under the [Prime Minister Shehbaz] Sharif government is shrinking at an alarming pace’.1198

Enforced disappearances persisted in 20251199 with the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances (COIED) reporting 10 618 cases as of August 20251200 compared to 10 000 cases until September 2024 as reported in the previous EUAA COI report Pakistan - Country Focus (December 2024). Meanwhile, ACLED recorded 960 cases of abduction and enforced disappearance between 1 November 2024 and 24 April 2026 in Pakistan, predominantly in Balochistan (778), followed by KP (95), Sindh (69), and Punjab (12), Federal Capital Islamabad (5), and Gilgit-Baltistan (1).1201 Enforced disappearance primarily affect Baloch, Pashtun and Sindhi people,1202 in a context where Punjabis dominate the Pakistani army and remain the most influential ethnic group in matters of security, politics1203 and the economy.1204

While the COIED claimed having resolved 103 cases of enforced disappearances by August 2025 by bringing the total cases addressed to 8 873,1205 Amnesty International notes that it has failed to provide effective remedies to victims and their families.1206 Pakistan’s legal framework, including the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997, Actions (in Aid of Civil Power) Regulation

2011, Army Act Amendments 2023, and Official Secrets Act Amendments 2023, reportedly provides ‘legal cover’ for arbitrary detention and secret imprisonment,1207 while the 2025 Amendments to the Anti-Terrorism Act expanded preventive detention powers, allowing individuals to be detained for up to 90 days without charge or trial.1208

Between 1 November 2024 and 24 April 2026, ACLED recorded 104 incidents of mob violence across the country with the majority in Sindh, followed by Punjab and KP.1209

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