



Press Release

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EASO publishes its second Country of Origin Information report on Afghanistan

The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) has published its second Country of Origin Information (COI) Report entitled 'Afghanistan - Insurgent strategies: intimidation and targeted violence against Afghans'. This follows the publication, in July 2012, of the first EASO COI report on Afghanistan entitled 'Afghanistan: Taliban Strategies - Recruitment'.

COI refers to information on countries from which asylum seekers originate. The availability of, and expertise on, COI is one of the cornerstones of decision-making in the asylum process and, as such, can enhance harmonisation - EASO's continuous support in the field of COI is an important tool in implementing the Common European Asylum System. The purpose of this report is to provide information supporting COI Experts, and Decision and Policy Makers active in Refugee Status Determination Procedures. EASO chose Afghanistan for its first two COI reports in view of the fact that Afghanistan is the source of the largest number of asylum seekers in the EU, and because of the large differences in first instance asylum decision rates in regard to this flow in Member States.

The report examines strategies used by the Taliban and other insurgent groups to intimidate the population. These include: night letters; illegal checkpoints; collection of taxes; abduction; targeted killings; parallel justice systems; targeting of relatives, and 'hit lists'. It is important to keep in mind that the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan is largely defined by historical underlying mechanisms: Local rivalries, power play and tribal feuds. The insurgents often use these mechanisms to their benefit but it also works in the other direction. There are regional differences in this campaign of intimidation and targeted violence, which vary for the range of targeted profiles studied in this report, which include: Government officials and employees; Afghan National Security Forces; Government supporters; collaborators and contractors; Afghans working for international military forces; Afghans working for international organisations, companies, NGOs and Afghan NGOs; persons classed as "spies"; journalists, media and human rights activists; educational staff or students; medical staff; construction workers; truck drivers and those judged as violating the Taliban's moral code.

The report is available for consultation on the EASO website: www.easo.europa.eu

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