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Press Release: Afghanistan in Focus



EASO publishes two Country of Origin Information (COI) reports on the targeting of individuals in Afghanistan.

Today, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) published two Country of Origin Information (COI) Reports entitled 'Afghanistan - Individuals targeted by armed actors in the conflict' and 'Afghanistan - Individuals targeted under societal and legal norms'. In 2016, Afghanistan ranked second in the top countries of origin in EU+ countries [1], with more than 175,000 applicants. In the first ten months of 2017, more than 40,000 applications have been lodged in the EU+ by Afghans, ranking third (in the overall applications to date). In addition, Afghan applications constitute the largest backlog of all countries of origin. At the end of October 2017, there were more than 64,000 asylum applications from Afghan nationals in the EU+ pending at first instance.

The reports were drafted by COI researchers from EASO in accordance with the EASO COI Report Methodology. The report was reviewed by COI researchers from Sweden and UNHCR. In addition, a review of the report was carried out by Afghanistan expert Neamat Nojumi and the Human Rights Service of the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA).

The terms of reference of these reports were defined based on information needs identified by asylum policy experts in EU+ countries and UNHCR.

Both reports discuss the situation and treatment of individuals by different actors in the conflict and in society. The report 'Individuals targeted by armed actors in the conflict' deals with the modus operandi, methods and targeting strategies used by armed actors, both on the side of the insurgents as on the side of the government, in the context of the conflict and the possibilities for individuals to escape such targeting. The report 'Individuals targeted under societal and legal norms' is focused on socio-legal structures and actors in

society and how such elements treat issues such as crime, gender-based violence, harmful traditional practices, disputes, transgressions of social norms, and the possibility for individuals to avoid targeting. Special attention is paid to the situation of women throughout both reports, and a separate chapter covers certain issues affecting children.

Earlier this year, EASO already published a COI Report, titled Afghanistan – Key socio-economic indicators, state protection, and mobility in Kabul City, Mazar-e Sharif, and Herat City (August 2017). An update of the EASO COI Report Afghanistan – Security Situation (November 2016) is expected shortly.

It is EASO's intention to continue to produce such reports on important countries of origin and to update them regularly in order to raise and harmonise COI standards in the EU and to further support the practical implementation of the Common European Asylum System.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office on the following email address: press@easo.europa.eu

[1] EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland

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