4.6. Religious minorities

COMMON ANALYSIS
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It is recalled, as per Article 10(3) QR, that an applicant cannot be expected to adapt his or her behaviour, convictions or identity, or to abstain from certain practices, where such behaviour, convictions or practices are inherent to his or her identity, to avoid the risk of persecution in his or her country of origin.

☐ 4.6.1. Ahmadis

This profile should be read in conjunction with Individuals (perceived as) transgressing Islamic norms.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: COI Update 2026, 5.; Country Focus 2026, 6.1.2.; Country Focus 2024, 6.2.4.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Ahmadis, or members of the *Ahmadiyya* community, are the followers of the messianic teachings of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Despite Ahmadis' self-identification as Muslims, they are not considered as such by the other branches and sects of Islam or the authorities. Ahmadis are perceived as 'blasphemous unbelievers' in Pakistan because they also recognise as a prophet Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, and as such, it contradicts Mohammad being the final prophet for Muslims.

They are located primarily in Punjab, especially in the town of Chenab Nagar (previously known as Rabwah) where they constitute 95 % of the population. The actual number of Ahmadis is highly uncertain, due to their frequent preference for hiding their faith, but it is believed to be comprised between 160 000 and 600 000.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Some acts to which Ahmadis could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. More specifically, members of the *Ahmadiyya* community have been killed, including by firearms, in the context of attacks on worshippers in mosques and in houses, abducted, injured, and arbitrarily arrested. Ahmadis are constitutionally considered non-Muslims. Legal provisions force them to publicly deny their Muslim faith as they cannot, for example, call themselves Muslims or call their places of worship 'mosques'. They are forbidden from using features that can be associated with Islam.

Detention for three-year term for distributing altered translations of the Quran, as well as blasphemy accusations and charges, have also taken place. For consequences on blasphemy accusations, refer to Individuals (perceived as) transgressing Islamic norms.

The attacks against members of the *Ahmadiyya* community have been carried out by Islamic extremists such as Tehreek-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and affiliated groups, political religious groups or groups reportedly connected to local religious and political actors, mob groups, Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), and Pakistani authorities.

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that Ahmadis could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should also be considered. More specifically, *Ahmadiyya* places of worship have been subjected to destruction, vandalisation, desecration, and sealing or seizure. There have also been several cases of damage to and desecration of graves, as well as disruption of funerals and attacks on cemeteries. The community is also subjected to societal threats, hate speech, discrimination, as well as systemic and structural barriers to participation in public and political life. For instance, Ahmadis have been prevented from using public graveyards and excluded from inheriting property from a Muslim relative under *Sharia*, Muslim personal law, and the Constitution. Textbooks either ignore or insult them. Ahmadis must hide their beliefs to go to school, get jobs, or even get identity documents.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for Ahmadis to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances** (10), such as:

- **Visibility and nature of the religious practice**: Ahmadis publicly exposing their faith by, for example, attending places of worships and/or cemeteries, and/or disseminating Ahmadi materials about their faith are at particular risk of

persecution.

- **Position within the community**: applicants with a specific profile in the *Ahmadiyya* community such as being a leader of the community or acting as a representative of the community are also at particular risk since those elements substantiate the public expression of the faith.

- **Home area**: considering the lower number of attacks against Ahmadis in Chenab Nagar than in other parts of the country and the fact that their community constitutes the majority in this area, Ahmadis would face a lower risk of persecution in Chenab Nagar.

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for an applicant under this profile, this is highly likely to be for reasons of **religion**, as they are considered non-Muslims and 'blasphemous unbelievers' by state and non-state actors of persecution.

☐ 4.6.2. Christians

This profile should be read in conjunction with Individuals (perceived as) transgressing Islamic norms.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: COI Update 2026, 3.; Country Focus 2026, 6.1.2., 6.1.3.; Country Focus 2024, 6.2.2., 6.8.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Christians in Pakistan account for about 3 million, the majority living in Punjab and Islamabad, with smaller groups in Sindh, Balochistan and KP.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Some acts to which Christians could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. More specifically, Christians have been subjected to killings, trafficking in human beings, sexual violence, forced marriages, abductions, forced conversions to Islam, and attacks on Christian villages, by mob

groups and unidentified individuals.

Christians in Pakistan have also reportedly faced blasphemy accusations, sometimes leading to killings and imprisonment. See also Individuals (perceived as) transgressing Islamic norms.

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that Christians could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should also be considered. More specifically, they have faced destruction of places of worship and homes, forced eviction, land grabbing, and intimidation, including in the context of mob violence. They have also been subjected to ongoing threats, violence, and socio-economic marginalisation (including loss of employment) which in some cases resulted in displacement. At times, they have also been prevented from performing funeral rites.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for Christians to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Visibility and nature of the religious practice**: Christians publicly participating in Christian ceremonies, thereby publicly adopting non-Muslim behaviour, face a higher risk. The nature, the repetitiveness and the visibility of the non-Muslim practice, should be taken into account.

- **Gender**: Christian women and girls are at higher risk of abductions, forced conversions to Islam and forced marriages. See also Women and girls.

- **Socio-economic situation of the family**: belonging to lower societal classes increases the risk of being subjected to work exploitation and forced conversion to Islam.

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for an applicant under this profile, this is highly likely to be for reasons of **religion** as they are non-Muslims and may be considered blasphemers. For Christian women and girls, persecution may also be for reasons of **membership of a particular social group** due to their innate characteristic (as a woman) and distinct identity in Pakistan as indicated by the social, moral, and legal norms affecting specifically Pakistani women.

☐ 4.6.3. Hindus

This profile should be read in conjunction with Individuals (perceived as) transgressing Islamic norms.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: COI Update 2026, 3.; Country Focus 2026, 6.1.2., 6.1.3.; Country Focus 2024, 6.2.1., 6.8.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

There are approximately 4 million Hindus in Pakistan primarily located in Sindh. Hindus are perceived as *kafirs* (infidels) in Pakistan and the term Hindu is often used as an insult in political discourse, everyday interactions, and school settings. Incidents against Hindus have reportedly contributed to an exodus of Hindus to India that reached over 500 000 people by August 2024.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Some acts to which Hindus could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. More specifically, Hindus have faced trafficking in human beings, kidnappings for ransom, abductions, bonded labour, violent attacks, blasphemy accusations (see also Individuals (perceived as) transgressing Islamic norms), as well as forced conversions to Islam. Hindu women and girls have been reportedly picked up from the streets by armed groups, harassed or abducted, and in some cases forcibly married to Muslim men, and converted to Islam.

The actors responsible for attacks and violence against Hindus include Islamist groups and Muslim individuals, as well as mobs, armed groups, and organised criminal gangs (see Non-state actors).

The severity and/or repetitiveness of other acts that Hindus could be subjected to and whether they occur as an accumulation of various measures, should be also considered. More specifically, they have been subjected to land seizures, destruction of Hindu places of worship, digital extortion, threats, online hate speech and incitement to violence, harassment, economic and social exclusion, institutionalised inequality, and systematic discrimination, including by being frequently prevented from exercising their funeral rites.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for Hindus to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**,

such as:

- **Visibility and nature of the religious practice**: Hindus publicly participating in Hindu ceremonies, thereby publicly adopting non-Muslim behaviour, face a higher risk. The nature, the repetitiveness and the visibility of the non-Muslim practice, should be taken into account.

- **Gender**: Hindu women and girls are at higher risk of abduction, forced conversion to Islam and forced marriage. At times, they have been subjected to forced conversion to Islam through marriage. See also Women and girls.

- **Socio-economic situation of the family**: belonging to lower societal classes increases the risk of being subjected to work exploitation and forced conversion to Islam.

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for an applicant under this profile, this is highly likely to be for reasons of **religion** as they are perceived as *kafirs* (infidels). For Hindu women and girls, persecution may also be for reasons of **membership of a particular social group** due to their innate characteristic (as a woman) and distinct identity in Pakistan as indicated by the social, moral, and legal norms affecting specifically Pakistani women.

☐ 4.6.4. Shia Muslims

This profile should be read in conjunction with Individuals (perceived as) transgressing Islamic norms.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI products: COI Update 2026, 3.; Country Focus 2026, 6.1.2.; Country Focus 2024, 6.2.3.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The belief of Shia Muslims (often known as *Ahl-e Teshih*) diverges from the Sunni majority with respect to the succession lineage of the Prophet Mohammed. Shias account for approximately 10 % to 15 % of the total population of the country. They retain a minority status almost everywhere in Pakistan, with the notable exceptions of Gilgit-Baltistan and Kurram District of KP. Shia Islam is also the religion of the vast

majority of Hazaras of Afghan origin.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Acts to which Shia Muslims could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. More precisely, Shia Muslims have been subjected to sectarian violence including killings, with methods such as suicide bombings, roadside explosions, targeted shootings, and improvised explosive devices in busy marketplaces.

Shia Muslims are vulnerable to blasphemy accusations (see also Individuals (perceived as) transgressing Islamic norms).

The actors responsible for attacks and violence against Shia Muslims include sectarian groups, such as ISKP and ISPP (see Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) and Pakistan Province (ISPP)). Some militant groups (such as SSP and LeJ, see non-state actors) even include the extermination of Shia among their goals, and actively pursue it through armed attacks against Shia places of gathering and worship.

Incidents reported against Shia Muslims include attacks on Shia convoys and places of worship, resulting in dozens of deaths and numerous injuries. One attack was claimed by the ISKP accusing Shia Muslims of being 'infidels'.

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for Shia Muslims to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Ethnic background**: Shias Muslims of Hazara ethnicity face a particularly high risk of persecution from Sunni extremist groups as their distinct physical features make them easily identifiable.

- **Home area**: the risk of targeting by Sunni extremist groups is higher in areas of ISKP operations, as well as in Kurram District (KP).

- **Visibility and nature of the religious practice**: Shias publicly participating in Shia ceremonies, that are in themselves different from Sunni ones, face a higher risk. The nature, the repetitiveness and the visibility of the religious practice should be taken into account.

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where a well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for an applicant under this profile, this is highly likely to be for reasons of **religion** as Shia Muslims have been violently targeted by sectarian groups, who consider them as 'infidels'. For Shias of Hazara ethnicity, it may also be for reasons of **race (ethnicity)**, since they are easily identifiable due to their distinct features specific to their ethnic group.

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ECtHR, judgment of 12 February 2026, *F.T. v Belgium*, No.58765/21, Fifth Section Committee, para. 11: '*Si l'examen des récents rapports internationaux et nationaux disponibles, y compris les informations fournies par les parties, confirme la discrimination et la violence auxquelles lespersonnes de confession ahmadie doivent régulièrement faire face au Pakistan, y compris par les autorités, et confirme la situation particulièrement sensible des femmes de confession ahmadie, il en ressort également que la seule appartenance à la confession ahmadie ne suffit pas à établir un risque réel de persécution* .' Summary available in the EUAA Case Law Database.

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