



Home Office

Country Information Note Pakistan: Documentation

Version 1.0
January 2020

Preface

Purpose

This note provides country of origin information (COI) and a summary of COI for use by Home Office decision makers alongside other notes relevant to handling particular types of protection and human rights claims (as set out in [the basis of claim](#) section). It is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of a particular subject or theme.

Methodology

The country information in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), dated April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual, 2013](#). Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

The structure and content of the country information section follows a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to this note.

All information included in the note was published or made publicly available on or before the 'cut-off' date(s) in the country information section. Any event taking place or report/article published after these date(s) is not included.

All information is publicly accessible or can be made publicly available, and is from generally reliable sources. Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion.

Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information, and
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources.

Multiple sourcing is used to ensure that the information is accurate, balanced and corroborated, so that a comprehensive and up-to-date picture at the time of publication is provided of the issues relevant to this note.

Information is compared and contrasted, whenever possible, to provide a range of views and opinions. The inclusion of a source, however, is not an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a brief footnote; full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

Feedback

Our goal is to continuously improve our material. Therefore, if you would like to comment on this note, please email the [Country Policy and Information Team](#).

Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The [Independent Advisory Group on Country Information](#) (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support him in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the [gov.uk website](#).

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Summary

Updated: 14 January 2020

1.1 Types of documentation

- 1.1.1 The most reliable forms of documentation in Pakistan are passports and Computerised National Identity Cards (CNICs).
- 1.1.2 Manual identity cards were replaced by CNICs in 2002 and, in 2012, the Smart National Identity Card (SNIC) was introduced with the aim of replacing CNICs by 2020, though both types remain valid at the time of publication of this note. CNICs record the holder's legal name; gender (male, female or transgender); father's name (or husband's name for a married female); identification marks; date of birth; unique 13-digit number; family registration ID number; current address; permanent address; date of issue; date of expiry; signature; photo; and thumbprint. CNICs do not display information on the holder's religion although this is provided to the issuing authority – NADRA (National Database & Registration Authority) – upon application in person at a NADRA Registration Centre (NRC) or online, depending on the circumstances (see [National Identity Cards \(NICs\)](#)).
- 1.1.3 National Identity Cards for Overseas Pakistanis (NICOPs) are issued to citizens of Pakistan who live abroad and Pakistan Origin Cards (POCs) are available to persons of Pakistani origin but who may not have citizenship (see [Identity cards for overseas Pakistanis](#)).
- 1.1.4 Child Registration Certificates (CRCs), also known as a 'B-form', and electronic chip-based Juvenile Cards, may be issued to children under 18 (see [Identity documents for children](#)).
- 1.1.5 All Pakistani citizens are eligible to apply for a passport if they hold a CNIC, SNIC, NICOP or CRC. Passports are machine readable and contain a number of biometric and security features, including the holder's photograph and fingerprint information, watermarks, as well as the holder's religion (see [Passports](#)).
- 1.1.6 Other common forms of identification include birth, death, marriage and divorce certificates, domicile and family registration certificates and drivers' licences (see [Birth and death certificates](#), [Marriage and divorce certificates](#) and [Other documentation](#)).

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1.2 Airport screening

- 1.2.1 To exit Pakistan from an international airport, various documentation is required, including a valid passport and CNIC. According to country information, departing passengers undergo standardised security checks, including passport scanning, at least twice, and checks made against the Exit Control List (ECL), a government-maintained list preventing named persons from exiting the country (see [Airport screening](#) and [Passports](#)).

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1.3 Police records

1.3.1 There is no central police database and therefore criminal records across police stations and provinces are not automatically shared electronically but may be shared manually (see [Criminal record checks](#)).

1.3.2 A First Information Report (FIR), a record of a crime reported to the police and the basis to initiate an investigation or arrest for a cognisable offence (an offence where the police may arrest a person without warrant), should contain the following:

- FIR number
- police station where registered
- district/town
- date and time of the incident reported
- date and time of the report made to police
- name and address of the reporting person
- summary of the case, applicable section of the Pakistan Penal Code, and listing of any lost items
- place of the incident and distance from the police station
- investigation officer and details of delay (if any)
- signature (or thumb print) of the reporting person
- signature of the duty officer.

1.3.3 FIRs are hand written in Urdu or the local language. According to country information, an automated process to record and track FIRs was in place in Punjab and Sindh provinces, whereby an SMS message would be sent to the complainant with information of the police officer investigating the matter (see [First Information Reports \(FIRs\)](#)).

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1.4 Afghan refugees

1.4.1 Over 1.4 million Afghan refugees are registered with UNHCR and hold Proof of Registration (POR) cards, which allows the holder to legally remain in Pakistan (see [Proof of Registration \(POR\) card](#)). Undocumented Afghans (estimated to be 1 million – see [Proof of Registration \(POR\) card](#)) living in Pakistan may hold an Afghan Citizenship Card (ACC), a temporary document offering proof of identity (see [Afghan Citizenship Card \(ACC\)](#)). Many Afghans, particularly Hazaras residing in Quetta, may not hold either a POR or ACC but may have a Tazkira (Afghan identity document). Machine readable Afghan passports are not issued in Pakistan, according to the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) (see [Afghan Tazkiras and passports](#)).

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1.5 Fraud and corruption

- 1.5.1 Whilst security features in identity cards and passports have reduced the risk of fraud, in general, document fraud is common. It is reported to be easy to procure fraudulently obtained genuine documents or fake documents. Airline staff may be subject to bribery to ignore fraudulent or fake travel documents (see [Prevalence and procurement of fraudulent documents](#) and [Types of fraudulent documents](#)).
- 1.5.2 Corruption is widespread across all sectors and government institutions. Some police accept bribes to register or verify false complaints (First Information Reports (FIRs), which are also described by DFAT as easy to counterfeit (see [First Information Reports \(FIRs\)](#) and [Registration of FIRs](#)).
- 1.5.3 Laws against corruption are not implemented effectively and corruption in government and by government officials is widespread (see [Action against corruption](#)).

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1.6 Caselaw

- 1.6.1 In the caselaw [A v Secretary of State for the Home Department \(Pakistan\) \[2002\] UKIAT 00439 \(19 February 2002\)](#), heard on 20 December 2001, the Immigration Appeal Tribunal held:
 - '1. In asylum and human rights cases it is for an individual claimant to show that a document on which he seeks to rely can be relied on.
 - '2. The decision maker should consider whether a document is one on which reliance should properly be placed after looking at all the evidence in the round.
 - '3. Only very rarely will there be the need to make an allegation of forgery, or evidence strong enough to support it. The allegation should not be made without such evidence. Failure to establish the allegation on the balance of probabilities to the higher civil standard does not show that a document is reliable. The decision maker still needs to apply principles 1 and 2.' (para 38)

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Country information

Section 2 updated: 14 January 2020

2. Types of identification and issuing authorities

2.1 National Identity Cards (NICs)

- 2.1.1 The National Database & Registration Authority (NADRA) is the government body, under the Ministry of Interior (Mol), responsible for issuing various identity cards and civil registration certificates¹. Documents can be applied for at NADRA Registration Centres (NRCs) based across Pakistan and at foreign missions, or online².
- 2.1.2 In 2002, paper-based identity cards were replaced by Computerised National Identity Cards (CNICs)³. In 2012, a programme began to replace CNICs with Smart National Identity Cards (SNICs) by 2020, though both types remain valid^{4 5}. New CNICs must be applied for in person at an NRC^{6 7}; lost or stolen cards can be applied for online⁸. SNICs can be applied for online⁹.
- 2.1.3 National Identity Cards (CNICs and SNICs) are issued to citizens of Pakistan aged 18 and over. They contain a unique 13-digit identification number¹⁰ and, as noted in the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) report, are required to obtain '... a passport or drivers' licence, engage in formal employment, register as a voter, access services such as bank accounts, obtain a SIM card, open new water, electricity or gas accounts, purchase land or vehicles, and to gain entry to a higher college or university.'¹¹ DFAT added that, alongside passports, CNICs were Pakistan's most reliable form of identification¹². According to the Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2017-18, implemented by the National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS) and published in January 2019, 91.3% of men and 76.2% of women aged over 18 held a CNIC¹³.
- 2.1.4 When applying for a CNIC, a government official must verify the application unless a blood relative (father/mother/brother/sister/son/daughter) is available to have their biometrics taken during the application process at the NRC¹⁴. DFAT noted 'Applicants from the former FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas, which merged with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2018¹⁵] and some parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan must have

¹ NADRA, (website), [url](#).

² NADRA, 'Find nearest NADRA center', n.d., [url](#).

³ NADRA, 'National Identification System', n.d., [url](#).

⁴ NADRA, 'National Identification System', n.d., [url](#).

⁵ DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (para 5.52), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁶ NADRA, 'Find nearest NADRA center', n.d., [url](#).

⁷ DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (para 5.54), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁸ DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (para 5.54), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁹ NADRA, 'National Identity Card (NIC)', n.d., [url](#).

¹⁰ NADRA, 'National Identity Card (NIC)', n.d., [url](#).

¹¹ DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (para 5.52), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹² DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (para 5.46), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹³ NIPS, 'PDHS 2017-18', (page 28), January 2019, [url](#).

¹⁴ NADRA, 'National Identity Card (NIC)', n.d., [url](#).

¹⁵ FATA – Bajaur, Khyber, Kurram, Orakzai, Mohmand, North Waziristan, and South Waziristan

their applications counter-signed by a Deputy Commissioner. The impact of the 2018 FATA Interim Government Regulation on the requirement for counter-signature by Deputy Commissioners, if any, is unknown at the time of publishing [February 2019].¹⁶

2.1.5 According to DFAT:

‘CNICs record the following information about the holder: legal name; gender (male, female or transgender); father’s name (or husband’s name for a married female); identification marks; date of birth; CNIC number; family registration ID number; current address; permanent address; date of issue; date of expiry; signature; photo; and thumbprint. CNICs do not display information on the holder’s religion, but NADRA collects this information during the application process. CNICs are valid for five or ten years; CNICs issued to citizens over the age of 65 are valid for life.’¹⁷

2.1.6 DFAT also noted that ‘SNICs contain similar information to CNICs, and have a smart chip containing biometric information and a number of additional security features. While the document itself is highly secure, rigorous identity checks are not undertaken in the issuance process for SNICs.’¹⁸

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2.2 Identity cards for Pakistanis overseas

2.2.1 National Identity Cards for Overseas Pakistanis (NICOPs) are issued to citizens of Pakistan who live abroad and allow any citizen of Pakistan to travel to Pakistan without requiring a visa in case of dual nationality¹⁹. Pakistan Origin Cards (POCs) are available to persons of Pakistani origin, allowing visa-free entry, indefinite stay rights, exemption from foreigner registration requirements, property rights and the right to open a bank account. A foreign national (not of Pakistani origin) who is married to a Pakistani national is also eligible for a POC, unless they are a citizen or national of India, Israel or Taiwan; a citizen or national of state or country not recognized by Pakistan [Israel²⁰ and Armenia²¹]; or a citizen of any enemy country²².

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2.3 Identity documents for children

2.3.1 A Child Registration Certificate (CRC), also known as a ‘B-form’, may be issued to a child under 18 providing they have a birth certificate and the parent is the holder of a national identity card or NICOP²³. As with CNICs, verification of the application is required by a government official in the absence of a blood relative²⁴. According to the PDHS 2017-18, 34.9% of

¹⁶ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.55), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹⁷ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.56), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹⁸ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.57), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹⁹ NADRA, ‘NICOP’, n.d., [url](#).

²⁰ Middle East Eye, ‘Imran Khan says Pakistan “will not recognise” Israel’, 27 September 2019, [url](#).

²¹ Express Tribune, ‘Strange estrangement: Pakistan and Armenia’, 3 November 2018, [url](#).

²² NADRA, ‘POC’, n.d., [url](#).

²³ NADRA, ‘CRC’, n.d., [url](#).

²⁴ NADRA, ‘CRC’, n.d., [url](#).

boys and 34% of girls under 18 had a CRC²⁵. According to DFAT, ‘Children under ten years of age do not require supporting documentation to obtain a CRC, but those over the age of ten are required to provide a copy of a birth certificate or school record.’²⁶ A Juvenile Card (JV), which contains an electronic smart chip, is available to a child under 18 and can be issued at NRCs in the presence of a parent or blood relative who holds a national id card²⁷.

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2.4 Passports

- 2.4.1 The Directorate General of Immigration and Passports (DGIP) is responsible for issuing Passports, Visas, Pakistan Citizenship and Renunciation of Pakistan Citizenship Certificates²⁸. Regional passport offices are based across Pakistan and at foreign missions²⁹ and all Pakistani citizens are eligible to apply for a passport providing they hold a CNIC, SNIC, NICOP or CRC³⁰.
- 2.4.2 According to the DGIP website, persons applying for a machine readable passport were checked against the Exit Control List (ECL³¹) and Black List (BL³²)³³. In January 2019, whilst noting laws on the ECL existed, the legality of the Black List, which held more than 15,000 names, was questioned by the Senate’s Standing Committee on Law and Justice, who described it as unconstitutional. In response, the DGIP said the blacklist only contained names of those who had travelled abroad illegally or had undertaken illegal activities whilst abroad^{34 35}.
- 2.4.3 There are 3 types of machine-readable passports (MRPs) – ordinary, official and diplomatic³⁶. DFAT noted ‘These passports contain a number of biometric and security features, including the holder’s photograph and fingerprint information, and watermarks. Passports contain information about the holder’s religion. DFAT understands the government had aimed to replace all manual passports by November 2015, and that manual passports are no longer issued.’³⁷ According to the website of the Pakistan High Commission (HC), London, manual passports have been phased out and MRPs are issued at the HC, London, and Consulates in Birmingham,

²⁵ NIPS, ‘PDHS 2017-18’, (page 28), January 2019, [url](#).

²⁶ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.65), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

²⁷ NADRA, ‘JV’, n.d., [url](#).

²⁸ DGIP, (website), [url](#).

²⁹ DGIP, ‘Offices’, n.d., [url](#).

³⁰ DGIP, ‘Ordinary Passport’, n.d., [url](#).

³¹ ECL – a government-maintained list preventing exit from the country, including those wanted for criminal or terrorism offences and occasionally civil society or human rights activists said to have caused embarrassment to government officials, see IRB, [url](#).

³² BL – maintained by DGIP to deny issuing passports to persons making multiple applications or using fake ID to obtain a passport, see IRB [url](#).

³³ DGIP, ‘Process’, n.d., [url](#).

³⁴ Pakistan Today, ‘Over 15,000 people placed on blacklist, Senate panel told’, 22 January 2019, [url](#).

³⁵ Dawn, ‘Senate endorses report on travel blacklist...’, 28 January 2019, [url](#).

³⁶ DGIP, ‘Passport’, n.d., [url](#).

³⁷ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.59), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

Bradford, Glasgow and Manchester³⁸. The HC noted that married women applying for a MRP must provide a CNIC, SNIC or NICOP with their husband's name³⁹.

- 2.4.4 The US Department of State's Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2018 (USSD HR Report 2018) noted 'Passport applicants must list their religious affiliation and, if Muslim, affirm a declaration that the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement was a false prophet. Ahmadi representatives reported authorities wrote the word "Ahmadi" in their passports if they refused to sign the declaration.'⁴⁰

For further information on passports for Ahmadis, see the [Country Policy and Information Note Pakistan: Ahmadis](#).

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2.5 Birth and death certificates

- 2.5.1 According to the PDHS 2017-18, a registered birth is defined as a child who has a birth certificate or their birth is registered with the civil authorities. The PDHS noted that birth certificates were required to access services including school enrolment, passports, voter registration and marriage registration. The PDHS added that 42% of children under age 5 have had their births registered, and 36% have a birth certificate⁴¹. The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported, in March 2019, that an estimated 60 million children were not registered, 25 million of whom were in Punjab province⁴². The PDHS noted that, whilst birth registration has increased over the last 5 years, only 2% of children in [former] FATA and 19% of children in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were registered as compared with 82% of children in the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT)⁴³.

- 2.5.2 The DFAT report noted:

'Birth certificates in Pakistan can be issued by NADRA, local government bodies (union councils) or hospitals. Hospital birth certificates are automatically issued to children born in hospitals, however no central database exists for these certificates and no automatic registration process captures the many babies who are not born in a hospital. While technically compulsory, in practice large numbers of births are not registered. According to the most recent available data from UNICEF, only 34 per cent of children under the age of five in Pakistan had their births officially registered between 2013 and 2015. School records and matriculation certificates are often used in lieu of birth certificates.

'NADRA birth certificates are uniform across the country, but other types of certificates are not. NADRA certificates are fully computerised and contain a complete birth record in both English and Urdu. NADRA certificates and local

³⁸ High Commission for Pakistan, 'Machine Readable Passport', n.d., [url](#).

³⁹ High Commission for Pakistan, 'Applying for New or Renewal of MRP', n.d., [url](#).

⁴⁰ USSD, 'HR Report 2018', (page 29), 13 March 2019, [url](#).

⁴¹ NIPS, 'PDHS 2017-18', (page 14), January 2019, [url](#).

⁴² UNICEF, 'Digital birth registration helps make Pakistan a safer place...', 29 March 2019, [url](#).

⁴³ NIPS, 'PDHS 2017-18', (page 14), January 2019, [url](#).

government certificates should be stamped and signed by local government officials.⁴⁴

2.5.3 Regarding the births of children to Afghan refugee parents, DFAT noted:

‘DFAT understands that children born in Pakistan to Afghan refugee parents receive Pakistan birth certificates with the assistance of UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees]. These certificates can be either NADRA certificates or certificates issued by non-government health organisations, which are generally accepted as genuine documents in Pakistan and Afghanistan. NADRA has issued 1.1 million birth certificates to Afghan children born in Pakistan.’⁴⁵

See also [Afghan refugees](#).

2.5.4 Regarding death certificates, DFAT noted ‘NADRA issues fully computerised death certificates containing relevant information in English and Urdu. Older, handwritten death certificates issued by union councils also exist.’⁴⁶

2.5.5 The USSD’s Reciprocity Schedule for Pakistan, undated, noted:

‘In locations where a proper cemetery registration system exists, local authorities accept cemetery receipts as proof of death. A death certificate issued by a hospital is also acceptable as proof for a death registration. In cases where a death occurred at home, affidavits from close relatives are required to register the death. In addition to a death certificate, a National Identity Card Cancellation request may be obtained from NADRA as secondary proof of death.’⁴⁷

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2.6 Marriage and divorce certificates

2.6.1 The DFAT report noted:

‘Marriage certificates (for Muslims, called nikah namas) are common identification documents. Nikah namas contain the signatures of the bride and groom, two witnesses and a marriage officiator. They are typically handwritten in Urdu. Nikah namas are registered with the local council. NADRA then issues a fully computerised marriage registration certificate, with information in both Urdu and English.

‘Religious leaders of non-Muslim groups can issue marriage certificates for their communities. Christian marriages are generally registered with local authorities, though procedures for marriage documentation can vary. A new law for the registration of Hindu marriages passed in 2017 [...]. DFAT understands that the government accepts unofficial marriage documents issued by local Ahmadi offices as evidence of marriage, although Ahmadis can face difficulty updating their CNIC after marriage [...], or when seeking to update National Identity Cards for Overseas Pakistanis (NICOPs).’⁴⁸

⁴⁴ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (paras 5.48-5.49), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁴⁵ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.50), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁴⁶ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.51), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁴⁷ USSD, ‘Reciprocity Schedule Pakistan’, (Marriage, divorce certificates), n.d., [url](#).

⁴⁸ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (paras 5.62-5.63), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

For information on identity cards for Ahmadis, see the [Country Policy and Information Note Pakistan: Ahmadis](#).

- 2.6.2 The USSD Reciprocity Schedule noted ‘Ahmadi, Christian, Hindu, and Parsi marriage certificates are issued by church or temple leaders and are not generally registered with the local Union Council.’⁴⁹
- 2.6.3 As regards divorce, the USSD Reciprocity Schedule noted that divorce certificates for Muslims, issued by Union Councils, were usually hand written and identified if the divorce was initiated either by the husband (Talaq) or the wife (Khula). The report noted that Union Councils also issued NADRA divorce certificates. It added that, normally, divorce certificates for these Ahmadis, Christians, Hindus and Parsis were issued by a Family Court after the filing of a legal case and were not generally registered with the local authorities⁵⁰.

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2.7 Other documentation

- 2.7.1 The IRB produced a response on driver licences based on a variety of sources, dated 13 January 2017. It noted that, in 2016 correspondence, an official from the Pakistan High Commission in Ottawa indicated ‘... the issuance of driver's licenses in Pakistan is handled both by the Pakistan Highways and Motorway Police and by traffic police offices in the provinces.’ The IRB also provided information on procedures for obtaining a license in Punjab and Sindh provinces⁵¹. The website of the National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) provided details on how to apply for a licence⁵². According to the Pakistan High Commission in Ottawa, cited by the IRB, ‘... driver's licenses “may vary in format” as they are issued either in “electronic card” or in booklet format.’⁵³ According to DFAT, ‘Drivers’ licences are generally considered a less reliable form of identification,’⁵⁴
- 2.7.2 Family Registration Certificates (FRCs) contain information on each family member⁵⁵, though cannot be used for legal requirements⁵⁶. New FRCs are issued upon marriage, and amended upon the birth of a child⁵⁷.
- 2.7.3 The DFAT report noted ‘A domicile certificate is a document containing information about a person’s place and date of birth. These certificates are legally obtainable only by people resident in Pakistan, but are easy to obtain illegally. NADRA or the deputy commissioner of a district can issue domicile certificates. Between 2002 and 2009, local governments also issued domicile certificates.’⁵⁸

⁴⁹ USSD, ‘Reciprocity Schedule Pakistan’, (Birth, death, burial certificates), n.d., [url](#).

⁵⁰ USSD, ‘Reciprocity Schedule Pakistan’, (Birth, death, burial certificates), n.d., [url](#).

⁵¹ IRB, ‘Pakistan: Procedures to obtain a driver's license...’, 13 January 2017, [url](#).

⁵² NHMP, website (Licensing), n.d., [url](#).

⁵³ IRB, ‘Pakistan: Procedures to obtain a driver's license...’, 13 January 2017, [url](#).

⁵⁴ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.46), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁵⁵ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.66), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁵⁶ NADRA, ‘FRC’, n.d., [url](#).

⁵⁷ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.66), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁵⁸ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.67), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

- 2.7.4 The Islamabad Capital Territory Administration (ICTA) noted on its website that a domicile certificate ‘... is an essential document which proves that a person is an inhabitant or a permanent resident of the city. As per law, this certificate can be obtained from one city only. You may require domicile certificate for a job or for seeking admission in the university.’⁵⁹

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Section 3 updated: 14 January 2020

3. Fatwas

- 3.1.1 For information on fatwas see the [Country Policy and Information Note Pakistan: Shia Muslims](#).
- 3.1.2 Though somewhat dated, see also the Research Directorate of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) response on [Pakistan: The issuance of “fatwas”; reports of fatwas issued against Muslims and non-Muslims \(January 1998 - November 2004\)](#).

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Section 4 updated: 14 January 2020

4. Exit requirements

4.1 Airport screening

- 4.1.1 According to the websites of Allama Iqbal International Airport Lahore (AllAP)⁶⁰, Islamabad International Airport (IIAP)⁶¹, Bacha Khan International Airport Peshawar⁶², and Multan International Airport⁶³, the following documentation was required to depart the country on an international flight:

- Valid Airline Ticket
- Valid Passport
- Valid Visa (if applicable)
- Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC)
- Photo ID
- Health Certificate (if applicable)
- No Objection Certificate (NOC) or Ex-Pakistan Leave (Mandatory for Government Employees).

- 4.1.2 Published in January 2018 and covering the period 2015-December 2017, the IRB Research Directorate reported on airport screening procedures for international travellers and cited a representative, from the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), who indicated that:

‘... during passport screening the FIA [Federal Investigation Agency] consults NADRA data and the ECL [Exit Control List], and the ECL data “is

⁵⁹ ICTA, ‘Domicile Certificate’, n.d., [url](#).

⁶⁰ AllAP, ‘Departure Procedures’, n.d., [url](#).

⁶¹ IIAP, ‘Departure Procedures’, n.d., [url](#).

⁶² Bacha Khan, ‘Departure Procedures’, n.d., [url](#).

⁶³ Multan International Airport, ‘Departure’, n.d., [url](#).

checked by FIA for departure clearance of passengers” as well as to verify “if any special instructions are given by any government department or agency for any particular suspect” (HRCP 22 Dec. 2017). The same source also indicated that security screening is a standardized procedure for all passengers at all airports, and that “[n]o exceptions are made in the procedure” (HRCP 22 Dec. 2017).⁶⁴

4.1.3 The IRB response added:

‘In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate, an immigration consultant based in Canada, with an office in Pakistan, indicated that according to security procedures, there are “absolutely no exceptions” as everyone’s passport is scanned at least twice at the airport, and every airport has computers with Internet access at all times (Immigration consultant 28 Dec. 2017). Without providing further details, the consultant noted, however, that there are instances where authorities “turn a blind eye,” and that there have been instances of bribery (Immigration consultant 28 Dec. 2017).’⁶⁵

See also [Prevalence and procurement of fraudulent documents](#).

4.1.4 According to the FIA⁶⁶ and NADRA⁶⁷ websites, the Integrated Border Management System (IBMS), was used to capture biometric data from documents presented at exit / entry points and was deployed at the following airports:

- Benazir Bhutto International Airport [BBIAP⁶⁸], Islamabad
- Jinnah International Airport, Karachi
- Allama Iqbal International Airport, Lahore
- Bacha Khan International Airport, Peshawar
- Quetta International Airport, Quetta
- Sialkot International Airport, Sialkot
- Faisalabad International Airport, Faisalabad
- Multan International Airport, Multan
- Sheikh Zayed International Airport, Rahim Yar Khan
- Sheikh Rashid International Airport, Bhawalpur
- D.G.Khan International Airport, D.G. Khan
- Turbat International Airport, Turbat
- Gawadar International Airport, Gawadar
- Sukkur International Airport, Sukkur.

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⁶⁴ IRB, ‘Pakistan: Airport security screening procedures’, 15 January 2018, [url](#).

⁶⁵ IRB, ‘Pakistan: Airport security screening procedures’, 15 January 2018, [url](#).

⁶⁶ FIA, ‘IBMS’, n.d., [url](#).

⁶⁷ NADRA, ‘IBMS’, n.d., [url](#).

⁶⁸ BBIAP closed for commercial flights on 20 April 2018 and was replaced by IAP (Islamabad International Airport). See Pakistan Today, [url](#).

5. Police documentation

5.1 Criminal record checks

5.1.1 DFAT noted:

'Police issue documentation containing information about a person's criminal record. Officials typically check with local police from the applicant's district before issuing the certificate. However, Pakistan has no centralised criminal database, and police clearance certificates often do not contain an accurate record of the applicant's criminal history. An applicant who has committed a crime in one district may be able to obtain a police clearance certificate from another district.'⁶⁹

5.1.2 According to a 2016 Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan (LJCP) report, an automated criminal record verification and management system was established in police departments in Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and partially formed in Punjab and Islamabad⁷⁰. However, interconnection between all police stations was fully operational only in Sindh province and partially so in Punjab province, according to the 2016 report⁷¹.

5.1.3 MIT Technology Review reported on the establishment of an automated Criminal Records Office (CRO) in Punjab province and stated that it:

'... maintains a database of people with criminal history, including their fingerprints. This data is available to police investigators for search and retrieval of information. The number of entries in the database had reached close to 300,000 by January 2017, and is a work in progress as it keeps getting updated automatically for those convicted of crimes. Already in dozens of cases, suspects have been caught on identification of their fingerprints using the CRO database.'⁷²

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5.2 First Information Reports (FIRs)

5.2.1 The USSD HR Report 2018 noted:

'A first information report (FIR) is the legal basis for any arrest, initiated when police receive information about the commission of a "cognizable" offense [one in which the police may arrest a person without warrant]. A third party usually initiates a FIR, but police can file FIRs on their own initiative. A FIR allows police to detain a suspect for 24 hours, after which a magistrate may order detention for an additional 14 days if police show detention is necessary to obtain evidence material to the investigation. Some authorities did not observe these limits on detention. Authorities reportedly filed FIRs without supporting evidence in order to harass or intimidate detainees or did

⁶⁹ DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (para 5.68), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁷⁰ LJCP, 'Towards a National Policy and Strategy ...', (page 19), February 2016, [url](#).

⁷¹ LJCP, 'Towards a National Policy and Strategy ...', (page 20), February 2016, [url](#).

⁷² MIT Technology Review, 'Transforming Policing Through Technology', n.d., [url](#).

not file them when adequate evidence was provided unless the complainant paid a bribe.⁷³

5.2.2 According to its citizens' guide to FIRs, dated 2013, the Centre for Peace Development Initiatives Pakistan (CPDI-Pakistan), an independent and non-partisan group that promotes citizenship rights in Pakistan, FIRs can be filed to the police in person, in writing, or by telephone⁷⁴. However, according to a Human Rights Watch (HRW) report, dated 2016, to register a FIR, complainants must be physically present at the police station in the jurisdiction in which the alleged offence occurred⁷⁵. FIRs can be registered online on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police website⁷⁶ and, according to a 2016 LJCP report, online registration was available in Sindh⁷⁷.

5.2.3 The CDPI-Pakistan guide noted FIRs were written documents and that the following information should be provided when filing a FIR:

- Name and address of complainant;
- Date, time and location of the incident;
- The true facts of the incident as they occurred, including the use of weapons, if any;
- Names and description of the persons involved in the incident;
- Names and addresses of witnesses, if any⁷⁸.

5.2.4 The Research Directorate IRB provided information on FIRs in January 2014. Describing the format and appearance of a FIR, the IRB noted they were hand written in Urdu or the local language, for example Sindhi or Pashtu⁷⁹. It added:

'The official at the High Commission of Pakistan in Ottawa indicated that information in the FIR includes a narrative of the events by the complainant, the law applicable to the offence, the complainant's contact information, the FIR identification number, the date and year of registration, and the police station where the FIR was filed (11 Dec. 2013). In correspondence with the Research Directorate, the Chief of the Citizens Police Liaison Committee (CPLC) in Karachi, an "operationally independent" volunteer organization that, among other things, assists with FIR registration and police complaints provided a simulated example of the FIR format used in Karachi, which requires:

- FIR number
- police station where registered
- district/town
- date and time of the incident reported

⁷³ USSD, 'HR Report 2018', (page 11), 13 March 2019, [url](#).

⁷⁴ CPDI-Pakistan, 'FIR (A Guide for Citizens)', (page 1), 2013, [url](#).

⁷⁵ HRW, "This Crooked System", (page 20), September 2016, [url](#).

⁷⁶ Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police, 'Online FIR', n.d., [url](#).

⁷⁷ LJCP, 'Towards a National Policy and Strategy ...', (page 19), February 2016, [url](#).

⁷⁸ CPDI-Pakistan, 'FIR (A Guide for Citizens)', (page 2), 2013, [url](#).

⁷⁹ IRB, 'First Information Reports (FIRs)', 10 January 2014, [url](#).

- date and time of the report made to police
- name and address of the reporting person
- summary of the case, applicable section of the Pakistan Penal Code, and listing of any lost items
- place of the incident and distance from the police station
- investigation officer and details of delay (if any)
- signature of the reporting person
- signature of the duty officer.⁸⁰

5.2.5 The Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) reported that an automated process to record and track FIRs was launched in March 2017 and operational in all police stations in Punjab province. The PITB added that the system was replicated in Sindh province and that Gilgit-Baltistan and Balochistan governments had requested the same software to be installed⁸¹.

5.2.6 Also reporting on the automated FIR system in Punjab, MIT Technology Review stated that the online platform digitized ‘the entire procedure from registration of an FIR, nomination of suspects, proceedings at courts to the closure of the case. The Police Department has hired a dedicated staff on senior station assistant (SSA) and police station assistant (PSA) positions at the police station level to help walk-in complainants lodge their applications onto the online application.’ The report added ‘As soon as a complaint is converted into an FIR, the system generates an automated SMS to the complainant with information of the police officer investigating the matter.’⁸²

5.2.7 The CPDI-Pakistan guide to FIRs noted that the FIR must be signed by the complainant. A thumb print is acceptable as a signature if the person is illiterate. Complainants have the right to a free copy of the FIR⁸³. According to the website of the Islamabad Police, a copy of a FIR can be obtained, in person and after providing relevant documentation and reason for request, from the Citizen Service Centre or Model Police Stations⁸⁴.

5.2.8 The IRB report on FIRs noted that ‘Information varied on which other persons receive copies of FIRs upon registration.’ The report stated:
 ‘In telephone interviews, the official at the High Commission of Pakistan in Ottawa and a representative of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) both stated that copies of the registered FIR would be provided to the complainant, the police station, the district court, and the accused person (Pakistan 11 Dec. 2013; HRCP 17 Dec. 2013). The HRCP representative added that copies are also sent to the District Police Officer (DPO), Regional Police Officer (RPO), and the Provincial Police Officer (PPO) (ibid.). The lawyer in Karachi indicated that copies would be provided to the complainant, and sent to the court having jurisdiction over the area, and to

⁸⁰ IRB, ‘First Information Reports (FIRs)’, 10 January 2014, [url](#).

⁸¹ PITB, ‘Electronic FIR’, n.d., [url](#).

⁸² MIT Technology Review, ‘Transforming Policing Through Technology’, n.d., [url](#).

⁸³ CPDI-Pakistan, ‘FIR (A Guide for Citizens)’, (page 2), 2013, [url](#).

⁸⁴ Islamabad Police, ‘Copy of FIR’, n.d., [url](#).

the office of the District Magistrate (central office) (Lawyer 18 Dec. 2013). He also noted that “the accused is not given a copy under the Rules, but they can obtain one from the court under court order,” and that generally the accused obtains a copy from the duty police officer by paying him “courtesy money” (ibid.).⁸⁵

- 5.2.9 The CDPI-Pakistan guide also noted that a person who files a false complaint, offers wrong or misleading information to the police, or refuses to sign a statement of FIR, may be liable for prosecution⁸⁶.

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Section 6 updated: 14 January 2020

6. Afghan refugees

6.1 Proof of Registration (PoR) Card

6.1.1 The DFAT report noted:

‘Pakistan is host to approximately 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees and an estimated one million unregistered Afghans, some displaced for nearly 40 years. In 2007, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the UNHCR signed a tripartite agreement, which gave Afghan refugees the right to register and obtain a Proof of Registration (PoR) Card, identifying them as Afghan refugees eligible for protection and support through UNHCR under Pakistan refugee laws.’⁸⁷

- 6.1.2 As of 31 October 2019, UNHCR recorded that 1,412,576 POR cardholders remained in Pakistan, 58% of whom resided in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa⁸⁸.

- 6.1.3 A POR Card entitles the holder to legally remain in Pakistan and is valid throughout the country. It does not allow holders to cross international borders, including between Pakistan and Afghanistan⁸⁹.

- 6.1.4 In its Afghan Refugees Registration Update, covering the period 1 January to 31 October 2019, the UNHCR reported that PoRs provided ‘temporary legal stay and freedom of movement’ for Afghan refugees⁹⁰. In June 2019, the validity of PoRs was extended to 30 June 2020^{91 92}. The UNHCR report of October 2019 also noted that the issuance of birth certificates for Afghan refugee children had been temporarily suspended by NADRA, pending official endorsement of changes made to the template⁹³.

- 6.1.5 The DFAT report stated that ‘UNHCR can provide PoR holders with financial assistance for repatriation, access to UNHCR refugee camps, enrolment in UNHCR schools and access to health services provided by UNHCR.’⁹⁴

⁸⁵ IRB, ‘First Information Reports (FIRs)’, 10 January 2014, [url](#).

⁸⁶ CPDI-Pakistan, ‘FIR (A Guide for Citizens)’, (page 2), 2013, [url](#).

⁸⁷ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.49), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁸⁸ UNHCR, ‘Pakistan: Afghan Refugee Update 1 January-31 October 2019’, [url](#).

⁸⁹ UNHCR, ‘Frequently Asked Questions’, June 2018, [url](#).

⁹⁰ UNHCR, ‘Pakistan: Afghan Refugees Registration Update’, 31 October 2019, [url](#).

⁹¹ SAFRON, ‘Notification Regarding Validity Of Tripartite Agreement’, 28 June 2019, [url](#).

⁹² UNHCR, ‘Pakistan: Afghan Refugees Registration Update’, 31 October 2019, [url](#).

⁹³ UNHCR, ‘Pakistan: Afghan Refugees Registration Update’, 31 October 2019, [url](#).

⁹⁴ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.51), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

- 6.1.6 The UNCHR Registration Update noted that PoR Card Modification Centres (PCMs) – which updated and replaced cards, registered children up to the age of 5 years, issued new cards to eligible children aged over 5 and birth certificates to under 18s – were located in Peshawar, Quetta, Karachi and Rawalpindi. Mobile registration vans were also deployed to remote areas⁹⁵.

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6.2 Afghan Citizenship Card (ACC)

6.2.1 According to the DFAT report:

‘In 2017, the government also launched a six-month programme to register undocumented Afghans, including with a new Afghan Citizenship Card (ACC). The ACC is a temporary identity document for Afghans who do not possess other forms of identification, and who are not seeking refugee registration. The ACC provides legal protection from arbitrary arrest, detention or deportation under the Foreigner’s Act, 1946. ACCs are not a replacement for PoR cards, which provide evidence of humanitarian status. PoR card holders were excluded from registering for an ACC.’⁹⁶

- 6.2.2 Whilst the DFAT report noted that ‘Any self-declared Afghan can apply for an ACC’, it also noted ‘Single males under 18 years were refused registration under the ACC program.’⁹⁷

- 6.2.3 According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as of 24 May 2018, 878,604 applications for ACCs had been submitted to NADRA, in coordination with the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) and the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MORR). Most documentation had taken place in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with other registrations occurring in Lahore, Karachi and Quetta⁹⁸.

- 6.2.4 According to DFAT ‘NADRA and MORR representatives staff 22 registration offices across Pakistan.’⁹⁹ In May 2018, the IOM referred to 21 Afghan citizen centres set up by NADRA¹⁰⁰.

- 6.2.5 DFAT noted that ‘NADRA perform biometric verification and take photographs and fingerprints, and then cross check applicants across existing identification databases (CNIC and PoR card). MORR interviews applicants. ACCs are issued once both the Pakistan and Afghan governments are satisfied regarding an applicant’s Afghan identity. ACCs have the following characteristics:

- the applicant’s name, date and place of birth and family details;
- an identification number consisting of two alpha digits followed by eleven numeric digits;
- a family Identification number consisting of one alpha digit followed by eleven numeric digits. This is the same for all members of a family;

⁹⁵ UNHCR, ‘Pakistan: Afghan Refugees Registration Update’, 31 October 2019, [url](#).

⁹⁶ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.59), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁹⁷ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (paras 3.60 and 3.62), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁹⁸ IOM, ‘UN Migration Agency Supports Pakistan’s Documented...’, 24 May 2018, [url](#).

⁹⁹ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.60), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹⁰⁰ IOM, ‘UN Migration Agency Supports Pakistan’s Documented...’, 24 May 2018, [url](#).

- all children under the age of five are listed on the rear of their parent's ACC;
 - all children over the age of five were eligible to receive their own ACC;
 - text on reverse of card: 'This card is exclusively issued to undocumented Afghan Citizens living in Pakistan. The card holder is liable to obtain passport/travel documents from the Government of Afghanistan.'¹⁰¹
- 6.2.6 DFAT also noted that 'Approved applicants receive a No Objection Certificate (NOC, also referred to as a "token") while awaiting their ACC. DFAT understands that only the ACC breadwinner will be permitted to remain in Pakistan, and familial dependants will be expected to return to Afghanistan, despite being listed on the back of the ACC.'¹⁰²
- 6.2.7 No Objection Certificates (NOCs), issued by the Ministry of Interior, were required by foreigners to travel to certain areas¹⁰³.
- 6.2.8 A notification on the SAFRON website, dated 28 June 2019, stated that the validity of ACCs had been extended to 31 October 2019¹⁰⁴.

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6.3 Afghan Tazkiras and passports

6.3.1 According to DFAT, 'Many Afghan refugees in Pakistan, predominantly in Hazara town, Quetta, [...] still do not hold either an ACC or PoR card but may hold a tazkira [Afghan identity card] or UNHCR registration documents... DFAT understands applicants can apply for tazkiras at the Afghan Consulate in Quetta, however they are issued in Kabul and applicants are required to travel to Kabul to collect them. While DFAT is aware of anecdotal evidence that it may be possible, in limited circumstances, to collect Tazkiras from the Afghan Consulate in Quetta (if applicants are prepared to wait a number of months), DFAT assesses this is rare.'¹⁰⁵

6.3.2 The DFAT report stated in regard to passports:

'The Afghan consulate in Peshawar can renew expired Afghan passports and issue NOCs for Afghans without documentation in order to facilitate permanent return to Afghanistan. The Afghan consulate in Quetta can only issue passports within Pakistan in emergencies, with all other applications referred to Kabul. Machine readable [Afghan] passports are not issued in Pakistan. An Afghan can technically obtain a visa in Afghanistan to travel to Pakistan within 48 hours, although DFAT understands, at times, visas can be difficult to obtain.

'According to Afghan government policy, a foreign woman who marries an Afghan man obtains his citizenship and can seek an Afghan passport. Children under seven may travel to Afghanistan on an NOC (without a

¹⁰¹ DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (para 3.60), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹⁰² DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (para 3.63), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹⁰³ FCO, 'Foreign Travel Advice Pakistan', (Safety and security), 15 November 2019, [url](#).

¹⁰⁴ SAFRON, 'Notification Regarding Validity Of Tripartite Agreement', 28 June 2019, [url](#).

¹⁰⁵ DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (paras 3.65-3.66), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

passport), and apply for a passport in Afghanistan. Children over seven with one Afghan parent can apply for Afghan passports.’¹⁰⁶

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Section 7 updated: 14 January 2020

7. Corruption

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 GAN Integrity’s Business Anti-Corruption Portal noted in December 2017, regarding Pakistan, citing a range of sources:

‘Corruption is rampant in all sectors and institutions. The Pakistani Penal Code applies to individuals and makes it illegal to offer, pay or accept a bribe. Companies can be held civilly liable under the Prevention of Corruption Act and the National Accountability Ordinance. Facilitation payments and gifts are prohibited but are common practice. [...] Pakistan is unable to guarantee integrity in state bodies and is unable to prevent corruption despite a sound legal framework. The government didn’t implement anti-corruption laws effectively and officials engaged in corruption with impunity.’¹⁰⁷

7.1.2 The same source noted:

‘There is a high risk of corruption in Pakistan’s public services sector. Inefficient government bureaucracy together with high-levels of corruption present significant barriers to business in Pakistan.... Irregular payments and bribes are commonly exchanged when obtaining public services and licenses... More than half of Pakistanis believe local government officials are corrupt... Corruption is widespread in Pakistan’s administration; there is evidence that the devolution of certain authorities from the federal to the provincial level has led to an increase in corruption... Major causes of corruption are cited as the lack of accountability and enforcement of penalties, as well as the lack of a merit-based promotion system coupled with low wages... Corruption at the lower levels of government is common, to the point where Pakistanis often consider it to be normal...’¹⁰⁸

See also [Action against corruption and fraud](#).

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7.2 Registration of FIRs

7.2.1 According to the HRW 2016 report:

‘The common perception is that the police will demand bribes before taking a complaint, subject complainants to abusive behavior, and falsely accuse the complainant of the crime. [...]

‘In practice, instead of formally registering an FIR, the police will usually make a note of the complaint in the roznamcha (a register that records the daily activities of a police station). While the police claim that only false or manufactured complaints are not registered as FIRs, the process often is a

¹⁰⁶ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (paras 3.67-3.68), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹⁰⁷ GAN Integrity, ‘Pakistan Corruption Report’, December 2017, [url](#).

¹⁰⁸ GAN Integrity, ‘Pakistan Corruption Report’, December 2017, [url](#).

form of police discrimination. Human rights activists say police are less likely to register complaints brought by those from marginalized groups, and also those alleging that a crime was committed by a powerful person. In many instances where perpetrators have ties with powerful citizens, FIRs may ultimately be registered but against “unknown persons,” allowing them to escape investigation.’¹⁰⁹

- 7.2.2 According to a 2014 Supreme Court Order, directing the Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan (Wafaqi Mohtasib) to address mal-administration in police stations, police often refused to register FIRs, timely investigations did not occur, false or vexatious FIRs were registered to pressurise and harass people, and police frequently sought to arrest accused persons named in a FIR without first gathering sufficient evidence to make such an arrest¹¹⁰.
- 7.2.3 The USSD HR Report 2018 stated that ‘Corruption within the lower levels of the police force was common. Some police charged fees to register genuine complaints and accepted bribes for registering false complaints.’¹¹¹ In its 2018 report, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), reported that there continued to be numerous reports about police not registering FIRs¹¹². The Express Tribune reported similar in April 2019¹¹³.
- 7.2.4 Regarding FIRs, the DFAT report noted ‘FIRs use standard forms with the relevant information written in by hand, and are relatively simple to counterfeit. Reports exist of police accepting bribes to verify fraudulent FIRs. DFAT does not consider the existence of an FIR to constitute evidence that the events described in the FIR actually occurred.’¹¹⁴

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7.3 Prevalence and procurement of fraudulent documents

- 7.3.1 DFAT noted ‘CNICs, SNICs and passports contain a number of security features, which have reduced the incidence of document fraud. Authorities have put in place measures to combat the fraudulent issuance of documents, and can cancel fraudulent CNICs.’¹¹⁵
- 7.3.2 The Research Directorate of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB), cited correspondence, dated November 2014, with a lawyer at an Islamabad-based law firm whose areas of practice include commercial fraud, intellectual property, real property, banking and finance. The lawyer noted it was “very easy” to obtain fraudulent documents in Pakistan. He also indicated that fraudulent documents are used for “fraud and misrepresentation” before private and public authorities. The lawyer stated that fraudulent documents can be obtained either on the black market, through people who operate with the “connivance” of junior employees working at different institutions, or directly through the payment of bribes.’¹¹⁶

¹⁰⁹ HRW, “This Crooked System”, (page 21), September 2016, [url](#).

¹¹⁰ Federal Ombudsman, ‘Report on addressing mal-administration...’, (page 31), 19 May 2016, [url](#).

¹¹¹ USSD, ‘HR Report 2018’, (page 35), 13 March 2019, [url](#).

¹¹² HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2018’, (page 69), March 2019, [url](#).

¹¹³ Express Tribune, ‘FIR registration process gets further complicated’, 25 April 2019, [url](#).

¹¹⁴ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.73), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹¹⁵ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.70), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹¹⁶ IRB, ‘Pakistan: Fraudulent documents...’, 14 January 2015, [url](#).

7.3.3 DFAT also confirmed the prevalence of document fraud:

'Document fraud is widespread for forms of documentation not issued by a competent central authority such as NADRA. Due to the relative ease in acquiring fraudulently obtained genuine documents, such documents are common in Pakistan and are generally preferred over counterfeit documents, as they are difficult to detect. Fraudulently obtained genuine documents, such as CNICs and passports, can be obtained with fraudulent (altered or counterfeit) feeder documents. Types of documents historically found to be fraudulent in Pakistan include, but are not limited to, documents regarding academic qualifications such as degrees and transcripts, bank statements, agreements, references, and ownership deeds.'¹¹⁷

7.3.4 An undated article in MIT Technology Review reported on the automation of police and crimes data in Punjab province, a project that began in 2014¹¹⁸. The report noted that, when verifying police personnel data for a Human Resource Management Information System, irregularities were found in approximately 41,000 of 152,000 personnel records, including the presence of fake CNICs, or CNICs that contained incorrect data¹¹⁹.

7.3.5 The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reported in July 2016 that it was common for Pakistani migrants to be smuggled to the United Kingdom, on direct flights or via other airports, using fraudulent documents¹²⁰. According to the report 'Smuggled migrants from Pakistan have been found using fraudulent or stolen passports or visas, travel and identity documents that were obtained through bribery or other illicit means, or using documents issued in the name of other persons.'¹²¹ The UNODC added that smugglers were known to bribe airline personnel to ignore the use of fraudulent travel and identity documents¹²². UNODC also said that 'It is also not uncommon for businesses such as travel agencies or visa consultants in Pakistan to offer migrant smuggling services, ranging from providing fraudulent documents to organising flights and accommodation.'¹²³ The report also noted that it was common for Pakistani nationals to claim to be nationals of other countries, such as Afghanistan or Syria¹²⁴.

7.3.6 A report in the Express Tribune, dated 3 September 2018, noted that, according to the chairman of NADRA, some Afghan nationals obtained CNICs by pretending to be related to Pakistani nationals. The chairman stated that the cards had been blocked. The report also added that some Pakistani Pashtuns pretended to be Afghan refugees and received relief funds, but then returned to Pakistan¹²⁵.

7.3.7 DFAT noted 'Union councils and NADRA can verify fraudulent documents, although detection is difficult where genuine documents were obtained with

¹¹⁷ DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (para 5.71), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹¹⁸ MIT Technology Review, 'Transforming Policing Through Technology', n.d., [url](#).

¹¹⁹ MIT Technology Review, 'Transforming Policing Through Technology', n.d., [url](#).

¹²⁰ UNODC, 'Smuggling of Migrants from Pakistan', (page 65), July 2016, [url](#).

¹²¹ UNODC, 'Smuggling of Migrants from Pakistan', (page 72), July 2016, [url](#).

¹²² UNODC, 'Smuggling of Migrants from Pakistan', (pages 72-73), July 2016, [url](#).

¹²³ UNODC, 'Smuggling of Migrants from Pakistan', (page 83), July 2016, [url](#).

¹²⁴ UNODC, 'Smuggling of Migrants from Pakistan', (page 65), July 2016, [url](#).

¹²⁵ Express Tribune, 'Afghans obtained CNICs by fraud: NADRA chief', 3 September 2018, [url](#).

fraudulently altered or counterfeited primary documents. NADRA now issues birth certificates, but fraudulently obtained, fraudulently altered or counterfeit certificates are still possible as long as hospitals retain the authority to issue birth certificates.¹²⁶

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7.4 Types of fraudulent documents

7.4.1 The IRB Research Directorate noted in its response on fraudulent documents from 2012 to December 2014:

‘The [Islamabad-based] lawyer indicated that the types of documents routinely found to be fraudulent in Pakistan include documents regarding academic qualifications such as degrees and transcripts, bank statements, “agreements”, “references”, and “ownership deeds”. In correspondence with the Research Directorate, a representative of the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI), an “independent, non-partisan and a not-for-profit civil society organization working on issues of peace and development in Pakistan”, similarly said that fake property documents and documents concerning “valuable entitlements” are routinely found in Pakistan.’¹²⁷

7.4.2 The DFAT report also noted that fraudulently altered or forged documents were common and included school records, birth certificates, death certificates, medical records and bank records. The report added ‘Local sources report instances where influential people have paid news organisations to publish false stories.’¹²⁸

7.4.3 The IRB noted that, according to a High Court Advocate,

‘...“fake” articles can get published in newspapers, especially those publications that have limited circulation, but expressed the opinion that “it is not very common these days to find a fake or bogus article” (ibid.). The same source added that, often motivated by their own agenda or the owner’s business or political interests, newspapers publish “fake” articles with stories that “may not be entirely false but nevertheless untrue” (ibid.). He concluded by saying that there are no sanctions established in Pakistan regarding the publishing of “fake” stories (ibid.).’¹²⁹

7.4.4 Regarding identification for Afghans, DFAT noted ‘As self-declaration as an Afghan is the only requirement to apply for an ACC, it is possible for an individual not in either the NADRA or MORR [Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation] databases to fraudulently obtain an ACC [...].’¹³⁰

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¹²⁶ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (paras 5.71-5.72), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹²⁷ IRB, ‘Pakistan: Fraudulent documents...’, 14 January 2015, [url](#).

¹²⁸ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.74), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹²⁹ IRB, ‘Pakistan: Fraudulent documents...’, 14 January 2015, [url](#).

¹³⁰ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.75), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

7.5 Action against corruption and fraud

- 7.5.1 The Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) provides penalties for offences in relation to forgery¹³¹.
- 7.5.2 The USSD HR Report 2018 noted ‘The law provides criminal penalties for official corruption, but the government generally did not implement the law effectively, and officials frequently engaged in corrupt practices. Corruption was pervasive in politics and government, and various politicians and public office holders faced allegations of corruption, including bribery, extortion, cronyism, nepotism, patronage, graft, and embezzlement.’¹³²
- 7.5.3 The same source added:
‘The National Accountability Bureau serves as the highest-level anticorruption authority, with a mandate to eliminate corruption through awareness, prevention, and enforcement. The National Accountability Bureau and other investigative agencies, including the Federal Board of Revenue, the State Bank of Pakistan, and the Federal Investigation Agency, conduct investigations into corruption, tax evasion, and money laundering.’¹³³
- 7.5.4 The DFAT report stated ‘Corruption is also common [...], however in August 2015, the FIA reportedly investigated allegations of NADRA officials issuing fake CNICs to militants in return for bribes as low as USD 100. Since then, Mol has increased its oversight of NADRA and implemented tough measures against fraud within NADRA. DFAT assesses that government efforts have reduced the incidence of bribery and fraud, but have not eliminated it.’¹³⁴
- 7.5.5 The Freedom House report, Freedom in the World 2019, noted that ‘There are numerous formal safeguards against official corruption, including a dedicated agency, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). [...]. However, corruption is believed to remain endemic in practice, and the use of accountability mechanisms is often selective and politically driven.’¹³⁵

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¹³¹ PPC, (Chapter XVIII), 1860, [url](#).

¹³² USSD, ‘HR Report 2018’, (page 35), 13 March 2019, [url](#).

¹³³ USSD, ‘HR Report 2018’, (page 35), 13 March 2019, [url](#).

¹³⁴ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 5.76), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹³⁵ Freedom House, ‘Freedom in the World 2019’, (section C2), 4 February 2019, [url](#).

Terms of Reference

A 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) is a broad outline of what the CPIN seeks to cover. They form the basis for the [country information section](#). The Home Office's Country Policy and Information Team uses some standardised ToRs, depending on the subject, and these are then adapted depending on the country concerned.

For this particular CPIN, the following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Identification
 - ID cards
 - Overseas Pakistanis
 - Children's documents
 - Passports
 - Birth and death certificates
 - Marriage and divorce certificates
 - Fatwas
 - Other ID
 - Airport screening
- Police documents
 - Criminal records
 - First Information Reports (FIRs)
- Afghan refugees
 - PoRs, ACCs, Tazkiras and passports
- Corruption
 - Forged and fraudulent documents – prevalence, types, action
 - FIRs

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Version control

Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **1.0**
- valid from **22 January 2020**

Changes from last version of this note

First version.

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