

Pakistan: COI Repository

Asylum seekers from Afghanistan

1st September 2021 - 22nd June 2022





C L I F F O R D
C H A N C E

Pakistan: COI Repository



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This repository was produced with the kind support of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation



This project is supported by Refugee Action.

Background to this document

The Pakistan Country of Origin Information (COI) Repository was started as part of an emergency response to the crisis in Afghanistan following the Taliban takeover in 2021. The initiative is coordinated by Asylos and Clifford Chance.

Purpose of this document

This document is a collection of COI and its purpose is to address and pre-empt needs that arise as asylum seekers who have fled the current situation in Afghanistan, and are in neighbouring states, will make claims for international protection.

This is a living document intended to collect sources that are reporting on the situation for asylum seekers in Pakistan and relevant source excerpts. Research themes for this report are devised in consultation with UK lawyers and with regards to relevant UK Home Office guidance on similar situations. An updated version of this document will be published on a weekly basis, with new weekly additions highlighted in green throughout the document.

Disclaimer

The COI Repository is intended as background reference material for legal representatives and those assisting asylum seekers, to assist in their preparation of the case. The COI Repository should be used as a tool to help identify relevant COI. The information cited in the repository can be considered by decision makers in assessing asylum applications and appeals. Legal representatives are welcome to submit relevant excerpts cited in this document for their specific case to decision makers (including judges) to assist in the determination of an asylum claim or appeal. **However, this document should not be submitted directly, in its entirety or in isolation as evidence to decision-makers in asylum applications or appeals.**

The information cited in this document is illustrative, but not exhaustive of the information available in the public domain, nor is it determinative of any individual human rights or asylum claim. Submissions should always be complemented by case-specific COI research. While we strive to be as comprehensive as possible, no amount of research can ever provide an exhaustive picture of the situation. It is therefore important to note that the absence of information should not be taken as evidence that an issue, incident or violation does not exist.

We are COI research experts and adhere to strict research principles of providing relevant, objective, transparent, timely and reliable sources material. We therefore include all discoverable relevant information, whether or not supportive of any human rights or asylum claim. **It is therefore imperative that legal representatives and those assisting asylum seekers read the whole COI Repository and submit only relevant excerpts cited in this document for their specific case in addition to conducting their own case-specific COI research.**

Due to the rapid unfolding of events in Afghanistan and the increased media interest during August 2021, as well as internal organisational matters, it was agreed that research would only start on 1st September 2021. Therefore, sources published in August 2021 have not been included.

Feedback

If you would like to suggest additional research topics or sources to include that would assist you in supporting your clients, please fill out this [form](#) or get in touch by emailing misha.nayak-oliver@asylos.eu.

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SECTION 1 - COI Findings

New additions since the last publication of the repository are highlighted in green.

Territory overview of movement of Afghan asylum seekers to Pakistan

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation Update - 1 June 2022](#), 10 June 2022

"The number of new arrivals includes those who approached UNHCR and Partners in Tajikistan (5,710), Iran (38,180) and Pakistan (117,550), new arrivals reported by the Government of Uzbekistan (13,020), as well as the Afghans who were kept by the Iranian authorities at border locations (3,780) since 1 January 2021, although only 738 individuals of the latter group remain in the country. The vast majority of those interviewed report leaving Afghanistan for security-related reasons. The overall number of Afghans with international refugee protection needs is likely to be much higher. The increase on the overall figure does not necessarily reflect the displacement of that same period, but rather the date of assessment. [...] There are more than 178,200 reported newly arriving Afghans who may be in need of international protection in countries neighbouring Afghanistan since 1 January 2021. The overall number of Afghans with international refugee protection needs is likely to be much higher, as not all approach or contact UNHCR. In Iran and Pakistan, more than half are children and a nearly a quarter are women."

UNHCR, Government [UNHCR verify 1.3 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan](#), 3 June 2022

"The Government of Pakistan, with the support of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, completed the verification of some 1.3 million registered Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan.

The Documentation Renewal and Information Verification Exercise, known as DRIVE, was aimed at updating and verifying the data of Afghans holding a Proof of Registration (PoR) card. The exercise was a joint effort conducted by the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), the Chief Commissionerate Commissioner for Afghan Refugees (CCAR), and UNHCR with the technical assistance of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA)".

United Nations Human Rights Commission, [New Arrivals from Pakistan](#), 7 February 2022

"117,547 individuals have arrived in Pakistan since January 2021, with a peak of 35,289 arrivals in August 2021. 53% of arrivals have been male and 47% female (25% men, 22% women, 25% girls and 28% boys). 88% of border crossings occurred at Chaman, 10% at Torkham, and 2% other. 96% of refugees fled due to violence and insecurity.

Council of Foreign Relations, [The Taliban in Afghanistan](#), 15 September 2021

"Following the 2021 takeover, tens of thousands of Afghans tried to escape Afghanistan, and the UN refugee agency said more than half a million Afghans could flee by the end of the year."

Human Rights Watch, [Policy Responses to Support Afghans Fleeing Taliban-Controlled Afghanistan](#), 21 October 2021

"Although 13,097 Afghans who crossed into Pakistan and approached the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) between August and early October, for asylum, the actual number of Afghans who have crossed is likely to be far higher since many who are crossing are undocumented. The Afghanistan/Pakistan border is formally closed to all except those with valid travel or work documents or traveling for medical reasons."

Control of Territory and security situation

What territory in Pakistan do the Taliban and other armed actors control?

United States Institute of Peace, [Five Things to Watch in the Islamabad-Pakistani Taliban Talks](#), 21 June 2022

"After several months of intense fighting, the Pakistani government and the anti-Pakistan insurgent group the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) are talking once again. In early June, the TTP, also known as the Pakistani Taliban, announced a cessation of hostilities with Pakistan for three months. This cease-fire resulted from weeks of secret talks in Kabul between the TTP and Pakistani military officials, followed by a more public meeting between the TTP and Pakistani tribal leaders — both mediated by the Afghan Taliban. For the first time, the Afghan Taliban also confirmed the talks and their role as mediators between Pakistan and the TTP."

"Given this deadlock, the Afghan Taliban's mediation role takes center stage...First, the Taliban's position is likely to be shaped by their own foreign relations and level of reliance on Pakistan — which is a function of the political and material support Taliban enjoyed from Pakistan during the U.S. presence in Afghanistan. One reason the Taliban appear to have pushed the TTP to negotiate in recent months is Pakistan's mounting pressure amid Afghanistan's deepening economic and humanitarian crisis. This pressure peaked with Pakistan's airstrikes in eastern Afghanistan in the month of April. Pakistan may have also threatened more coercive pressure, including through restrictions on the Taliban leadership with homes and families in Pakistan as well as an economic squeeze on the Taliban's revenues by restricting Afghanistan-Pakistan border trade. That seems to have shaken some Taliban leaders, like Pakistan's long-standing ally Siraj Haqqani, the acting interior minister in Kabul, into action. They seem to believe that their regime is likely to remain isolated for the foreseeable future and more hostility with Pakistan will make their life more difficult, maybe even threaten the regime's survival.

Yet this concern isn't sufficient for the Taliban to completely reverse their alliance with the TTP. Haqqani continues to openly praise the TTP for its contribution in the insurgency against the United States and the former Afghan government, reiterating that the Taliban can't abandon the TTP. Perhaps for this reason, the Taliban may be looking for strategic breathing room to offset their dependence on Pakistan. Among the recent moves the Taliban have made is reaching out to India, expending major political capital by reportedly assuring the Indian government it will take action against Pakistan-backed jihadist groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Muhammed, as well as al-Qaida in the Indian subcontinent (AQIS). If India responds to the Taliban's entreaties, this may open up new avenues of assistance for the Taliban, but it is unclear when.

If the Taliban's level of reliance on Pakistan doesn't change, two factors will be key to their medium-term position on the TTP. One is the Taliban's internal politics. There is a reservoir of support for the TTP, both for its own contributions to the Taliban's insurgency as well as for its anti-Pakistan politics. A faction of the Taliban which appears to have stepped up its support for the TTP and wants to shield it from Pakistan is the Kandahari Taliban leadership, including Taliban Defense Minister Mullah Yaqub. The extent to which this constituency will offset Haqqani's preference for working with Pakistan is crucial.

Second, the Taliban's position on the TTP's demands will be important. While the Taliban generally back the TTP's quest for a Shariah-based order in Pakistan, it is unclear where they stand on the TTP's negotiating positions. It is plausible that the TTP's demands (in particular, FATA merger reversal and reduction of Pakistani forces from FATA) are, in fact, the Taliban's demands, as they could advance the Taliban's interests. For example, they can create a buffer zone between Pakistan and the Taliban's Afghanistan while elevating the political status of the TTP, which subordinates itself to the Taliban. Fulfillment of the TTP's demands can also soften a critical chunk of the Durand Line and make it more consistent with the Afghan nationalist position on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

On the other hand, some in the Taliban — in particular, those concerned about ISIS-K as a threat to regime survival — may fear that if the TTP is unable to assert control of the territorial carve out it may get if Pakistan concedes in talks, anti-Taliban armed factions may take root and challenge the Taliban from across the border."

Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, [Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan 4-10 June 2022](#), 16 June 2022

"In Pakistan, Baloch separatists, Islamist militants, and unknown armed groups clashed with state forces and carried out explosive attacks in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces last week. These trends contributed to the

35% increase in violence in Pakistan in the past month relative to the past year flagged by ACLED's Conflict Change Map, which first warned of increased violence to come in the country in the past month."

BBC News, [Pakistani Taliban militants announce indefinite ceasefire with Islamabad](#), 3 June 2022

"The Pakistani Taliban has announced an indefinite ceasefire with Pakistan's government after talks brokered by the Afghan Taliban government. The Pakistani Taliban (TTP) said substantial progress had been made at the talks in Kabul, and the truce extended until further notice. A Pakistani government official said the talks were moving in a positive direction, AFP news agency reports. The TTP has been fighting Pakistan's armed forces for years. The TTP - Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan - wants to impose its own ultra hard-line interpretation of sharia law in Pakistani regions along the border with Afghanistan. The mountainous area has long been a hotbed of militant activity. The group has enjoyed a close but ambiguous relationship with the Afghan Taliban, reports the BBC's Secunder Kermani in Islamabad. Since the Taliban took control of Afghanistan last year, the TTP has stepped up its attacks in Pakistan, killing dozens of government soldiers in 2021."

Gandhara, [Pakistani Official Confirms Cease-Fire Deal With Taliban](#), 3 June 2022

"A Pakistani official has confirmed a deal with the Pakistani Taliban under which an indefinite cease-fire with Islamabad was declared following a round of peace talks brokered by Afghanistan's Taliban leaders in Kabul. [...] On June 2, Muhammad Khurasani, a spokesman for the hard-line Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), said the decision on the cease-fire was made after "substantial progress" in talks held in Kabul with a delegation of 50 Pakistani tribal elders. The Pakistani government has been in talks with the militants as part of Islamabad's ongoing efforts to stem attacks carried out by the outlawed TTP that have killed dozens of Pakistani soldiers this year. A new delegation of elders arrived in Kabul from Pakistan on May 31 for a fresh round of negotiations. As a result of progress in the talks "the leadership of the TTP has extended the cease-fire until further notice," Khurasani said in a statement issued in Kabul. Further meetings will be held in few days, he said. There was no statement from the Afghan Taliban, which seized power in their country in August as U.S. and NATO troops were in the final stages of a withdrawal. A truce previously agreed until May 30 for the Islamic festival of Eid had held until now."

International Crisis Group, [Keeping Turmoil at Bay in Pakistan's Polarised Polity](#), 25 May 2022

"Attacks by Pakistani Taliban militants, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's merged tribal districts at the border with Afghanistan, have escalated in recent weeks, killing or injuring scores of soldiers. The spike in cross-border attacks and military casualties is straining Pakistan's ties with its Afghan Taliban allies. For the first time since the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, Pakistani warplanes have reportedly attacked Pakistani Taliban targets in Afghan territory. At a time when the Pakistani Taliban are making a comeback, taking advantage of Afghan havens, the military high command is likely particularly concerned about Khan's anti-Western rhetoric. His allegation that the Sharif government is "foreign-imposed" – in other words, forced upon an Islamic country by meddling Westerners – could give the Pakistani Taliban yet another rallying cry with which to raise funds, find new recruits and attack state institutions."

The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), [Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan 7-13 May 2022](#), 19 May 2022

"In Pakistan, Baloch separatists continued attacks against security forces and civilian targets in Balochistan province last week. Multiple fatalities were reported across separate attacks involving Baloch separatist groups, including the Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) and the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), in a number of districts. Meanwhile, Baloch Republican Guard (BRG) militants destroyed a transmission tower in Nasirabad district. Violence in Balochistan is both common and highly volatile; it is considered an area of 'extreme risk' by ACLED's Volatility and Risk Predictability Index.

Elsewhere, in Sindh province, SRA militants conducted an IED explosion targeting coast guard personnel in Karachi district last week. One civilian was killed and 13 others were injured in the explosion. This violence contributes to the 100% increase in violence in Sindh over the past week relative to the past month, as flagged by ACLED's Subnational Surge Tracker."

Long War Journal, [Afghan Taliban brokers ceasefire between Pakistan and TTP](#), 18 May 2022

"The Afghan Taliban played a key role in extending a ceasefire between the Pakistani state and the Movement of the Taliban in Pakistan (TTP). The Haqqani Network, an integral part of the Taliban whose leader, Sirajuddin Haqqani, is the Taliban's deputy emir and minister of the interior, reportedly helped facilitate the negotiations."

"The TTP is known to shelter and operate inside of Afghanistan, despite claims by the Afghan Taliban that no foreign terror groups operate on its soil. Thousands of TTP fighters maneuver in southern and eastern Afghanistan, and the group played a key role in the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in the summer of 2021.

The TTP's mission and mandate is to establish an Islamic Emirate of Pakistan, to accomplish the same thing the Taliban did in Afghanistan. The TTP, which swears allegiance to the Afghan Taliban and is backed by Al Qaeda, has ramped up attacks in Pakistan since Afghanistan was taken over by the Taliban."

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA), [Militant attacks surge by 24pc in Pakistan](#), 5 May 2022

"The Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies () the insurgents staged 34 attacks across the country in April. At least 55 people were killed, including 34 security personnel, 13 civilians and eight militants, statistics from PICSS revealed. Another 25 people were wounded, including 11 security personnel and 14 civilians. In March, militants had conducted 26 across , killing 115 people and injuring 288 others."

United States Institute of Peace, [Pakistan's Twin Taliban Problem](#), 4 May 2022

"Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban are teetering on the brink of a major crisis. Since coming into power, the Taliban has defied Pakistan — its main state benefactor during the insurgency against the United States military and the deposed Afghan government. It has done so by challenging the status of the Afghan-Pakistan border and providing a haven to the anti-Pakistan insurgent group the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), also known as the Pakistani Taliban, which has killed thousands of Pakistanis and seeks to establish a Taliban-style, Shariah-compliant state in Pakistan. This has stunned Islamabad, which was operating on the assumption that the Taliban would be beholden to Pakistan out of gratitude for years of support."

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA), [Deadly border attacks test Pakistani gov't relations with Taliban](#), 30 April 2022

"The Taliban warned Islamabad of "consequences" saying it would not tolerate "invasions" from its neighbors after nearly 50 people were killed on April 16 in alleged Pakistani air raids in the border provinces of Kunar and Khost. Pakistan has not confirmed if it was behind the air raids."

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan State of Human Rights in 2021](#), 29 April 2022

"Two army soldiers were killed on the Bajaur border in August by firing from inside Afghanistan in August. Two FC soldiers were killed in an IED attack in Bajaur in October."

The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), [Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan 16-22 April 2022](#), 28 April 2022

"In Pakistan, Baloch separatists clashed with security forces and targeted civilians with grenades in Balochistan province last week. Multiple fatalities were reported across separate attacks involving Baloch separatist groups, including the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and the Baloch Liberation Front (BLF). Meanwhile, BLA militants demolished a telecommunication tower with explosives in Barkhan district. ACLED's Conflict Change Map first warned of increased violence to come in Pakistan in the past month.

Elsewhere, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, TTP militants continued to clash with state forces and target security forces and civilians with explosive attacks last week. Multiple fatalities were reported across separate attacks in a number of districts in the province. Meanwhile, IS militants shot and killed a policeman in Peshawar district. The militants also destroyed a telecommunications tower with explosives in Bajaur district, contributing to the 100% increase in violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa last month relative to the past year flagged by ACLED's Subnational Threat Tracker, which first warned of increased violence to come in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the past month."

The Jamestown Foundation, [Pakistani Taliban Launches Spring Offensive amid Political Turmoil in Islamabad](#), 22 April 2022

"In April 11, five policemen were killed when their patrol vehicle was ambushed by militants in Dera Ismail Khan in Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (The News , April 12). On the same day, in a separate incident, two soldiers were killed when terrorists attacked a military post in Angur Ada, South Waziristan in the same province (Express Tribune, April 13). The terrorist attacks were launched against security forces on the same day that Shehbaz Sharif of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) was elected as Pakistan's new prime minister to replace Imran Khan, who was ousted from office as a result of a no-confidence vote brought by opposition parties against him on April 9 (The News, April 10).

The two attacks represented the beginning of the so-called Al-Badr spring offensive by the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which is also known as the Pakistani Taliban. On March 30, the TTP announced it would launch the spring offensive during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan against security forces and their collaborators. According to the group's spokesman, Mohammad Khorasani, the offensive would include "martyrdom (suicide) operations, ambush attacks, mine operations, counter-attacks, target attacks, and laser and sniper operations." The announcement from the TTP also came at a time when Imran Khan was facing the no-confidence vote in Parliament. The uncertainty on the political front provides the TTP with the opportunity to operate with more freedom in Pakistan. Political stability has been vital to fighting the group in Pakistan, which borders Taliban-ruled Afghanistan – a country that harbors the TTP. As a result, the TTP is set to exploit the political crisis and further entrench itself in Pakistan, as seen through the surge in attacks from the day "regime change" took place in Islamabad on April 11."

United States Institute of Peace, [After the Taliban's Takeover: Pakistan's TTP Problem](#), 19 January 2022

"In 2021, the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) insurgency escalated its challenge against Pakistan. Operating from bases in Afghanistan, and with a growing presence inside Pakistan, the group mounted an increasing number of attacks against Pakistani security forces —

The insurgency also showed renewed political strength by bringing in splintered factions and improving internal cohesion. Additionally, al-Qaeda signaled its continued alliance with the TTP. On Tuesday, after an attack by the TTP on the police in Pakistan's capital city of Islamabad, Pakistan's Interior Minister warned that more attacks by the group are likely.

Ever since the Taliban's takeover, the TTP has emphasized that the Afghan Taliban is not only a model insurgency, but also the mothership of their movement. TTP chief Noor Wali Mehsud has publicly reiterated his pledge of allegiance to Afghan Taliban leader Maulvi Hibatullah Akhundzada and claimed the TTP to be a branch of the Taliban in Pakistan. For their part, the Taliban are evasive on the current status and future of the TTP in Afghanistan and remain non-committal on a crackdown despite the group's violence against Pakistan."

The Washington Post, [Taliban recruits flood into Afghanistan from neighboring Pakistan as the group works to consolidate control](#), 18 December 2021

"But many Pakistanis blame instability in Afghanistan for militant attacks on their own soil, something they fear will increase with the Taliban in power. One powerful group is the Pakistani Taliban, known as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, or TTP, which is distinct from the Afghan Taliban but has thrown its support behind the neighboring rulers."

Council of Foreign Relations, [The Taliban in Afghanistan](#), 15 September 2021

"Between two hundred and five hundred al-Qaeda fighters are believed to be in Afghanistan, and its leaders are believed to be based in regions along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Many members of the Taliban's interim cabinet previously worked with al-Qaeda; some are believed to maintain ties to this day."

ACLED, [Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan, 14-20 May 2022](#), 26 May 2022

"Last week in South Asia and Afghanistan, the Taliban came under attacks from anti-Taliban groups and Islamic State (IS) in Afghanistan. The group also clashed with the Tajik military along the border as the Pakistani military conducted cross-border shelling into Afghanistan, injuring civilians."

International Crisis Group, ["Keeping Turmoil at Bay in Pakistan's Polarised Polity"](#), 25 May 2022

"Militant violence is already surging, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province's tribal belt bordering Afghanistan, straining relations between Islamabad and Kabul's Taliban-led authorities. Political polarisation could worsen and erupt into violence, weakening parliamentary institutions, while sapping the state's capacity to counter security threats."

General security situation for asylum seekers in Pakistan

BBC News, [Pakistani Taliban militants announce indefinite ceasefire with Islamabad](#), 3 June 2022

"The Pakistani Taliban has announced an indefinite ceasefire with Pakistan's government after talks brokered by the Afghan Taliban government. The Pakistani Taliban (TTP) said substantial progress had been made at the talks in Kabul, and the truce extended until further notice. A Pakistani government official said the talks were moving in a positive direction, AFP news agency reports. The TTP has been fighting Pakistan's armed forces for years. The TTP - Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan - wants to impose its own ultra hard-line interpretation of sharia law in Pakistani regions along the border with Afghanistan. The mountainous area has long been a hotbed of militant activity. The group has enjoyed a close but ambiguous relationship with the Afghan Taliban, reports the BBC's Secunder Kermani in Islamabad. Since the Taliban took control of Afghanistan last year, the TTP has stepped up its attacks in Pakistan, killing dozens of government soldiers in 2021."

ATNnews, [IEA assures Afghan protestors in Pakistan they will be safe at home](#), 25 May 2022

"Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday that Afghans who fled to Pakistan following the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's (IEA) take over in August last year can return home and their safety will be ensured. The ministry said that a number of Afghans who have been protesting in Islamabad for some time now want to be evacuated to other countries. These Afghans have told Pakistani media that their lives would be in danger if they returned home. [...] One protester, Alyas Zaki, told Dawn News: "We are here and want to get settled in any developed country. So far, we are not being given the status of refugees here."

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"A report by the Danish Refugee Council stated in September 2018 that the Government of Pakistan distinguishes between refugees with a recognised status, meaning the Proof of Registration (PoR) cardholders or RIC holders] and those without this status. This differentiation is relevant to the protection, the rights and assistance that Afghan refugees receive and are entitled to, even though officially no rights other than protection from refoulement are attached to the status of being a PoR cardholder."

"As reported by the U.S. magazine Foreign Policy in November 2021, Pakistan has not registered any new refugees since 2007, despite UNHCR being present in the country. According to a study published by the Afghan Displacement Solution Platform (ADSP) in June 2019, UNHCR did not conduct group status determination or grant prima facie status to Afghans in Pakistan, instead, most Afghan refugees were left in legal limbo. Until 2006, Afghan refugees in Pakistan did not need to be in possession of legal documents. In late 2006-early 2007, the Pakistani government, together with UNHCR, started the registration of Afghan refugees and issuance of PoR cards. The PoR cardholders are considered as registered refugees. In addition to this group, the Afghan population living in Pakistan can be divided into three additional categories: Afghan Citizens Cards (ACC) holders, undocumented Afghans and visa holders. In 2017, Pakistan started issuing ACC to document a part of the unregistered Afghan refugees as a means of indefinitely legalising their stay without granting them refugee status. Still, there were also undocumented Afghan refugees who were not in possession of any Pakistani documents. (For more information on the various registration and documentation exercises, please see section 2 Documentation of registered and unregistered Afghan refugees.) Another category of Afghans living in Pakistan were the ones holding an Afghan passport with a Pakistani visa (e.g. study or work). Figure 1 shows the four main categories of Afghans living in Pakistan according to their legal status as described by the study of ADSP."

Regarding the legal situation of Afghans arriving in Pakistan after August 2021, refugee rights advocates reported in November 2021 that the lack of policies for new arrivals made it difficult for aid organisations to assist them. As a

result, many new arriving Afghans had to rely on informal networks and try to keep a low profile for fear of being stopped by Pakistani authorities."

"Mielke highlights the potential threat to both the Afghan and Pakistani populations within Pakistan posed by the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) group, as the attack on the Shiite Mosque in Peshawar on 4 March 2022 demonstrated."

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA), [Pakistan: We do not accept newcomers from Afghanistan](#), 8 May 2022

"Pakistani officials have stated that they do not want to increase the number of refugees in that country and will not accept the number of Afghans who came to Pakistan after the change of government in Afghanistan as refugees. [...] According to the officials, the refugees wanted to seek refuge in the United States or other Western countries, but were stranded in Islamabad due to delays in processing their documents by foreign embassies.

The officials stressed that although large numbers of Afghans are issued visas daily by the Pakistani embassy for business or medical purposes, travel to Pakistan does not allow to become a refugee.

It is worth mentioning that after the recent political developments and the change of government in Afghanistan, many of our compatriots immigrated to neighboring countries, including Pakistan."

The Jamestown Foundation, [No End in Sight: Jihadist and Baluch Ethno-Nationalist Suicide Terrorism in Pakistan Since the U.S. Withdrawal From Afghanistan](#), 6 May 2022

"[b]oth Afghan refugees and the Baluchs have faced unwarranted harassment, allegations of sympathizing with TTP and Baluch insurgents, as well as arbitrary detentions, dislocations and stigmatization (Dawn, March 20). This has contributed to a collective sense of despair, disempowerment, and humiliation. Hence, such suicide attacks are carried out to restore lost honor and take revenge for the humiliations they have endured."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Gandhara, [First Female Suicide Bomber Marks 'Paradigm Shift' In Pakistan's Baluch Insurgency](#), 29 April 2022

"Shari Baloch, a 31-year-old mother of two, reportedly became the first woman to carry out a suicide bombing for the secular, ethnic Baluch rebels seeking independence for Pakistan's largest and resource-rich province, Balochistan. She killed three Chinese citizens and their Pakistani driver in front of the Confucius Institute in the southern seaport city of Karachi on April 26. The attack raised questions about what motivated an educated, happily married, middle-class woman to blow herself up. Many in Pakistan wonder whether the attack signifies a new direction for the two-decade-old Baluch insurgency that is locked in a violent stalemate with Islamabad. Since 2000, Baluch rebel groups have been engaged in conflict with the Pakistani security forces in the vast southwestern province bordering Afghanistan and Iran and hemmed in by the Arabian Sea. Islamabad blames the rebels for attacks on government forces, installations, immigrants, and laborers from the eastern Punjab Province and even pro-Islamabad Baluch figures."

UNHCR, [Information for new arrivals](#), undated

"UNHCR is aware that many Afghans face a very difficult situation in Pakistan and desire to be resettled to another country. However, due to the extremely limited number of resettlement places available, only a small number of individuals may be considered for resettlement."

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"Afghan new arrivals faced multi-faceted protection challenges. Most notably, access to registration and documentation which would enable them to enjoy basic rights, facilitate access to services, and mitigate the risk of arrest and [sic] detention.

Moreover, such access would protect against refoulement. Between September and November, 1,800 Afghans - predominantly undocumented Afghans, including some new arrivals – were reportedly deported. Among new arrivals: approximately 20 per cent reported a specific need and of this subset: 29 per cent had serious medical needs; 16 per cent had disabilities; 14 per cent were women-at-risk; 11 per cent were single parents; and 8 per cent

were children-at-risk. The top concerns for the new arrivals residing in Pakistan were access to shelter (87 per cent), livelihoods (82 per cent), food (78 per cent) and medical assistance (42 per cent)."

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan 2022](#), 12 January 2022

"In the face of a growing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, the Government of Pakistan is playing a key role to avoid a worse-case scenario. In conjunction with calls on the international community to enhance their support Afghanistan, it has proactively engaged in global, regional, and bilateral diplomacy efforts. Additionally, it has donated humanitarian aid and facilitated humanitarian action in support of the people of Afghanistan. In response to security concerns, the Government of Pakistan has also implemented a series of measures, resulting in a more regulated border management."

World Food Programme, [WFP Critical Corporate Initiative: Climate Response Analysis – Pakistan](#), December 2021

"Climate change is likely to drive migration and potentially lead to the outbreak of conflict through its negative impact on resource availability—a phenomenon possible in all assessed livelihood zones. In Balochistan's Western Dry Mountains, Balochistan's Dry Western Plateau, and KPK's Northern Dry Mountains, climate impacts may also lead to displacement and conflict by exacerbating preexisting conflict dynamics. In KPK, both natural disasters and an influx of Afghan refugees may heighten the likelihood of scarcity-induced conflict and may amplify ongoing conflicts."

"In Balochistan's Western Dry Mountains (LZ3), agriculturalists migrate due to underdeveloped local marketing facilities, environmental degradation from prolonged droughts, and security issues related to conflict between state security forces and Baloch militias [53], [109]. Nearly 80% of rural-to-urban out-migration is driven by economic concerns [109]. The deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan, spurred by the sudden withdrawal of American forces, poses an additional threat due to increasing refugee flows and the potential for changing political dynamics to heighten tensions between Baloch separatists, TTP, and Pakistani forces [111]."

"The Northern Dry Mountains in KPK (LZ5) are affected by flooding, snow, droughts, and conflict-induced agricultural losses [12], [59]. Food losses caused by changing rainfall patterns, local violence, and poor market access underline the importance of non-agricultural livelihoods for households that, as a result, often migrate out of the LZ [12], [53]. In this context, economic out-migration, both permanent and seasonal, from rural districts to rural and urban areas, coincides with declining agricultural incomes and increasing food insecurity [53], [109]. Seasonal and permanent migration is essential for generating remittances, which contribute up to 31% of income for rural households in LZ5 [53]. Therefore, resource scarcity and pre-existing conflict conditions are the two impact pathways leading to migration and displacement in LZ5, both of which may be inflamed by natural disasters. As in LZ3 and LZ4, refugee influxes and conflict spillover from neighboring Afghanistan may exacerbate ongoing conflicts in LZ5, particularly in the NMDs, and strain public services [111]."

"While economic opportunity is the main driver of emigration, a small share of emigrants leaves Pakistan due to conflict, a loss of trust in the state, and poor educational opportunities [26]. Violence and persecution also drive out-migration, and, in 2019, 137,000 refugees and 66,000 asylum seekers fled Pakistan. Those seeking refuge are more likely to be families than single males. Many immigrants arriving in Pakistan hail from India, Afghanistan, Iran, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka. Afghan refugees represent the largest single block of immigrants, with a population of 1.4 million [29], [30]."

Foreign Policy, [Afghan Refugees Get Cold Welcome in Pakistan](#), 22 November 2021

"This attitude toward recent Afghan arrivals reflects the fears of a state burdened by the cost of hosting refugees and paranoid about its national security. Rights groups said Afghans are often scapegoated by the government and sections of the public in Pakistan's fight against economic uncertainty and extremism."

International Rescue Committee, [Overcoming poverty and disaster – Pakistan](#), Undated

"Pakistan has several populations each with a unique set of humanitarian challenges: communities that have been displaced by violence; many registered and unregistered Afghan refugees; and people uprooted by natural disasters such as floods or drought."

Given such challenges, quality of life for many Pakistanis suffers greatly. Many children lack basic education and are unprepared for life and work.

Additionally, health care services often do not offer support for the unique needs of women and girls. A high number of women die during, before or after childbirth; and girls often do not have enough information to make informed decisions about their health."

Crime rates against asylum seekers from Afghanistan, including kidnappings and abductions

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [HRCP demands repeal of colonial laws that curb peaceful assembly](#), 20 June 2022

"The right to peaceful assembly is a cornerstone of any democratic society. The study provides an analysis of this right as enshrined in Article 16 of Pakistan's constitution as well as offers a review of legal provisions and procedures that impact it. Moreover, HRCP was able to conduct a detailed mapping of assemblies from years 2010 to 2020 through this study, to find that disproportionate curbs were placed on at least 392 of the 858 assemblies surveyed; these included excessive use of force, arbitrary and politically motivated arrests and detentions, registration of criminal or terrorism charges, and the imposition of moratoriums on assemblies for extended periods of time for no valid reason.

The study proposes creating and enforcing better protocols for law enforcement agencies that involve training in human rights and crowd-management practices, with an emphasis on minimal use of force; allowing unrestricted media and digital access to assemblies; and facilitating free speech and movement for all assemblies rather than imposing content-based restrictions or blockading routes."

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"In 2021, sources indicated that police harassment of Afghan refugees remained an issue. An August 2021 study by Mielke and her co-authors, based on 62 semi-structured qualitative interviews and quantitative data from 299 surveyed participants obtained between December 2019 and March 2021, stated that police harassment of Afghans in Pakistan appeared to be pervasive and included extortion, corruption, and violence. In addition, study participants reported experiencing unannounced home and business searches, verbal abuse, and the prevalent notion that 'the police or security authorities can penetrate your space anytime'."

"In their August 2021 study, Mielke et al cited the organisations EHSAR Foundation, UNDP, Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO), and Paidar Development Organization (PDO) as also providing legal assistance throughout Pakistan, in addition to SHARP. However, according to the study, these organisations provide assistance exclusively to registered Afghans. The study's findings indicate that the main strategy of Afghans who are facing problems with the police and are unwilling or unable to bribe their way out of the situation is to seek legal assistance from NGOs - 'provided that the person is aware of it and knows, for example, the help line number'."

"Meanwhile, the aforementioned August 2021 study co-authored by Mielke et al referred to 'many respondents' who reported having paid money to police officers to get out of police encounters. Such payments at checkpoints reportedly ranged from 200 to 6 000 Pakistan rupees (approx. EUR 1 to EUR 30247). Payments for the release of individuals arrested for allegedly having expired documents reportedly reached up to 20 000 Pakistan rupees (approx. EUR 100248)".

"In the case of conflict, Afghans reportedly seek to resolve these among themselves whenever possible, out of fear of Pakistani security and law enforcement agencies, especially the police. Based on a long tradition of community conflict resolution in Afghan as well as Pakistani areas, this is also the case when members of the host community are involved. Thus, Afghans rely on their own conflict resolution structures and attribute significant authority to 'communal leadership and traditional authority structures (elders)' in conflict resolution."

"Mielke et al reported that female residents of the peri-urban Pul Saggian site (Lahore) felt unsafe and powerless following child kidnappings and a murder that police had failed to properly investigate."

"Mudassar M. Javed explained that security-related incidents have also increased and the number of attacks in Pakistan has risen again. Security checks have been tightened in some areas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. However, these security checks are not pervasive, and the Pakistani police is not equipped to carry out checks or

arrest people on a constant basis. Moreover, if police officers arrest large numbers of people without just cause, there is a high likelihood that those arrested will be released in court and officers will have to justify in court why those people were arrested in the first place. According to Javed, the Pakistani government has not taken any strict measures or shown harsh treatment toward newly arrived Afghans, however the government has not yet announced a clear policy regarding newly arriving Afghans.^{25F 252} According to an open letter by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) dated November 2021, the lack of clarity on how to respond to the influx is causing concerns, particularly among border guards and police. Reports indicate that refugees are being extorted, denied entry, and even subjected to violence by the Pakistani authorities."

"Undocumented Afghans (including those holding an Afghan passport or the tazkera) who do not have Government of Pakistan- or UNHCR-issued documents are 'in breach of the Foreigners Act, 1946 and are liable to arrest, detention and deportation'. For more information on the Foreigners Act, 1946 and its implications, please see section 1.3.1 Laws and policies. According to a representative of Pakistan's NGO Human Rights Alliance (HRA) cited in the August 2021 paper by Mielke and others, 'undocumented refugees are often kept in prison for months and years'."

Pajhwok Afghan News (Afghan News Agency), [30 Afghan bonded labourers freed from brick kiln](#), 15 May 2022

"Thirty Afghan nationals, including women and children, have been freed from illegal detention as a result of a raid on a brick kiln in the garrison city of Rawalpindi. [...] According to The Express Tribune, the Afghan families, which had fled their homeland, ended up in the brick kiln. They were forced to work without payment and proper food. "The rescued Afghans were starving and had not eaten for several days," police said. On seeing police officials on the premises, the families started crying for help. Medical tests will be conducted to determine if they had been tortured."

Coercion / forced recruitment of asylum seekers from Afghanistan to join Taliban and other armed groups in Pakistan

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"According to Taliban commanders, the recent influx from Pakistan is estimated to be between 5 000 and 10 000, while the Taliban reportedly have an estimated 75 000 fighters in their ranks. In January 2022, the New York Times reported that Taliban officials were attempting to fill the vacancies of former Afghan government employees with former Taliban fighters and exiles, who were quietly residing in Pakistan, and whose existence Pakistan had officially denied for years."

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA), [Turmoil leaves widows, orphans behind](#), 30 April 2022

"The Taliban have accused Pakistan of conducting airstrikes against Afghan cities. Pakistan denied the charges. Local officials say 36 people died in the explosions. Afghan Voice Agency (AVA) – Monitoring, in recent months, Pakistan has stepped up military actions along the border between the two countries. The border was originally drawn by British colonial rulers and is disputed by Kabul. The unrest in Afghanistan has led to many husbands dying or being drawn into extremist groups. The women and children left behind struggle to survive."

Leaving and 'defecting' from armed groups in Afghanistan and evacuating to Pakistan

What legal prosecution is there for defectors?

Council of Foreign Relations, [The Taliban in Afghanistan](#), 15 September 2021

"Many experts say the Pakistani security establishment continues to give financial and logistical support to the Taliban, including providing sanctuary to Taliban militants, in an effort to counter India's influence in Afghanistan. Islamabad dismisses these charges. (At the same time, Pakistan has battled its own insurgency group, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, which is sometimes referred to as the Pakistani Taliban and is distinct from the Afghan group.)"

How are defectors of the Taliban treated by Pakistan?

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

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The Washington Post, [Taliban recruits flood into Afghanistan from neighboring Pakistan as the group works to consolidate control](#), 18 December 2021

"Quduratullah, the Afghan Taliban fighter, said there is deep suspicion of fighters like himself who have spent much of their lives in Pakistan. Millions of Afghan refugees who fled war have lived in Pakistan for decades. Many lack the rights that would allow them to work and live freely in Pakistan, putting them at an economic disadvantage and making the population ripe for radicalization or recruitment."

"He said he lives part of the year there because the rest of his unit does the same. He listed dozens of instances of harassment at the hands of Pakistani police because of his Taliban ties including multiple detentions, one resulting in jail time."

Justice, law and order in Pakistan for asylum seekers from Afghanistan

What governance, laws and policies exist to protect asylum seekers in Pakistan?

Afghan Voices Agency, [Pakistan is facing a new wave of Afghan refugees](#), 20 June 2022

"Qaisarkhan Afridi; A spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) told Anatolia News Agency that more than 250,000 Afghans had entered Pakistan since the Taliban took power in Afghanistan. "More than 250,000 Afghans have traveled to Pakistan over the past 10 months following the establishment of the Islamic Emirate," he added. Afridi continued: "We are negotiating with the government of Pakistan to register and legalize the presence of Afghan immigrants who immigrated to this country after the Islamic Emirate came to power." Pakistan's cabinet, meanwhile, approved a plan last week to provide facilities for migrants seeking relocation."

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [HRCP demands repeal of colonial laws that curb peaceful assembly](#), 20 June 2022

"The right to peaceful assembly is a cornerstone of any democratic society. The study provides an analysis of this right as enshrined in Article 16 of Pakistan's constitution as well as offers a review of legal provisions and procedures that impact it. Moreover, HRCP was able to conduct a detailed mapping of assemblies from years 2010 to 2020 through this study, to find that disproportionate curbs were placed on at least 392 of the 858 assemblies surveyed; these included excessive use of force, arbitrary and politically motivated arrests and detentions, registration of criminal or terrorism charges, and the imposition of moratoriums on assemblies for extended periods of time for no valid reason.

The study proposes creating and enforcing better protocols for law enforcement agencies that involve training in human rights and crowd-management practices, with an emphasis on minimal use of force; allowing unrestricted

media and digital access to assemblies; and facilitating free speech and movement for all assemblies rather than imposing content-based restrictions or blockading routes."

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan State of Human Rights in 2021](#), 29 April 2022

"In September [2021], the senior superintendent of police suspended the station house officer and a Muharrar of Lohi Bher police station after a suspect, Afghan national Shireen Khan, committed suicide by hanging himself in the police lock-up. This remains an entrenched pattern that must be reversed. [...] The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) calls on the state to immediately address the situation of Afghan refugees in the country, which, in the absence of any comprehensive policy framework or legislation, has been sidelined. Contrary to the Prime Minister's public announcements, ordinary citizens from Afghanistan have been left to fend for themselves amid new and arbitrary restrictions on cross-border movement. This dire lack of protocol and policy is unjust and serves only to aggravate the tension between the two countries rather than restoring balance in such a precarious situation. HRCP thus recommends that the state take the following practical steps towards tackling what could potentially become a full-blown humanitarian crisis: Develop a transparent, human rights-centric policy Historically, Parliament has never held a discussion on the situation of Afghan refugees, relegating this issue to the military domain instead where policies have been made in secrecy. In similar fashion, public debate on this issue has been ousted and 'secret briefings' held, which HRCP deems unacceptable. The Cabinet's 2017 decision to adopt a national policy on the management of Afghan refugees and nationals in Pakistan along specific parameters must be revived immediately, and the Parliamentary Committee of the Whole, in consultation with civil society organisations, must develop a substantial policy to address the matter in a way that upholds human rights and humanitarian law. This policy must also be announced in Parliament to allow for much-needed discussion and debate before it is implemented. [...] SAP-PK executive director Muhammad Tahseen said that the absence of such a policy meant that poorer, more vulnerable HRCP chairperson Hina Jilani pointed out that developments in Afghanistan had serious implications for civil society in Pakistan and that 'secret briefings' on the issue were unacceptable. While respecting Afghan sovereignty was indeed important, she said, this should not keep civil society in Pakistan from speaking up against human rights violations in Afghanistan. [...] 15 October, Islamabad: Roundtable discussion, in collaboration with SAPPK, on the situation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and the unfolding humanitarian crisis. [...] 22 November, Islamabad: Joint roundtable on the situation of Afghan refugees. [...] 28 August [2021], Quetta: HRCP visited Afghan refugees in Haraza Town to express solidarity with their plight."

USDOS, [2021 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan](#), 12 April 2022

"There were numerous reports the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings. Security forces reportedly committed extrajudicial killings in connection with conflicts throughout the country (see section 1.g.)."

Australia, [DFAT, DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan](#), 25 January 2022

"In 2017, the government launched a further, six-month program to register undocumented Afghans by issuing them with a new Afghan Citizenship Card (ACC). The ACC is a temporary identity document for Afghans without other forms of identification and offers far more limited benefits than the PoR. ACC holders are entitled to stay temporarily in Pakistan and have freedom of movement but cannot access public health services or public education. Like PoR holders, they cannot legally work and, while many do work in the informal economy, they are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. During the registration period any self-declared Afghan could apply for an ACC, but PoR card holders and single males under 18 were excluded. 3.23 Many Afghan refugees in Pakistan hold neither an ACC nor PoR. Some are registered as refugees or asylum seekers with the UNHCR and can legally stay temporarily in Pakistan, although this is not always understood or respected by security forces. Afghans registered with the UNHCR can theoretically rent property, register births and access health services and education, but this usually requires intervention by the UNHCR and is unattainable for many. Others have no Pakistani or UNHCR documents, although they may hold a tazkira (Afghan national identity document) or Afghan passport. These undocumented Afghans are in breach of the Foreigners Act, 1946 and are liable to arrest, detention and deportation."

HRCP, [Open letter: The situation of Afghan refugees cannot continue to be ignored](#), 22 November 2021

"The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) calls on the state to immediately address the situation of Afghan refugees in the country, which, in the absence of any comprehensive policy framework or legislation, has been sidelined.

Contrary to the Prime Minister's public announcements, ordinary citizens from Afghanistan have been left to fend for themselves amid new and arbitrary restrictions on cross-border movement. This dire lack of protocol and policy is unjust and serves only to aggravate the tension between the two countries rather than restoring balance in such a precarious situation. [...] There is a worrying lack of clarity at the grassroots level about how to respond to this crisis, especially among border patrol and the police. Multiple reports from the border indicate that authorities have been extorting refugees for money, giving preferential treatment, refusing entry, and even subjecting them to violence. Refugee camps also suffer from poor hygienic conditions and refugees continue to experience harassment and xenophobia from local administrations and communities."

Council of Foreign Relations, [The Taliban in Afghanistan](#), 15 September 2021

"Many experts say the Pakistani security establishment continues to give financial and logistical support to the Taliban, including providing sanctuary to Taliban militants, in an effort to counter India's influence in Afghanistan. Islamabad dismisses these charges. (At the same time, Pakistan has battled its own insurgency group, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, which is sometimes referred to as the Pakistani Taliban and is distinct from the Afghan group.)"

What is Pakistan's justice and dispute resolution system for asylum seekers?

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"Mielke et al reported that female residents of the peri-urban Pul Saggian site (Lahore) felt unsafe and powerless following child kidnappings and a murder that police had failed to properly investigate."

UNHCR, [Report on the humanitarian and human rights situation of Afghan refugees in Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan](#), 31 March 2022

"Most notably, access to registration and documentation which would enable them to enjoy basic rights, facilitate access to services, and mitigate the risk of arrest and detention. Moreover, such access would protect against refoulement. Between September and November, 1,800 Afghans - predominantly undocumented Afghans, including some new arrivals – were reportedly deported. Among new arrivals: approximately 20 per cent reported a specific need and of this subset: 29 per cent had serious medical needs; 16 per cent had disabilities; 14 per cent were women-at-risk; 11 per cent were single parents; and 8 per cent were children-at-risk. The top concerns for the new arrivals residing in Pakistan were access to shelter (87 per cent), livelihoods (82 per cent), food (78 per cent) and medical assistance (42 per cent)"

UNHCR – UN Refugee Agency, [Pakistan Country Factsheet \(January 2022\)](#), 14 January 2022

"UNHCR operates nine Advice and Legal Aid Centres (ALACs) in the main refugee-hosting areas run by UNHCR partners SHARP and SEHER. ALAC teams are involved in direct interventions to secure release of persons of concern who are arrested/detained on the basis of their legal status, conduct legal awareness raising sessions with the community and capacity building activities with law enforcement agencies on the rights of refugees."

Treatment of asylum seekers by public authorities

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [HRCP demands repeal of colonial laws that curb peaceful assembly](#), 20 June 2022

"The right to peaceful assembly is a cornerstone of any democratic society. The study provides an analysis of this right as enshrined in Article 16 of Pakistan's constitution as well as offers a review of legal provisions and procedures that impact it. Moreover, HRCP was able to conduct a detailed mapping of assemblies from years 2010 to 2020

through this study, to find that disproportionate curbs were placed on at least 392 of the 858 assemblies surveyed; these included excessive use of force, arbitrary and politically motivated arrests and detentions, registration of criminal or terrorism charges, and the imposition of moratoriums on assemblies for extended periods of time for no valid reason.

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Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [HRCP demands economic stability, political rights](#), 18 June 2022

"It noted the worsening instances of police brutality against peaceful protestors across Pakistan with arrests of activists and political workers on anti-state charges becoming a common feature. Freedom of press is in continuous stress and journalists have been persistently targeted."

Gandhara, [Gandhara Briefing: Pakistani Visas, Taliban Taxes, Afghan Bodybuilders](#), 17 June 2022

"Radio Mashaal and Radio Azadi report on the thriving black market for Pakistani visas in Afghanistan, which can cost up to \$1,000. The exorbitant prices line the pockets of corrupt Pakistani officials and their Afghan go-betweens. There is no shortage of Afghans willing to do whatever it takes to flee Taliban persecution and the economic meltdown in their homeland.

"People can get a monthlong visa by paying \$300, a five-month visa for \$500, and \$700 for a yearlong visa," said Farhad Salehi, a resident of Herat who has already spent \$500 in bribes without success.

Pakistani officials have clamped down on corruption and fired 12 embassy staff during the past three months. A senior embassy official told us that the employees were sacked after a "thorough investigation" that established that they were "minting money from Afghans."

Islamabad has also unveiled a new visa policy, making it easier for Afghans seeking asylum in Western counties to transit through Pakistan."

Ariana News, [Pakistan PM approves on arrival transit visas for Afghans](#), 13 June 2022

"Pakistan's Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif has approved a new on arrival visa policy for Afghan nationals going abroad via Pakistan, local media reported on Saturday.

Salman Sufi, head of the Prime Minister's Strategic Reforms Initiatives, said that under the new policy a transit visa of 30 days would be issued within 24 hours by the Pakistan government to Afghan nationals, Dawn newspaper reported."

Al Jazeera, ["What does the future hold for Afghan refugees in Iran?"](#), 12 June 2022

"That's how they move us. If border agents catch us we'll be deported. In Afghanistan the Taliban might take our money, in Pakistan the smugglers could force us to pay at gunpoint, and in Iran, the drivers might demand extra money."

Ariana News, ["IEA assures Afghan protesters in Pakistan they will be safe at home"](#), 25 May 2022

"They are an estimated 300,000 to 400,000 Afghans in Pakistan who fled there during last year's take over. This is in addition to the 1.5 million refugees who have been living in Pakistan for decades. [...] Pakistan was also not providing asylum to them, adding: "We know people of Pakistan are also facing several challenges such as unemployment and high inflation".

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"Mielke et al reported that female residents of the peri-urban Pul Saggian site (Lahore) felt unsafe and powerless following child kidnappings and a murder that police had failed to properly investigate."

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan State of Human Rights in 2021](#), 29 April 2022

"Following the takeover of Kabul by the Afghan Taliban, there was an influx of Afghan refugees, many of whom reported instances of harassment, such as border officials extorting money and refusing entry. [...] The police arrested at least 194 Afghans in Peshawar in August on charges of rioting, damaging public property and shouting slogans against Pakistan while celebrating Afghan Independence Day. [...] "After the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, there was an influx of Afghan refugees from the Chaman border crossing point. Most of these refugees settled in Quetta. Some of them even travelled as far as Karachi. In September, the Balochistan government deported 200 Afghan refugees because they had entered illegally. However, most refugees were allowed to remain in Balochistan. [...] civil society should be encouraged to assist refugees to whatever extent possible instead of being harassed by state authorities when such efforts are made."

UNHCR, [Report on the humanitarian and human rights situation of Afghan refugees in Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan](#), 31 March 2022

"Most notably, access to registration and documentation which would enable them to enjoy basic rights, facilitate access to services, and mitigate the risk of arrest and detention."

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

[Javed, M.M., Zoom interview, 22 February 2022]

"SHARP is one of two UNHCR partner organisations operating a total of nine Advice and Legal Aid Centers (ALACs) in the main refugee-hosting areas. ALAC organisations engage in direct interventions regarding the release of individuals arrested/detained because of their legal status. Moreover, ALAC teams conduct awareness events on legal issues and capacitybuilding activities among law enforcement agencies concerning refugee rights. [...] According to Mudassar M. Javed, SHARP operates centres across Pakistan where qualified teams of lawyers and counsellors provide free legal assistance 24/7 regarding issues and concerns that also involve the Pakistani police. SHARP provides training for police officers, judicial officials, lawyers, and prosecutors. In border areas where refugees were reportedly harassed despite being able to present all required documents, SHARP carried out extensive trainings for police personnel. This led to a reduction in police harassment, as they were informed of the available IDs and documents to avoid confusion and thus to avoid harassing refugees. [...] Mudassar M. Javed explained that bribery is a very common practice in the South Asian region in general. However, he also recognised some improvements in this regard, as systems are becoming more transparent and accountable due to the growing influence of social media. He acknowledged that Afghan refugees often find themselves in difficult situations, especially at the border, 'but it is not prevalent that every police officer takes bribes from refugees'. More generally, Javed added that harassment is not a regular practice and that police services are improving. [...] According to Javed, the Pakistani government has not taken any strict measures or shown harsh treatment toward newly arrived Afghans, however the government has not yet announced a clear policy regarding newly arriving Afghans. [...] Javed, M.M., Zoom interview, 22 February 2022"

HRCP, [Open letter: The situation of Afghan refugees cannot continue to be ignored](#), 22 November 2021

"The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) calls on the state to immediately address the situation of Afghan refugees in the country, which, in the absence of any comprehensive policy framework or legislation, has been sidelined.

Contrary to the Prime Minister's public announcements, ordinary citizens from Afghanistan have been left to fend for themselves amid new and arbitrary restrictions on cross-border movement. This dire lack of protocol and policy

is unjust and serves only to aggravate the tension between the two countries rather than restoring balance in such a precarious situation. [...] There is a worrying lack of clarity at the grassroots level about how to respond to this crisis, especially among border patrol and the police. Multiple reports from the border indicate that authorities have been extorting refugees for money, giving preferential treatment, refusing entry, and even subjecting them to violence. Refugee camps also suffer from poor hygienic conditions and refugees continue to experience harassment and xenophobia from local administrations and communities.”

Livelihood of asylum seekers from Afghanistan

UNOCHA, [Pakistan Humanitarian Response Plan 2021](#), 9 June 2022

“Pakistan has hosted millions of Afghan refugees for 40 years, reaching the figure of 4-5 million at the peak. Pakistan continues to generously host some 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees (holding Proof of Registration (POR) cards issued by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan), and approximately 0.6 million unregistered Afghans, providing them with assistance, basic necessities and protection. This protracted refugee situation, together with the existence of Afghans of other categories, needs to be supported by the international community in line with more equitable responsibility-sharing central to the Global Compact on Refugees. [...] Out of the 11 million people identified as in need in the 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview, the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan will target the most vulnerable 4.3 million people out of this group, including 1.4 million Afghan refugees (POR card holders), approximately 0.84 million Afghan Citizenship Card Holders (ACC) and between 0.4-0.6 million unregistered Afghans,5 who mainly live within the most vulnerable districts, with food security, livelihood, nutrition programmes, primary health services, including women’s health, WASH and education support, as well as shelter for those displaced. To do this, the HRP is requesting 332 million USD to respond to these humanitarian needs.”

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, [Flash External Update: Afghanistan Situation #13](#), 15 January 2022

"Basic needs cited by those newly arriving Afghans interviewed in Iran and Pakistan include access to shelter, livelihoods, food and documentation, with a large majority of those undocumented Afghans in Iran also citing concerns regarding detention and forced return."

HRCP, [Open letter: The situation of Afghan refugees cannot continue to be ignored](#), 22 November 2021

“The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) calls on the state to immediately address the situation of Afghan refugees in the country, which, in the absence of any comprehensive policy framework or legislation, has been sidelined. [...] Multiple reports from the border indicate that authorities have been extorting refugees for money, giving preferential treatment, refusing entry, and even subjecting them to violence. Refugee camps also suffer from poor hygienic conditions and refugees continue to experience harassment and xenophobia from local administrations and communities.”

Foreign Policy, [Afghan Refugees Get Cold Welcome in Pakistan](#), 22 November 2021

"Refugee rights advocates said Pakistan’s lack of policy on new arrivals has made it difficult for aid groups to support them. “This time, the situation is a bit different, and there is chaos for humanitarian organizations,” said Rukhshanda Naz, a board member of the Women’s Regional Network, a civil society group. As a result, Afghans in Pakistan are having to rely on informal networks in the communities they settle in to meet their basic needs."

Dawn, [No refugee camps along Afghan border: Sheikh Rashid](#), 6 September 2021

“Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed has categorically rejected presence of Afghan refugees camps in the border regions and called upon the world community to beware of such baseless allegations of India. Speaking to journalists at Torkham border on Sunday during his first visit to the region after Afghan Taliban’s takeover of Kabul, he said that he was at the border to tell the world community in clear cut terms that no such camp existed in any border area and the Indian government was spreading a totally false and baseless propaganda in that regard. “I want to tell the Indian media in particular and the world media in general that 4,000 Afghans have entered Pakistan with valid travel documents and a rather greater number of Afghans have returned to their country after the Taliban’s takeover of Kabul,” said the minister.”

Can cultural activities take place? What restrictions and guidelines does the State place on them?

What is the state of asylum seekers’ access to money in Pakistan?

Al Jazeera, "[What does the future hold for Afghan refugees in Iran?](#)", 12 June 2022

“That’s how they move us. If border agents catch us we’ll be deported. In Afghanistan the Taliban might take our money, in Pakistan the smugglers could force us to pay at gunpoint, and in Iran, the drivers might demand extra money.”

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"The Business Recorder stated in an article on 13 August 2021 that the new Alien Registration Card (ARC) launched by the government of Pakistan is supposed to facilitate the opening of a bank account and the starting of a business for ‘thousands of Afghan refugees’ among others.^{57F 593} As UNHCR explained, this announcement relates to the ‘National Database and Registration Authority (Alien Registration Card) Rules, 2021’, approved by the Federal Cabinet in February 2021. The rules provide that foreigners intending to stay in Pakistan for a certain minimum period must register as ‘Aliens’. The cards would have a validity of five years and would be extendable. The new rules however do not apply to the Afghan nationals’. [UNHCR, email, 15 March 2022]"

Australia, [DFAT, DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan](#), 25 January 2022

“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 the UNHCR under Pakistani refugee laws. PoR holders are entitled to stay temporarily in Pakistan, enjoy freedom of movement, and have access to public health and education. They can rent property, open bank accounts and register births. They are allowed to attend Pakistani universities, but places are limited and very few have the means to do so. They cannot legally work, although many do work in the informal economy. They are ineligible for Pakistani government welfare payments, although some assistance is available through UNHCR programs. [...] CNICs and SNICs are the most common form of identification in Pakistan. They 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 gain entry to college or university. NADRA began a program in 2012 to replace all CNICs with SNICs, with a view to completion by 2020. However, as SNICs are more expensive and are linked to other basic services such as bill payment, mail and taxation, many Pakistanis do not obtain SNICs. CNICs and SNICs both remain valid. [...] To obtain a CNIC or SNIC, applicants need to submit the CNIC or MNIC number of a blood relative along with their own birth certificate, school, university certificate or citizenship certificate. An applicant who was previously registered and had an MNIC is

required to submit the original or a copy of their MNIC. An applicant who has turned 18 and holds a child registration certificate (CRC) must submit the CRC or a copy. [...] It is possible to apply for identity documents through NADRA's Pak-Identity online issuance service, but applicants seeking a CNIC for the first time are required to present in-person at any NADRA registration centre to submit their paperwork, have their photograph taken, and provide their signature and an impression of their thumb. Pakistanis living abroad can apply online for a NICOP, which will be delivered to them via courier. [...] Applicants with an existing computerised CNIC can apply online to renew, replace or modify their CNIC, without having to attend a NADRA office, although they may be required to attend in-person to have certain documents certified. Applications to renew, replace or modify non-computerised CNICs must be made in-person at any NADRA office. DFAT is aware of reports CNIC applicants have been told they must travel to a NADRA office in their district of origin to apply, but this is not official policy. In some cases it may be necessary for applicants to travel to their district of origin to obtain other documents required for a CNIC application. For example, a birth certificate can only be issued by the union council of the district of origin. [...] 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. [...] 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. NADRA can block a CNIC, PoR card or ACC for suspicious use – or allegedly for certain groups as a form of harassment (see Afghans)."

Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), [Understanding the Life of Afghans in Pakistan: Self-perception of Refugees](#), November 2021

"The most challenging aspect of doing business in Pakistan for Afghan refugees is lack of reliable financial or bank facilities for saving, withdrawing, purchasing or selling. The POR card offers a certain time period of stay in Pakistan. It enables the refugees to obtain a driver license, purchase mobile SIM cards, and open a bank account. The bank cards allotted to Afghans have plenty of limitations. For instance, they expire at almost the same time the POR is scheduled to expire, internet banking is not available, and applying for the bank card is also a difficult process as it requires a Pakistani guarantor. While Afghans are not allowed to hold bank accounts, banks themselves are also reluctant in this regard. Although legally Afghans are allowed to open account in each bank, many banks do not show an interest to open bank accounts for them.

To tackle these issues, several Afghans use Pakistani proxies or goldsmith mediators to open a bank account, or register a business, or rent a space for business activity. This increases their vulnerability as there are no contractual bounds in such cases. There have been several instances where goldsmith mediators or Pakistani proxies run away, or deny having any contact with the Afghan partners."

Availability of and access to food

United States Institute of Peace, [Five Things to Watch in the Islamabad-Pakistani Taliban Talks](#), 21 June 2022

"A third camp, mainly dotted by families and extended tribal networks of refugees linked to TTP rank-and-file who moved to Afghanistan after Pakistan's last major military operation called Zarb-e-Azb, seems to favor any settlement with Pakistani government that will ensure their swift and safe return to Pakistan from Afghanistan. Many in this camp have suffered from extreme poverty in eastern Afghanistan for several years — and the Taliban's support remains insufficient for them. Amid Afghanistan's growing humanitarian crisis, this camp's access to food and other public goods has decreased."

Pajhwok Afghan News (Afghan News Agency), [30 Afghan bonded labourers freed from brick kiln](#), 15 May 2022

"Thirty Afghan nationals, including women and children, have been freed from illegal detention as a result of a raid on a brick kiln in the garrison city of Rawalpindi. [...] According to The Express Tribune, the Afghan families, which had fled their homeland, ended up in the brick kiln. They were forced to work without payment and proper food. "The rescued Afghans were starving and had not eaten for several days," police said. On seeing police officials on the premises, the families started crying for help. Medical tests will be conducted to determine if they had been tortured."

WFP, [Global Report on Food Crises – 2022](#), 4 May 2022

"Additional drivers of acute food insecurity and malnutrition among refugees in Pakistan:

The vast majority (81 percent) of the Afghan refugees are hosted in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa - provinces that have the highest multi-dimensional poverty levels in the country. According to the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund, more than half of the refugees are in the category of extremely poor/ultrapoor (UNCHR, January 2022). Pakistan allows refugees freedom of movement, as well as access to public services, and from 2019, the Government enabled refugees to open bank accounts. But their long-standing presence in Pakistan – as well as the severe socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 – has strained available resources, infrastructure and service delivery systems (UNCHR, January 2022). Limited services for children with disabilities, mental health, and psychosocial support, most recently in relation to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, have been highlighted by the communities, with over 50 percent of children with disabilities having no access to schooling (UNCHR, January 2022). Medical needs are high, particularly related to maternal, newborn and child health, as well as reproductive health, and access to adequate quality and equitable health care remains a major concern for the community (UNCHR, January 2022).

Despite the high degree of acceptance, Afghan refugees and Afghans of other status in Pakistan have several multifaceted protection needs. These include the need for access to registration and documentation to enjoy basic rights, to facilitate access to services, and to mitigate the risk of arrest and detention (UNCHR, January 2022). Around 54 percent of registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan are children and 22 percent are women. Violence against children and gender-based violence are largely under-reported, and access to justice for refugee girls and women is often impeded by the lack of family/community support. Intimate partner violence, child, early and forced marriage and denial of resources, services, and opportunities are prevalent (UNCHR, January 2022). Gender inequalities result in lower levels of education, fewer work opportunities and lower levels of participation in decisionmaking processes and community-based planning. Children without documentation, including those whose births have not been registered, are also particularly vulnerable to trafficking and being detained and prosecuted as adults (UNCHR, January 2022)."

"Acute food insecurity forecast, 2022: Although the security situation is stable in most districts of Balochistan, instability in a few districts, such as Kech, Panjgur and Killa Abdullah, might have adverse implications for food security. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is stable in most districts, but given its geographic situation and history, insecurity cannot be ruled out, which may result in a curfew-like situation and restriction of movement (IPC, December 2021). Any new influx of refugees fleeing instability in Afghanistan may directly affect the existing resources of local communities in districts bordering Afghanistan (UNHCR, February 2022)."

UNHCR, [Report on the humanitarian and human rights situation of Afghan refugees in Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan](#), 31 March 2022

"Most notably, access to registration and documentation which would enable them to enjoy basic rights, facilitate access to services, and mitigate the risk of arrest and detention. Moreover, such access would protect against refoulement. Between September and November, 1,800 Afghans - predominantly undocumented Afghans, including some new arrivals – were reportedly deported. Among new arrivals: approximately 20 per cent reported a specific need and of this subset: 29 per cent had serious medical needs; 16 per cent had disabilities; 14 per cent were women-at-risk; 11 per cent were single parents; and 8 per cent were children-at-risk. The top concerns for the new arrivals

residing in Pakistan were access to shelter (87 per cent), livelihoods (82 per cent), food (78 per cent) and medical assistance (42 per cent)"

IPC, Pakistan – [Balochistan, IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis](#), December 2021

"The current situation in Afghanistan is another factor that cannot be ruled out as Pishin, Killa Abdullah, Nushki and Chagai districts are all bordering Afghanistan, whereas Chagai, Washuk, Panjgur and Kech are bordering Iran. Formal and informal trade takes place between Pakistan and Afghanistan and Iran through Chaman, Taftaan and a porous border. However, after the closure and fencing of the border, the livelihoods of the communities are affected. The emerging conditions in Afghanistan may also push refugees to these areas. According to some preliminary estimates, there is a likelihood of up to 300,000 new refugees arriving in Pakistan if the situation in Afghanistan remains the same or worsens. This will increase pressure on domestic resources, affecting the food security situation."

Availability of and access to water

Availability of and access to shelter

Pajhwok Afghan News (Afghan News Agency), [Urban refugee support unit opens in Peshawar](#), 24 May 2022

"An urban refugee support unit has been established in Peshawar, the capital of Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Chief Commissioner of Afghan Refugees Mohammad Saleem Khan inaugurated the unit, calling it a necessary step.

Off-camp refugees in the province faced serious problems related to sustainable livelihoods and a range of protection risks and discrimination, he said.

Around 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees are currently living in Pakistan. Some 52 per cent of them are residing outside camps while 48 per cent are living in 43 camps in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa."

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"Undocumented Afghans have limited access to housing.67F 663 When trying to get access to housing and property, they are vulnerable to exploitation.68F 664 As Mielke and her co-authors noted, a regulation of the Punjab provincial government 'punishes landlords who rent out to undocumented Afghans unless the Afghans provide an affidavit to the police, which can only be approved with proof of registration as PoR card- or ACC-holder. Large numbers of Afghans have little access to formal housing and live in katchi abadis (informal settlements) where they lack housing security, a study of Refugees in Towns found in September 2019."

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan State of Human Rights in 2021](#), 29 April 2022

"After the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, there was a major influx of Afghan refugees in Balochistan from Chaman border crossing point. However, the condition of these refugees was deplorable and no major programs were started for their relief. The winter was harsh for them and they braced it with the help of some individuals, but not at an organised level."

UNHCR, [Report on the humanitarian and human rights situation of Afghan refugees in Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan](#), 31 March 2022

"Most notably, access to registration and documentation which would enable them to enjoy basic rights, facilitate access to services, and mitigate the risk of arrest and detention. Moreover, such access would protect against refoulement. Between September and November, 1,800 Afghans - predominantly undocumented Afghans, including some new arrivals – were reportedly deported. Among new arrivals: approximately 20 per cent reported a specific need and of this subset: 29 per cent had serious medical needs; 16 per cent had disabilities; 14 per cent were women-at-risk; 11 per cent were single parents; and 8 per cent were children-at-risk. The top concerns for the new arrivals residing in Pakistan were access to shelter (87 per cent), livelihoods (82 per cent), food (78 per cent) and medical assistance (42 per cent)"

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"Afghan new arrivals faced multi-faceted protection challenges. Most notably, access to registration and documentation which would enable them to enjoy basic rights, facilitate access to services, and mitigate the risk of arrest and [sic] detention.

Moreover, such access would protect against refoulement. Between September and November, 1,800 Afghans - predominantly undocumented Afghans, including some new arrivals – were reportedly deported. Among new arrivals: approximately 20 per cent reported a specific need and of this subset: 29 per cent had serious medical needs; 16 per cent had disabilities; 14 per cent were women-at-risk; 11 per cent were single parents; and 8 per cent were children-at-risk. The top concerns for the new arrivals residing in Pakistan were access to shelter (87 per cent), livelihoods (82 per cent), food (78 per cent) and medical assistance (42 per cent)."

UNHCR, [Amid harsh winter and flooding, UNHCR provides emergency supplies to hundreds of people in Balochistan](#), 1 February 2022

"After conducting a rapid assessment to identify the most in need, UNHCR provided tents, plastic sheeting, blankets, jerrycans, sleeping mats, kitchen sets, and buckets, to 122 vulnerable refugees and Pakistani host families in the Chaman district.

"With this support amid harsh winter coupled with snow and rains, we hope that these vulnerable Afghan refugees and Pakistani communities will meet their urgent needs," said Mr. Erwin Policar, the Head of UNHCR's Sub-Office in Quetta.

Policar said that UNHCR will continue to work with local Pakistani authorities in responding to urgent humanitarian needs of vulnerable people. "Our support is always with Pakistan and Pakistanis who have extended great hospitality to Afghan refugees for over four decades," he said."

Australia – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, [DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan](#), 25 January 2022

"CNICs and SNICs are the most common form of identification in Pakistan. They are required to [...] open new water, electricity or gas accounts, purchase land or vehicles [...] To obtain a CNIC or SNIC, applicants need to submit the CNIC or MNIC number of a blood relative along with their own birth certificate, school, university certificate or citizenship certificate."

FP, [Afghan Refugees Get Cold Welcome in Pakistan](#), 22 November 2021

"Undocumented Afghans in Pakistan have limited access to [...] housing, and without legal protections, they are targets of discrimination and harassment by law enforcement."

Dawn, [No refugee camps along Afghan border: Sheikh Rashid](#), 6 September 2021

"Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed has categorically rejected presence of Afghan refugee camps in the border regions and called upon the world community to beware of such baseless allegations of India. Speaking to journalists at Torkham border on Sunday during his first visit to the region after Afghan Taliban's takeover of Kabul,

he said that he was at the border to tell the world community in clear cut terms that no such camp existed in any border area and the Indian government was spreading a totally false and baseless propaganda in that regard. "I want to tell the Indian media in particular and the world media in general that 4,000 Afghans have entered Pakistan with valid travel documents and a rather greater number of Afghans have returned to their country after the Taliban's takeover of Kabul," said the minister."

Dawn, [SAC holds protest against builders, refugee influx in Sindh](#), 6 September 2021

"Activists of Sindh United Party, Jeay Sindh Mahaz and other component parties of Sindh Action Committee protested in Sindh towns on Sunday against occupation of land by 'builder mafia' and arrival of Afghan refugees and other outsiders in the province. The nationalist parties' activists took out a motorcycle rally from Zero Point to press club in Nawabshah to record their protest against reports that Sindh government had doled out thousands of acres to builders. SUP central general secretary Roshan Ali Buriro said while speaking to protesters that nationalist parties' protest outside Bahria Town Karachi's gate on June 6 was a referendum against the Sindh government, which had registered over 30 FIRs against nationalist leaders and activists. He said that Sindh police had been turned into "Zardari's personal force", which the Pakistan Peoples Party had let loose on nationalist leaders and activists. Police had arrested a number of activists after attack on a rally in Nawabshah about five days back, he said. He announced that SUP would continue to hold more rallies and demonstrations across Sindh on Sept 8 in protest against registration of FIRs against nationalist parties' leaders and activists. Sindh Taraqqi Pasand Party chairman Dr Qadir Magsi said that Sindhis had rejected all anti-Sindh projects and their struggle for the rights of Sindh would continue. He said that since Sindh was already facing economic crisis it would not bear burden of more Afghan refugees. Sindhi people had rejected the provincial government's plans for illegally handing over land to the 'mafia', he said. JSM chairman Riaz Chandio warned PPP rulers to stop victimisation of nationalist leaders and activists. Awami Tehreek leader Sajjad Chandio, Nawaz Khan Zour of Jeay Sindh Qaumi Party, Awami Jamhoori Party's general secretary Noor Nabi Rahujo and Aslam Khairpuri of JSQM also spoke at the gathering. MIRPURKHAS: Scores of workers and office-bearers of JSM held a demonstration outside local press club in protest against arrival of Afghan refugees and other outsiders in Sindh and demanded authorities immediately stop their influx in the province. Zahoor Leghari and Taj Baloch, who led the protest, condemned the Sindh government for allowing Afghan nationals and other outsiders to land in the province."

Availability of and access to employment

Gandhara, [Afghan Musicians Who Fled Taliban Face Deportation From Pakistan](#), 3 June 2022

"Zaryali is among the hundreds of Afghan musicians who have fled to neighboring Pakistan since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. Soon after seizing power in August, the Taliban outlawed music and footage emerged of its fighters publicly beating and humiliating musicians and burning their instruments. The incidents have confirmed the worst fears of Afghan artists, who have said the Taliban is treating musicians with the same disdain it had shown during its first stint in power in the 1990s when it banned music as "un-Islamic." But even in Pakistan, Afghan musicians say they are not safe. Authorities have cracked down on undocumented Afghan migrants and refugees and deported them back to Afghanistan. Pakistan, which already hosts over 1 million Afghans, has been keen to avoid another major influx of refugees. Police in the northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa recently arrested four Afghan musicians for living illegally in the country. The arrests in the provincial capital, Peshawar, triggered protests by Pakistani musicians and activists who urged authorities not to deport them over fears for their safety. [...] The singer says many Afghan musicians in Peshawar, located near the Afghan border, are afraid to go outside and remain largely confined to their temporary accommodations. "Some of them have expired passports while others have expired visas," said Zaryali. "They cannot perform or find any work. They live in fear of being deported back to a country where they cannot live safely because their lives are in danger."

Ariana News, ["IEA assures Afghan protesters in Pakistan they will be safe at home"](#), 25 May 2022

"They are an estimated 300,000 to 400,000 Afghans in Pakistan who fled there during last year's take over. This is in addition to the 1.5 million refugees who have been living in Pakistan for decades. [...] Pakistan was also not providing asylum to them, adding: "We know people of Pakistan are also facing several challenges such as unemployment and high inflation"."

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"In its Livelihood Strategy (2018-2021), UNHCR noted that Afghan refugees are confronted with barriers such as low education and technical skills to access 'higher-level positions' in the employment market. The study by Mielke and other researchers further found 'distrust from private sector employers of the host community as well as increasingly hostile host community behaviour' to pose additional barriers to employment. The risk of being exploited by employers, for example through delayed or low salary payment, unpaid and forced overtime or work under unsafe conditions posed further obstacles. In a paper published in November 2020 based on interviews with 590 Afghan refugees in Pakistan, Asif Javed and co-authors stated that 57 % of the respondents found it difficult to get employed. The respondents identified a lack of education/qualification and skills as the main reason for the difficulties. Other obstacles they identified for getting employed were a lack of transportation and discrimination against refugees."

"The primary income source of two-thirds of the 299 respondents of the survey conducted by Mielke and other researchers was self-generated through largely informal arrangements. 17 % of the survey respondents 'primarily depended on salary from employment or pay from or other kinds of (also temporary) work'. 47 % of the respondents of the survey had work at the time of the survey. As for the respondents' legal status, 48 % of the Afghan refugees with a temporary residency and 32 % of unregistered Afghans were employed or self-employed."

IOM, Pakistan – [Bi-weekly Flow Monitoring Report: Spontaneous Return of Undocumented Afghan Migrants from Pakistan \(23 April to 6 May 2022\)](#), 18 May 2022

"During the reporting period, border authorities facilitated the return of 59 individuals due to the lack of legal documentation to remain in Pakistan."

"In Pakistan, the primary occupations reported by returnees were: unskilled labor (74%), skilled labor (24%) and business (2%).

The top 3 challenges returnees expected to face in Afghanistan were: arranging for livelihoods, settling into a new city and finding income opportunities."

"Push factors: Unable to pay house rent 37%; Unable to pay utilities 30%; Fear of arrest/deportation 23%; no employment 8%; Business reasons 2%."

ILO, [Promoting fair recruitment of foreign migrant workers through policy measures](#), 11 February 2022

"Mr Syed Nazar Ali, Secretary General, Employers Federation of Pakistan (EFP) highlighted that despite formal institutional structure, system and mechanism in Pakistan, the role of subagent or unregistered intermediaries in recruitment process could be witnessed. He said that the rising demand of human resource for foreign employment, has its impact on recruitment costs in Pakistan. Majority of the migrant workers are low educated and unskilled persons from rural areas. He further stated that the formal system of foreign employment promotion by both Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC) and OEPs has limited outreach in rural areas, which may create the gaps for informal channels of sub agents. He recommended enhanced role for social partners in creating awareness among masses and enhancing outreach of licensed OEPs."

Australia, [DFAT, DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan](#), 25 January 2022

"In 2017, the government launched a further, six-month program to register undocumented Afghans by issuing them with a new Afghan Citizenship Card (ACC). The ACC is a temporary identity document for Afghans without other forms of identification and offers far more limited benefits than the PoR. ACC holders are entitled to stay temporarily in Pakistan and have freedom of movement but cannot access public health services or public education. Like PoR holders, they cannot legally work and, while many do work in the informal economy, they are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. During the registration period any self-declared Afghan could apply for an ACC, but PoR card holders and single males under 18 were excluded. 3.23 Many Afghan refugees in Pakistan hold neither an ACC nor

PoR. Some are registered as refugees or asylum seekers with the UNHCR and can legally stay temporarily in Pakistan, although this is not always understood or respected by security forces. Afghans registered with the UNHCR can theoretically rent property, register births and access health services and education, but this usually requires intervention by the UNHCR and is unattainable for many. Others have no Pakistani or UNHCR documents, although they may hold a tazkira (Afghan national identity document) or Afghan passport. These undocumented Afghans are in breach of the Foreigners Act, 1946 and are liable to arrest, detention and deportation."

Medical Care

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan State of Human Rights in 2021](#), 29 April 2022

"After the Taliban took over Kabul on 15 August, Pakistan expected a renewed influx of the Afghan refugees. With approximately 63,000 registered Afghan refugees in Sindh, a majority of whom have settled in Sohrab Goth in Karachi and adjacent areas, legislators expressed their concern as to how well-equipped the provincial government was to control the spread of polio or coronavirus in the province in case more Afghan refugees reached Sindh. Conversely, there were questions by opposition legislators about how they would be accommodated in refugee camps."

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"Afghan new arrivals faced multi-faceted protection challenges. Most notably, access to registration and documentation which would enable them to enjoy basic rights, facilitate access to services, and mitigate the risk of arrest and [sic] detention.

Moreover, such access would protect against refoulement. Between September and November, 1,800 Afghans - predominantly undocumented Afghans, including some new arrivals – were reportedly deported. Among new arrivals: approximately 20 per cent reported a specific need and of this subset: 29 per cent had serious medical needs; 16 per cent had disabilities; 14 per cent were women-at-risk; 11 per cent were single parents; and 8 per cent were children-at-risk. The top concerns for the new arrivals residing in Pakistan were access to shelter (87 per cent), livelihoods (82 per cent), food (78 per cent) and medical assistance (42 per cent)."

World Health Organisation, [Statement of the Thirty-first Polio IHR Emergency Committee](#), 11 March 2022

"high-risk mobile populations in Pakistan such as migrants, nomads, displaced populations, particularly Afghan refugees represent a specific risk of international spread"

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan 2022](#), 12 January 2022

"Medical needs are high, particularly related to maternal, new-born and child health, as well as reproductive health, and access to adequate quality and equitable health care remains a major concern for the community."

Are there any challenges to accessing medical services or treatment? (Incl. outbreaks of diseases)

WHO, Cholera – Pakistan, 17 June 2022

[non-Afghan asylum seeker specific]

"Outbreak at a glance In Pakistan, cholera is endemic with an epidemic threshold of a single laboratory confirmed case. In 2022, Sindh province is facing a significant increase in cholera cases with 234 laboratory confirmed cases reported between 15 January to 27 May. Balochistan and Punjab provinces have also reported 31 and 25 confirmed cases of cholera, respectively. Currently, there is no evidence of cross-border spread of the disease. The risk of potential international spread exists given that Pakistan has long land borders with significant cross border movement and multiple major urban hubs including Karachi city in Sindh province, with international transport hubs. Description of the outbreak On 26 April 2022, the National IHR Focal Point of Pakistan reported a laboratory confirmed outbreak of cholera in Sindh province, Pakistan. As of 27 May, three provinces - Sindh, Balochistan, and

Punjab, have reported a total of 290 confirmed cases of cholera. The first laboratory confirmed case was reported on 15 January 2022 in Sindh province. Between 15 January and 27 May, 234 laboratory confirmed cases, with no deaths, have been reported from the province. Of these cases, 126 (54%) were females, and 114 (49%) were in children younger than nine years old. According to the cholera surveillance national policy, samples from children are prioritized over adults for confirmatory culture testing which may explain the high proportion of confirmed cases among children. As of 27 May, a total of 109 samples have been tested from the public water sources (hydrants) and individual households in Karachi city, Sindh province. Among these, results are available for 71 samples, of which 70% have shown presence of *Vibrio cholerae* while *Escherichia Coli* and coliform was detected in 55% and 90% of samples, respectively. In addition to Sindh province, three districts in Balochistan have reported 31 confirmed cases and nine deaths while two districts in Punjab have reported 25 confirmed cases. Figure 1: Distribution of cholera cases in Pakistan, 15 January to 27 May 2022 (n=290) [...]

WHO risk assessment The risk of potential international spread from Sindh province exists given that the most affected districts are located in Karachi city which is an industrial center as well as transport hub with airport and seaport; it is also the largest city in Pakistan and capital of Sindh province. Currently, no international cross-border spread has been confirmed for this event. However, with ongoing transmission in close proximity to border areas and transportation hubs, the risk of international spread cannot be ruled out. In Balochistan province, there is suboptimal surveillance, limited access to safe drinking water, and limited access to health care, and affected areas are in proximity to areas with active cross-border movement with Afghanistan and Iran. In Punjab, although response activities are taking place, the province is still recording an increased number of suspected cholera cases, including in Lahore, the provincial capital and large international commercial hub. Further spread to other provinces would worsen the situation given the frequent population movement. Necessary control measures are being implemented by the national authorities with support from WHO and partners to contain the outbreak, as described in the Public Health Response section above. However, there is a need to further strengthen surveillance by establishing systematic detection and laboratory confirmation of cholera to properly track the evolution of the outbreak and institute timely and appropriate interventions."

WHO, [Countries urged to adapt strategic framework to address huge unmet needs of skin diseases](#), 13 June 2022

[non-Afghan asylum seeker specific]

"In Pakistan, leprosy management is integrated with general dermatology and physical rehabilitation and, latterly, with treatment of tuberculosis and cutaneous leishmaniasis, achieving positive outcomes."

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"Based on his own experience by visiting ARVs in KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA, staff reporter at the News International in Peshawar, Khalid Khan Kheshgi, in an email correspondence on 2 March 2022 provided a brief overview of the situation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. He reported on the precarious circumstances in the ARVs, such as lack of basic services including adequate health care, education and electricity. The refugees staying in the ARVs are the ones who cannot afford to rent accommodation in the cities. According to Kheshgi, Afghan refugees prefer to rent an accommodation in the big cities of Pakistan or to live in a katchi abadi (an informal settlement)."

" For undocumented Afghans, access to healthcare has been described by ASDP to be 'not as good' as for those holding PoR cards or ACCs. While undocumented Afghans were 'provided with consultations at public healthcare facilities, they were obliged to purchase medicines from the market. As Mielke and her co-authors observed in their August 2021 academic paper, Afghans were accumulating savings for emergency medical treatments, which indicated that there were 'still multiple hurdles that Afghans face in reality when it comes to receiving adequate health care'."

" According to an expert quoted by Mielke and her co-authors, public healthcare facilities in Pakistan were affected by 'a lack of public finance and resources', and the medical needs of Afghan refugees were 'never budgeted into

plans'. Similarly, another expert quoted in the same paper noted that the country's health system was already overstretched by the health necessities of Pakistani citizens' alone. This is reflected by Afghans (and Pakistanis who are unable to afford private healthcare) experiencing long waiting times, absent doctors and patients being requested to buy medicine themselves, for example. As a consequence, some Afghans have turned to private healthcare providers, e.g., for the treatment of chronic kidney issues, including with financial support from 'economically stable' Afghan community members."

WFP, [Global Report on Food Crises – 2022](#), 4 May 2022

"Additional drivers of acute food insecurity and malnutrition among refugees in Pakistan:

The vast majority (81 percent) of the Afghan refugees are hosted in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa - provinces that have the highest multi-dimensional poverty levels in the country. According to the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund, more than half of the refugees are in the category of extremely poor/ultrapoor (UNCHR, January 2022). Pakistan allows refugees freedom of movement, as well as access to public services, and from 2019, the Government enabled refugees to open bank accounts. But their long-standing presence in Pakistan – as well as the severe socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 – has strained available resources, infrastructure and service delivery systems (UNCHR, January 2022). Limited services for children with disabilities, mental health, and psychosocial support, most recently in relation to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, have been highlighted by the communities, with over 50 percent of children with disabilities having no access to schooling (UNCHR, January 2022). Medical needs are high, particularly related to maternal, newborn and child health, as well as reproductive health, and access to adequate quality and equitable health care remains a major concern for the community (UNCHR, January 2022).

Despite the high degree of acceptance, Afghan refugees and Afghans of other status in Pakistan have several multifaceted protection needs. These include the need for access to registration and documentation to enjoy basic rights, to facilitate access to services, and to mitigate the risk of arrest and detention (UNCHR, January 2022). Around 54 percent of registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan are children and 22 percent are women. Violence against children and gender-based violence are largely under-reported, and access to justice for refugee girls and women is often impeded by the lack of family/community support. Intimate partner violence, child, early and forced marriage and denial of resources, services, and opportunities are prevalent (UNCHR, January 2022). Gender inequalities result in lower levels of education, fewer work opportunities and lower levels of participation in decisionmaking processes and community-based planning. Children without documentation, including those whose births have not been registered, are also particularly vulnerable to trafficking and being detained and prosecuted as adults (UNCHR, January 2022)."

UNFPA, [Midwives ensure life-saving reproductive health care for women returning from Afghanistan](#), 31 March 2022

"At the Zero Point clinic in Afghanistan's Kandahar Province, on the border with Pakistan, midwife Zul Haja often works late into the night to assist returnees in need of urgent care. "The women are grateful for the services and treatment we provide, which weren't easily accessible for them on the other side of the border. We make sure that they understand the importance of meeting their reproductive health needs – and the consequences of neglecting them," Ms. Haja explained.

Ms. Haja is in charge of the maternity unit at the UNFPA-supported clinic, where women receive safe delivery referrals, family planning information, treatment for sexually transmitted infections, antenatal care and basic psychosocial support. Having faced grinding poverty and challenging living conditions as refugees, her patients these days are nearly all returnees crossing back into Afghanistan, despite the ongoing humanitarian crisis embroiling the country."

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"While significant preparedness measures were put in place, planned interventions were based on scenario-planning that did not eventuate, namely the establishment of camps. Moreover, the Government's position remained firm to not accept new Afghan refugees into Pakistan. This position impeded provision of assistance to new arrivals, except for access to health and nutrition support."

UNFPA, [Traumatized by chaos and miscarriage, young mother finds a lifeline in the mobile health team](#), 7 March 2022

"The deployment of MHTs, along with other interventions such as the Family Health Houses, emergency clinics at the borders with Pakistan and Iran, mobile and static facilities that provide psychosocial support and protection services, as well as toll-free hotlines for midwifery assistance and adolescent and youth reproductive health comprise UNFPA's integrated reproductive health and protection response to the deepening crisis in Afghanistan."

ILO, [Extending social health protection: Accelerating progress towards Universal Health Coverage in Asia and the Pacific](#), 7 December 2021

"Within the Asia and the Pacific region, a large number of refugees have fled Afghanistan and Myanmar and are hosted in Bangladesh, Malaysia, Pakistan and Thailand. None of these four countries is a party to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, although the governments do cooperate with UN agencies, local and international NGOs to provide basic health services to refugee populations. Nevertheless, refugees face significant barriers to access, use and afford health care services (Sarker et al. 2020)."

UNHCR, [UNHCR and China's support of neonatal intensive care for Pakistani and refugee mothers and newborns](#), 12 November 2021

"UNHCR, with support from the Government of China, has completed the transfer of a consignment of emergency medical equipment to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) of the Polyclinic Hospital in Islamabad.

Twenty-three pieces of equipment were transferred to the hospital as part of a list of equipment needed by the hospital, including infant incubators, baby warmers, suction machines, infusion pumps and ultrasound machines.

The contribution was made possible by the financial support and generosity of the People's Republic of China. This donation is also part of an ongoing programme of support undertaken by UNHCR across Pakistan in refugee-hosting areas to support health services that ensure treatment for refugees within their general services."

"UNHCR's assistance towards host community services is guided by a Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees. A Support Platform was set up in 2019 to boost the support of the international community towards collective efforts to find solutions for Afghan refugees, including the need for increased assistance towards national services in hosting countries like Pakistan."

United Nations, [Refugee Agency Chief Calls for Solidarity with World's 82 Million People Forcibly Displaced, as Issues of Burden-Sharing, Resources Dominate Dialogue](#), 29 October 2021

"Noting that conflict continues to be the main driver of displacement, he turned first to Afghanistan, where millions of people have been displaced internally and abroad, with Iran and Pakistan and Turkey hosting generations of Afghan refugees."

"Burden and responsibility-sharing were requested by the representatives of Egypt and Pakistan, who highlighted the large numbers of refugees hosted by their countries."

United Nations General Security Council, [The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security](#), 2 September 2021

"Between January and June, humanitarian partners provided sexual reproductive health response to some 93,000 people at entry points with the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. Emergency reproductive health kits distributed during the same period gave support to 17,000 women and girls"

What effect does COVID-19 have on the health care system?

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"As the Government of Pakistan allows all Afghans to access their public health facilities, health sector actors, led by WHO, scaled up support for the government response to meet increasing demands, exacerbated by the pressures of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic."

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, [Bridging the Gaps - Migration Management and Policy Options for Afghan Refugees in Pakistan](#), December 2021

"Moreover, health facilities available in the camps are inadequate supplied to cater to the growing needs, especially amidst COVID-19. Particularly vulnerable are Afghan refugee women who often face barriers in accessing health services due to long distance, cultural norms that prevent them to seek medical support alone, and shortage of female staff (European Commission, 2020)."

What treatment for mental health conditions is available?

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"Limited services exist [in Pakistan] for children with specific needs, and those with mental health and psychosocial needs."

How are people with mental health conditions treated by the State?

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, [Bridging the Gaps - Migration Management and Policy Options for Afghan Refugees in Pakistan](#), December 2021

"The trauma of abuse, along with the suffering of living in protracted displacement may also lead to serious mental health issues among the refugees, an aspect that has received limited, if any, policy focus in Pakistan."

How are people with mental health conditions treated by society?

What are the challenges for persons with disabilities to access health services?

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"Limited services exist [in Pakistan] for children with specific needs, and those with mental health and psychosocial needs."

What treatment is available for people with drug-addiction issues?

Women

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation Update - 1 June 2022](#), 10 June 2022

"The number of new arrivals includes those who approached UNHCR and Partners in Tajikistan (5,710), Iran (38,180) and Pakistan (117,550), new arrivals reported by the Government of Uzbekistan (13,020), as well as the Afghans who were kept by the Iranian authorities at border locations (3,780) since 1 January 2021, although only 738 individuals of the latter group remain in the country. The vast majority of those interviewed report leaving Afghanistan for security-related reasons. The overall number of Afghans with international refugee protection needs is likely to be much higher. The increase on the overall figure does not necessarily reflect the displacement of that same period, but rather the date of assessment. [...] There are more than 178,200 reported newly arriving Afghans who may be

in need of international protection in countries neighbouring Afghanistan since 1 January 2021. The overall number of Afghans with international refugee protection needs is likely to be much higher, as not all approach or contact UNHCR. In Iran and Pakistan, more than half are children and a nearly a quarter are women."

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"In 2021, more than 100,000 Afghans (75 per cent women and children) approached UNHCR."

UNHCR, [Amid COVID disruptions, Afghan refugee women are stepping forward into business](#), 9 November 2021

"In Pakistan, enterprising Afghan refugee women are stepping forward to support their families, learn skills and run small businesses."

"When the COVID-19 pandemic started impacting the lives and livelihoods of millions of people, refugees in Pakistan were no exception. Many households rely on informal or day labour which can render them vulnerable to lockdowns and other economic disruptions."

"UNHCR has supported training for over 60 small home-based businesses owned by Afghan refugees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa since 2019, as well as training 5,000 youth in vocational work skills. Among the trainees, women are also coming forward to learn and gain skills and pursuing opportunities in crafts, carpets, clothes tailoring and design, among others."

UNHCR and partners are providing over 30 different livelihoods training opportunities in Pakistan for men and women in skills as diverse as bee-keeping, electrical and mobile repairs, and operating heavy machinery."

Human Rights Watch, [Policy Responses to Support Afghans Fleeing Taliban-Controlled Afghanistan](#), 21 October 2021

"Afghans continue to face Taliban threats and intimidation. Those at greatest risk include members of minority communities, human rights defenders, women's rights activists, high-profile women, journalists, media workers, judges, and others who held official administrative and security positions before the Taliban takeover."

United Nations General Security Council, [The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security](#), 2 September 2021

"Between January and June, humanitarian partners provided sexual reproductive health response to some 93,000 people at entry points with the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. Emergency reproductive health kits distributed during the same period gave support to 17,000 women and girls [...]"

Violence against women

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"Mielke et al reported that female residents of the peri-urban Pul Saggian site (Lahore) felt unsafe and powerless following child kidnappings and a murder that police had failed to properly investigate."

WFP, [Global Report on Food Crises – 2022](#), 4 May 2022

"Despite the high degree of acceptance, Afghan refugees and Afghans of other status in Pakistan have several multifaceted protection needs. These include the need for access to registration and documentation to enjoy basic rights, to facilitate access to services, and to mitigate the risk of arrest and detention (UNCHR, January 2022). Around 54 percent of registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan are children and 22 percent are women. Violence against children and gender-based violence are largely under-reported, and access to justice for refugee girls and women is often impeded by the lack of family/community support. Intimate partner violence, child, early and forced marriage and denial of resources, services, and opportunities are prevalent (UNCHR, January 2022). Gender inequalities result in lower levels of education, fewer work opportunities and lower levels of participation in decisionmaking processes

and community-based planning. Children without documentation, including those whose births have not been registered, are also particularly vulnerable to trafficking and being detained and prosecuted as adults (UNCHR, January 2022)."

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"Violence against children and gender-based violence is largely unreported. Access to justice for refugee girls and women is often impeded by the lack of family/community support. Children without documentation, including those whose births are not registered, are particularly vulnerable to trafficking, exploitation, exclusion from basic services and being detained and prosecuted as adults. Child marriage and child labour are prevalent. Access to education remains one of the most critical issues disproportionately affecting girls. Overall gender inequalities result in lower levels of education, fewer work opportunities and lower levels of participation in decision-making processes and community-based planning for females. Limited services exist for children with specific needs, and those with mental health and psychosocial needs. Medical needs are high, particularly related to maternal, new-born and child health, as well as reproductive health. Refugees also do not have the right to work, impeding access to livelihoods which is essential to ensure self-reliance."

UNHCR, [Speakers called for concerted, collective efforts to prevent gender-based violence](#), 9 December 2021

"Speaking on the occasion, the provincial minister said that Pakistan has taken measures to prevent gender-based violence. "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the only province that has done a lot when it comes to making legislations and reforms to address this issue," he said."

"Gayrat Ahmadshoev said that UNHCR there is a dire need to mobilize communities around the world to end all forms of violence on the basis of gender. He said that out of the 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan, some 46 per cent are females adding UNHCR Pakistan is striving to support Afghan refugee females from economic dependence to self-reliance. "Self-reliance gives women opportunity to contribute to family income and confidence to tackle gender-based violence," he said."

What is the position for lone/unmarried/single women without a male support network?

WFP, [Global Report on Food Crises – 2022](#), 4 May 2022

"Around 54 percent of registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan are children and 22 percent are women. Violence against children and gender-based violence are largely under-reported, and access to justice for refugee girls and women is often impeded by the lack of family/community support. Intimate partner violence, child, early and forced marriage and denial of resources, services, and opportunities are prevalent (UNCHR, January 2022). Gender inequalities result in lower levels of education, fewer work opportunities and lower levels of participation in decisionmaking processes and community-based planning. Children without documentation, including those whose births have not been registered, are also particularly vulnerable to trafficking and being detained and prosecuted as adults (UNCHR, January 2022)." **"Acute food insecurity forecast, 2022:** Although the security situation is stable in most districts of Balochistan, instability in a few districts, such as Kech, Panjgur and Killa Abdullah, might have adverse implications for food security. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is stable in most districts, but given its geographic situation and history, insecurity cannot be ruled out, which may result in a curfew-like situation and restriction of movement (IPC, December 2021). Any new influx of refugees fleeing instability in Afghanistan may directly affect the existing resources of local communities in districts bordering Afghanistan (UNHCR, February 2022)."

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"Afghan new arrivals faced multi-faceted protection challenges. Most notably, access to registration and documentation which would enable them to enjoy basic rights, facilitate access to services, and mitigate the risk of arrest and [sic] detention."

Moreover, such access would protect against refoulement. Between September and November, 1,800 Afghans - predominantly undocumented Afghans, including some new arrivals – were reportedly deported. Among new arrivals: approximately 20 per cent reported a specific need and of this subset: 29 per cent had serious medical needs; 16 per cent had disabilities; 14 per cent were women-at-risk; 11 per cent were single parents; and 8 per cent were children-at-risk. The top concerns for the new arrivals residing in Pakistan were access to shelter (87 per cent), livelihoods (82 per cent), food (78 per cent) and medical assistance (42 per cent)."

What is the situation of women in women's shelters?

Children

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation Update - 1 June 2022](#), 10 June 2022

"The number of new arrivals includes those who approached UNHCR and Partners in Tajikistan (5,710), Iran (38,180) and Pakistan (117,550), new arrivals reported by the Government of Uzbekistan (13,020), as well as the Afghans who were kept by the Iranian authorities at border locations (3,780) since 1 January 2021, although only 738 individuals of the latter group remain in the country. The vast majority of those interviewed report leaving Afghanistan for security-related reasons. The overall number of Afghans with international refugee protection needs is likely to be much higher. The increase on the overall figure does not necessarily reflect the displacement of that same period, but rather the date of assessment. [...] There are more than 178,200 reported newly arriving Afghans who may be in need of international protection in countries neighbouring Afghanistan since 1 January 2021. The overall number of Afghans with international refugee protection needs is likely to be much higher, as not all approach or contact UNHCR. In Iran and Pakistan, more than half are children and a nearly a quarter are women."

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"In 2020, it was reported that the second, third, and even fourth generation of Afghan refugees were living in Pakistan, and most children and youth of the Afghan refugee population were already born and raised in Pakistan, but were still living in legal limbo and at risk of being deported to Afghanistan, a country most of whom have never seen."

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"In 2021, more than 100,000 Afghans (75 per cent women and children) approached UNHCR."

Access to education

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"A background paper written by Hervé Nicolle for the 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report, published in 2018, stated that access to education for Afghan refugees has to be assessed in the light of a 'generally weak' educational system in Pakistan.50F 523 According to the Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLM) 2019-20, 32 % of children aged 5 to 16 in Pakistan are out of school. In absolute terms, a total of 22.8 million children were out of school as of December 2021, the second highest number worldwide according to Education Cannot Wait (ECW), the UN's global fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises. The quality of the public education system in Pakistan is reportedly poor with a shortage of schools and teachers existing. ... According to Farhan, the COVID-19 pandemic led to a further deterioration of the educational situation with around 26.1 million students dropping out of school in March 2020. After schools reopened in September 2020, 13 million children, of which 60 % were girls, stayed unenrolled."

"Mudassar M. Javed stated in March 2022 that, in order to be admitted to school Afghans need to present a UNHCR Asylum Seeker certificate and a PoR card or an ACC. The News International reported in March 2022 that tens of thousands of second- or third-generation Afghan refugee children born in Pakistan had no access to education because they did not have citizenship cards... With reference to the head of the Karachi-based NGO Initiator Human

Development Foundation which works for children of Afghan refugees, the article goes on to explain that statelessness would force most of the refugees', to send their children to study in madrassas or ask them to work as waste pickers'.

"Reasons that keep Afghan refugee children away from school are socio-economic factors, a lacking infrastructure, a 'conservative attitude towards female education' or security concerns for girls who live in rural areas or in the peripheries of urban areas."

"ADSP stated in June 2019 that there are no education services for Afghans without PoR card or ACC. For these undocumented Afghans it is possible to register in private education schools. However, private institutions are reluctant to give admission to undocumented Afghan refugees due to fear of disciplinary measures from the Pakistani government."

WFP, [Global Report on Food Crises – 2022](#), 4 May 2022

"Additional drivers of acute food insecurity and malnutrition among refugees in Pakistan:

The vast majority (81 percent) of the Afghan refugees are hosted in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa - provinces that have the highest multi-dimensional poverty levels in the country. According to the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund, more than half of the refugees are in the category of extremely poor/ultrapoor (UNCHR, January 2022). Pakistan allows refugees freedom of movement, as well as access to public services, and from 2019, the Government enabled refugees to open bank accounts. But their long-standing presence in Pakistan – as well as the severe socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 – has strained available resources, infrastructure and service delivery systems (UNCHR, January 2022). Limited services for children with disabilities, mental health, and psychosocial support, most recently in relation to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, have been highlighted by the communities, with over 50 percent of children with disabilities having no access to schooling (UNCHR, January 2022)."

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA), [Some Afghan refugees settling into life in Canada, but others still stranded](#), 4 May 2022

"For former interpreter Fida and his family, a stalled application has meant eight months trapped in a room in Pakistan, their VISAs expired, desperate for any word on an escape to Canada.

"I am really concerned for future of my children," he said. "They are deprived from school, have never been to school.""

USDOS, [2021 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan](#), 12 April 2022

"In 2020, out of the 417,000 school-aged children, only 83,839 (20 percent) were enrolled in school, of which onethird were in public schools. These enrollment levels translated into a literacy rate for Afghan refugees of 33 percent, with a 7.6 percent rate for girls, and dropout rates as high as 90 percent. Afghan refugees were able to use POR cards to enroll in universities, although there were reports that some universities refused to enroll POR cardholders following the card expiration in June 2020."

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"Access to education remains one of the most critical issues disproportionately affecting girls. Overall gender inequalities result in lower levels of education, fewer work opportunities and lower levels of participation in decision-making processes and community-based planning for females."

World Food Programme, [WFP & Gender – Contributing towards gender equality and women's empowerment in Pakistan](#), 9 March 2022

"Education is a major factor for eliminating gender inequality. The Government of Pakistan has highlighted that nearly 22.5 million children, predominantly girls, are out of school in the country (Pakistan Education Statistics, 2018). The situation is grimmer in NMDs, where only 5% of girls have completed their secondary education. To incentivize the enrolment and continued attendance of girls in schools in NMDs, WFP carried out an education support programme where adolescent female students received a monthly cash stipend of PKR 1,000. The

programme was initiated in October 2020 and concluded in August 2021. A total of 16,233 female students were assisted through the programme, including a small number of Afghan refugee girls."

UNHCR, [Afghan refugee removes obstacles barring kids with disabilities from school](#), 17 February 2022

"A second-generation Afghan refugee, Jamil ur Rehman was born in Pakistan.

As a person with a disability as well as a refugee, he has confronted a series of obstacles in trying to get an education. Entrenched community views on disability meant that he was actively prevented from attending school in his village in northwest Pakistan. Neighbours in the Lower Dir district of Pakistan's rugged Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province where he lived would say that he could never become a teacher or a soldier.

"No one thought I could do anything," he says. "My parents were interested [in sending me to school], but some of the community elders put hurdles in the way – they said that I was disabled and couldn't be educated." Jamil knew better."

"Four years ago, Jamil founded the Afghan Refugee Disabled Union (ARDU) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which is home to many refugees who have left Afghanistan in the years since the onset of conflict in 1979 triggered a first wave of displacement.

With the support of the Afghan refugee community, the local Union has so far distributed 60 wheelchairs to youngsters living in refugee villages who need them to get to school and realize their potential."

"An estimated 12 million people with disabilities have been forcibly displaced by persecution, violence and human rights violations worldwide, although surveys and assessments suggest the real number may be much higher.

They are often at higher risk of violence, discrimination, exploitation and abuse, and face barriers to access basic services. In addition, they are often excluded from education and the chance to work and earn a living.

"I began to realize more and more that education was important in order to be heard," Jamil says. "If you are not educated, you cannot achieve anything in your life. No one will listen."

He finally got the opportunity to learn how to read and write at age 12, with home-based literacy and numeracy support from Basic Education for Afghan Refugees, a local partner organization of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency. With perseverance, he eventually gained entry to a local refugee village school, where he completed grade three at the age of 18. But like many of the children and youth in his village, that was the ceiling for formal learning opportunities."

ECW, [Education Cannot Wait announces US\\$13.2 million catalytic grant to support education for the most vulnerable children and adolescents in Pakistan](#), 31 December 2021

"An estimated 22.8 million children are out of school in Pakistan, the second highest in the world. To address these pressing needs, Education Cannot Wait (ECW), the UN's global fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises, announced today US\$13.2 million in new catalytic grant funding for a visionary Multi-Year Resilience Programme in Pakistan. Delivered with the Government of Pakistan by three complementary consortia led by UNICEF, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) and the Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN), the new three-year programme seeks to mobilize US\$46.8 million in additional funding. The ECW seed funding grant will reach 155,000 children and adolescents. In reaching the most vulnerable and marginalized, 60% of beneficiaries are girls and 12% are children with disabilities."

What instances of forced recruitment and use of children are there?

Children separated from their families

Unaccompanied minors

WFP, [Global Report on Food Crises – 2022](#), 4 May 2022

"Around 54 percent of registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan are children and 22 percent are women. Violence against children and gender-based violence are largely under-reported, and access to justice for refugee girls and women is often impeded by the lack of family/community support. Intimate partner violence, child, early and forced

marriage and denial of resources, services, and opportunities are prevalent (UNCHR, January 2022). Gender inequalities result in lower levels of education, fewer work opportunities and lower levels of participation in decisionmaking processes and community-based planning. Children without documentation, including those whose births have not been registered, are also particularly vulnerable to trafficking and being detained and prosecuted as adults (UNCHR, January 2022)." **"Acute food insecurity forecast, 2022:** Although the security situation is stable in most districts of Balochistan, instability in a few districts, such as Kech, Panjgur and Killa Abdullah, might have adverse implications for food security. Khyber Pakhtunkwa is stable in most districts, but given its geographic situation and history, insecurity cannot be ruled out, which may result in a curfew-like situation and restriction of movement (IPC, December 2021). Any new influx of refugees fleeing instability in Afghanistan may directly affect the existing resources of local communities in districts bordering Afghanistan (UNHCR, February 2022)."

Early and forced marriage

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"Children without documentation, including those whose births are not registered, are particularly vulnerable to trafficking, exploitation, exclusion from basic services and being detained and prosecuted as adults. Child marriage and child labour are prevalent."

Persons with disabilities (stigma, discrimination, harassment, violence)

WFP, [Global Report on Food Crises – 2022](#), 4 May 2022

"Pakistan allows refugees freedom of movement, as well as access to public services, and from 2019, the Government enabled refugees to open bank accounts. But their long-standing presence in Pakistan – as well as the severe socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 – has strained available resources, infrastructure and service delivery systems (UNCHR, January 2022). Limited services for children with disabilities, mental health, and psychosocial support, most recently in relation to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, have been highlighted by the communities, with over 50 percent of children with disabilities having no access to schooling (UNCHR, January 2022). Medical needs are high, particularly related to maternal, newborn and child health, as well as reproductive health, and access to adequate quality and equitable health care remains a major concern for the community (UNCHR, January 2022)."

UNHCR, [Report on the humanitarian and human rights situation of Afghan refugees in Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan](#), 31 March 2022

"Most notably, access to registration and documentation which would enable them to enjoy basic rights, facilitate access to services, and mitigate the risk of arrest and detention. Moreover, such access would protect against refoulement. Between September and November, 1,800 Afghans - predominantly undocumented Afghans, including some new arrivals – were reportedly deported. Among new arrivals: approximately 20 per cent reported a specific need and of this subset: 29 per cent had serious medical needs; 16 per cent had disabilities; 14 per cent were women-at-risk; 11 per cent were single parents; and 8 per cent were children-at-risk. The top concerns for the new arrivals residing in Pakistan were access to shelter (87 per cent), livelihoods (82 per cent), food (78 per cent) and medical assistance (42 per cent)"

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"Limited services exist [in Pakistan] for children with specific needs, and those with mental health and psychosocial needs."

USDOS, [Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2020 - Pakistan](#), 30 March 2021

“access to schools [...] was on a space-available basis as determined by the principal, and most registered Afghan refugees attended private Afghan schools or schools sponsored by the international community [...] ‘for older students, particularly girls in refugee villages, access to education remained difficult [...]”

News International (The), [Statelessness keeps young Afghan refugees away from education](#), 13 March 2022

“Akbar Ali, a 12-year-old Afghan refugee in Karachi’s Johenjar Goth, has dreamt of becoming a doctor. [...] Without any official identification documents, particularly birth certificates, he can’t even enrol in a primary school. As a result, Ali has been forced to work as a waste picker in the city. Ali is one among tens of thousands of Afghan refugee children who despite being second- or third-generation refugees born in Pakistan, are deprived of access to education, mainly because of a lack of citizenship cards. [...] Afghan refugees, including Ali’s parents, have migrated to Pakistan from its western neighbour for decades, first fleeing the Soviet invasion in the 1970s, and then the civil war that ensued. Since 2001, a fresh influx of refugees followed the US invasion of Afghanistan, and the subsequent Taliban war to take back the country. With the Taliban regaining control of Kabul in August last year, the number of new refugees seems to be lower than expected so far, according to international aid groups and Pakistani officials.”

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

[Javed, M.M., email, 3 March 2022]

“Mudassar M. Javed stated in March 2022 that, in order to be admitted to school Afghans need to present a UNHCR Asylum Seeker certificate and a PoR card or an ACC. The case number on the certificate serves as the person’s ID card number according to Javed. The school administrations do not require other documentation for the admission. However, a birth certificate indicates that the minor is registered with one or both parents. Therefore, minors who have not yet received their ID cards can provide their birth certificates as a proof of registration, Javed explained.”

UNHCR, [Afghan refugee removes obstacles barring kids with disabilities from school](#), 17 February 2022

"A second-generation Afghan refugee, Jamil ur Rehman was born in Pakistan.

As a person with a disability as well as a refugee, he has confronted a series of obstacles in trying to get an education. Entrenched community views on disability meant that he was actively prevented from attending school in his village in northwest Pakistan. Neighbours in the Lower Dir district of Pakistan’s rugged Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province where he lived would say that he could never become a teacher or a soldier.

“No one thought I could do anything,” he says. “My parents were interested [in sending me to school], but some of the community elders put hurdles in the way – they said that I was disabled and couldn’t be educated.” Jamil knew better."

"Four years ago, Jamil founded the Afghan Refugee Disabled Union (ARDU) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which is home to many refugees who have left Afghanistan in the years since the onset of conflict in 1979 triggered a first wave of displacement.

With the support of the Afghan refugee community, the local Union has so far distributed 60 wheelchairs to youngsters living in refugee villages who need them to get to school and realize their potential."

" An estimated 12 million people with disabilities have been forcibly displaced by persecution, violence and human rights violations worldwide, although surveys and assessments suggest the real number may be much higher.

They are often at higher risk of violence, discrimination, exploitation and abuse, and face barriers to access basic services. In addition, they are often excluded from education and the chance to work and earn a living.

"I began to realize more and more that education was important in order to be heard," Jamil says. "If you are not educated, you cannot achieve anything in your life. No one will listen."

He finally got the opportunity to learn how to read and write at age 12, with home-based literacy and numeracy support from Basic Education for Afghan Refugees, a local partner organization of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency. With perseverance, he eventually gained entry to a local refugee village school, where he completed grade three at the age of 18. But like many of the children and youth in his village, that was the ceiling for formal learning opportunities."

UNHCR, [Pakistan Country Factsheet \(January 2022\)](#), 14 January 2022

“Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), including the Chief Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees and the Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees in the provinces serves as the main counterpart. UNHCR collaborates with National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) for registration of Afghans and issuance of birth certificates. UNHCR also works in partnership with National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) at the federal level and Technical Education and Vocational Training Authorities (TEVTA) at the provincial level for the youth skill development in Pakistan. UNHCR Pakistan also collaborates with provincial department of health and department of education, along with other provincial and district level government line departments. [...] UNHCR’s education strategy aims to facilitate access of Afghan children into nearby public schools where these are available to avoid provision of parallel education system, maximise resources and encourage peaceful co-existence amongst refugees and local children. Accessibility and absorption capacity are key considerations for refugees being able to access public schools. UNHCR also provides tertiary-level scholarships to Afghan refugee youth through the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI). The beneficiaries are aged between 17 to 30 years old.”

ECW, [Education Cannot Wait announces US\\$13.2 million catalytic grant to support education for the most vulnerable children and adolescents in Pakistan](#), 31 December 2021

“An estimated 22.8 million children are out of school in Pakistan, the second highest in the world. To address these pressing needs, Education Cannot Wait (ECW), the UN’s global fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises, announced today US\$13.2 million in new catalytic grant funding for a visionary Multi-Year Resilience Programme in Pakistan. Delivered with the Government of Pakistan by three complementary consortia led by UNICEF, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) and the Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN), the new three-year programme seeks to mobilize US\$46.8 million in additional funding. The ECW seed funding grant will reach 155,000 children and adolescents. In reaching the most vulnerable and marginalized, 60% of beneficiaries are girls and 12% are children with disabilities.”

News International (The), [Future of city’s Afghan students hangs in the balance after Taliban takeover](#), 27 September 2021

“After the recent takeover of Kabul by Taliban, the children of Afghan refugees studying at various schools across Karachi, Pakistan’s largest city by population, are now facing uncertainty, wondering if the Taliban regime would continue awarding certificates to them, as was the case during the Ashraf Ghani government. [...] The Afghan educators who have been residing in Karachi’s Sohrab Goth as refugees since the Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan have set up five or so private schools. Only one of them, the Syed Jamaluddin Afghani School, was recognised in 1996 by the Rabbani government in exile, and later on by the Taliban regime, and the Hamid Karzai and Ghani governments. Syed Hadi Hashmi, an elderly Afghan refugee, had established the Syed Jamaluddin Afghani School in 1992 with the aim to educate the children of Afghan refugees. The students of the remaining schools, a majority of which teach religious studies with some modern curriculum, applied for equivalence certificates from the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan. However, a majority of the students got their certificates by themselves at the educational institutes of Afghanistan. [...] These schools have been generating funds from collecting fees and donations, and the financial aid provided by the well-settled Afghan refugees. After the Taliban takeover, however, the future of these schools hangs in the balance. They had been making efforts to provide platforms for learning to hundreds of children, but now they might be heading towards closure. Thousands of Afghan children do not go to school because they help their parents with work, and most of them can be seen collecting recyclable things across the city. “We have to pay rents, utility bills, salaries and others expenses. A major part of the operating costs comes from fee collection,” Abdul Karim, an Afghan educator who resides in Sohrab Goth, told The News. “But due to the current situation, the earnings will be further reduced. The students will prefer to move to Western countries or start their businesses because they see no future for the educated people in Afghanistan to return.” [...] Among the enrolled students, around half are girls, who are studying at the schools established by Afghan refugees. “The girls were already in a state of misfortune as regards getting access to education,” said Karim. [...] School curriculum “We’ve been arranging separate classes for boys and girls, and have hired male and female teachers to run the schools. At the same time, we teach the same curriculum that was approved by the last Taliban regime,” said Zikrullah, administrator of the Syed Jamaluddin Afghani School. “No major change has been made in the curriculum in the past two decades, apart from adding or subtracting a few subjects such as languages, including Pashto and Dari, and geography with Islamic studies, Madani education, Arabic, Islamic history, etc.” He said the school imparts

religious education in the evening shift and modern education in the morning shift. "We have an identical Islamic education system but are still unsure if the Taliban regime will issue certificates to our students. We know nothing about the future of our students." [...] He, however, added that they would continue to educate children regardless of their gender. But certificates of unregistered schools being run by Afghan refugees are not accepted by Afghanistan's education ministry. "We're not responsible for providing jobs to our students. We merely want to educate more and more children."

Freedom of movement

UNHCR, [Pakistan: Overview of Refugee and Asylum-Seekers Population](#), 31 March 2022

[See page]

UNHCR, [Information for new arrivals](#), undated

"UNHCR is aware that many Afghans face a very difficult situation in Pakistan and desire to be resettled to another country. However, due to the extremely limited number of resettlement places available, only a small number of individuals may be considered for resettlement."

What is the Taliban's position regarding citizens leaving the country to Pakistan?

United States Institute of Peace, [Five Things to Watch in the Islamabad-Pakistani Taliban Talks](#), 21 June 2022

"A third camp, mainly dotted by families and extended tribal networks of refugees linked to TTP rank-and-file who moved to Afghanistan after Pakistan's last major military operation called Zarb-e-Azb, seems to favor any settlement with Pakistani government that will ensure their swift and safe return to Pakistan from Afghanistan. Many in this camp have suffered from extreme poverty in eastern Afghanistan for several years — and the Taliban's support remains insufficient for them. Amid Afghanistan's growing humanitarian crisis, this camp's access to food and other public goods has decreased."

Gandhara, [Gandhara Briefing: Pakistani Visas, Taliban Taxes, Afghan Bodybuilders](#), 17 June 2022

"Radio Mashaal and Radio Azadi report on the thriving black market for Pakistani visas in Afghanistan, which can cost up to \$1,000. The exorbitant prices line the pockets of corrupt Pakistani officials and their Afghan go-betweens. There is no shortage of Afghans willing to do whatever it takes to flee Taliban persecution and the economic meltdown in their homeland."

"People can get a monthlong visa by paying \$300, a five-month visa for \$500, and \$700 for a yearlong visa," said Farhad Salehi, a resident of Herat who has already spent \$500 in bribes without success.

Pakistani officials have clamped down on corruption and fired 12 embassy staff during the past three months. A senior embassy official told us that the employees were sacked after a "thorough investigation" that established that they were "minting money from Afghans."

Islamabad has also unveiled a new visa policy, making it easier for Afghans seeking asylum in Western countries to transit through Pakistan."

Number of returnees from Pakistan to Afghanistan

Ariana News, [Over 250,000 Afghan asylum seekers arrived in Pakistan since January 2021: UNHCR](#), 22 June 2022

"Afridi said only 850 Afghan refugees (185 families) have returned to their home country since the beginning of 2022 under the commission's voluntary repatriation program. The figure, he said, is slightly higher compared to repatriation during the same period last year."

IOM, Pakistan – [Bi-weekly Flow Monitoring Report: Spontaneous Return of Undocumented Afghan Migrants from Pakistan \(23 April to 6 May 2022\)](#), 18 May 2022

"During the reporting period, border authorities facilitated the return of 59 individuals due to the lack of legal documentation to remain in Pakistan.

During the reporting period, 5% of returnees were categorized as vulnerable persons, mainly chronically ill and elderly.

In Pakistan, the primary occupations reported by returnees were: unskilled labor (74%), skilled labor (24%) and business (2%).

All returnees were carrying household items, cash, personal belongings and productive assets when interviewed. They also travelled with additional items, such as productive assets (95%) and transportation or private vehicles (5%).

The average cost of travelling from Pakistan to Afghanistan reported was 19,595 PKR per family.

The top 3 challenges returnees expected to face in Afghanistan were: arranging for livelihoods, settling into a new city and finding income opportunities."

"Push factors: Unable to pay house rent 37%; Unable to pay utilities 30%; Fear of arrest/deportation 23%; no employment 8%; Business reasons 2%."

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan State of Human Rights in 2021](#), 29 April 2022

"After the Taliban took over Kabul on 15 August, Pakistan expected a renewed influx of the Afghan refugees. With approximately 63,000 registered Afghan refugees in Sindh, a majority of whom have settled in Sohrab Goth in Karachi and adjacent areas, legislators expressed their concern as to how well-equipped the provincial government was to control the spread of polio or coronavirus in the province in case more Afghan refugees reached Sindh. Conversely, there were questions by opposition legislators about how they would be accommodated in refugee camps. The energy minister, Imtiaz Ahmed Shaikh, responding on behalf of the chief minister, said that new refugees would be provided shelter in camps on Sindh's borders on humanitarian grounds and, from there, would be sent back to their country."

IOM, [Pakistan – Quarterly Flow Monitoring of Undocumented Afghan Returnees from Pakistan \(January – March 2022\)](#), 29 April 2022

"IOM Pakistan collects data on the outflows of undocumented Afghan migrants at the Torkham and Chaman border crossing points in an effort to better understand the migration movements of undocumented Afghan migrants returning to Afghanistan from Pakistan. This report is part of the European Union funded project "Displacement Tracking Matrix Regional Evidence for Migration Analysis and Policy (DTM REMAP)". Key findings during this reporting period are:

- From January to March 2022, 25,595 undocumented Afghan migrants spontaneously returned to Afghanistan, including 3,225 through the Torkham border point and 22,370 through the Chaman border point.
- Among the total number of undocumented Afghan returnees, border authorities facilitated the return of 538 individuals due to the lack of legal documentation to remain in Pakistan. Therefore, information concerning these 538 individuals is not included in the report analysis.
- The average family size of returnees was 10 individuals and 13% of all returnees recorded during the reporting period were categorized as vulnerable persons.
- All returnees were carrying household items, personal belongings and cash when surveyed. They also traveled with additional items, such as productive assets (97%) and transportation vehicles (7%).
- The top 3 challenges returnees expected to face in Afghanistan were: arranging livelihood, settling into a new city and finding better income opportunities."

IOM, [Flow Monitoring of Undocumented Afghan Returnees from Pakistan \(9 – 22 April 2022\)](#), 29 April 2022

"From 09 April to 22 April 2022, 893 undocumented Afghan migrants returned to Afghanistan, including 72 through the Torkham border point and 821 through the Chaman border point. During the reporting period, border authorities

facilitated the return of 111 individuals due to the lack of legal documentation to remain in Pakistan. Therefore, information concerning these 111 individuals is not included in the report analysis."

UNHCR, [Flash External Update: Afghanistan Situation #16](#), 15 April 2022

"Since the start of the year, 167 Afghan refugees have returned under UNHCR's facilitated voluntary repatriation programme, including 84 from Iran and 83 from Pakistan."

UNHCR, [Report on the humanitarian and human rights situation of Afghan refugees in Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan](#), 31 March 2022

"Most notably, access to registration and documentation which would enable them to enjoy basic rights, facilitate access to services, and mitigate the risk of arrest and detention. Moreover, such access would protect against refoulement."

UNHCR, [Pakistan: Voluntary Repatriation of Afghan Refugees](#), 31 March 2022

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation – Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Final Report](#), 31 March 2022

"Between September and November, 1,800 Afghans - predominantly undocumented Afghans, including some new arrivals – were reportedly deported."

IOM, [Spontaneous Return of Undocumented Afghan Migrants from Pakistan \(26 Mar. to 08 April 2022\)](#), 20 April 2022

"From 26 March to 08 April 2022, 3,553 undocumented Afghan migrants returned to Afghanistan, including 460 through the Torkham border point and 3,093 through the Chaman border point. During the reporting period, border authorities facilitated the return of 35 individuals due to the lack of legal documentation to remain in Pakistan. Therefore, information concerning these 35 individuals is not included in the report analysis.

During the reporting period, 11% of returnees were categorized as vulnerable persons, mainly chronically ill and elderly.

- In Pakistan, the primary occupations reported by majority of returnees were: unskilled labor (61%), skilled labor (23%), business (14%) and salaried job (2%).
- All returnees were carrying household items, cash, personal belongings and productive assets when interviewed. They also travelled with additional items, such as transportation or private vehicles (5%).
- The average cost of travelling from Pakistan to Afghanistan reported was 21,272 PKR per family.
- The top 3 challenges returnees expected to face in Afghanistan were: arranging for livelihoods, settling into a new city and finding income opportunities."

United Nations General Security Council, [The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security](#), 2 September 2021

"Between 20 May and 1 August, 245,690 undocumented Afghan migrants and 152 refugees returned from the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2,147 undocumented Afghans and 152 refugees returned from Pakistan, and 17 refugees returned from other countries."

What is the Taliban's treatment of asylum applicants returning to Afghanistan from Pakistan?

ATNnews, [IEA assures Afghan protestors in Pakistan they will be safe at home](#), 25 May 2022

"Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday that Afghans who fled to Pakistan following the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's (IEA) take over in August last year can return home and their safety will be ensured. The ministry said that a number of Afghans who have been protesting in Islamabad for some time now want to be evacuated to other countries. These Afghans have told Pakistani media that their lives would be in danger if they returned home. [...] One protester, Alyas Zaki, told Dawn News: "We are here and want to get settled in any developed country. So far, we are not being given the status of refugees here.""

Return of registered Afghan refugees from Pakistan to Afghanistan

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Voluntary Repatriation Update \(January–December 2021\)](#), 21 February 2022

"During 2021, 437 Afghan refugees returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan. Returns in 2021 were lower, with 1,092 returnees.

UNHCR's Voluntary Repatriation Centres (VRCs) in Pakistan process refugees willing to return to Afghanistan and issue them a Voluntary Repatriation Form (VRF). Two VRCs are located in Pakistan: one in Azakhel in Peshawar (KPK) and another in Baleli in Quetta (Baluchistan). Upon return to Afghanistan, returnees are assisted at Encashment Centers (ECs) located in Kabul, Jalalabad, and Kandahar for returnees from Pakistan and other countries. At the ECs, all returnees with a valid VRF receive a one-off multisectoral assistance package, consisting of a cash grant amounting USD 250 per person (based on their area of origin) to prevent, mitigate, and respond to immediate protection risks and vulnerabilities upon return to Afghanistan and to cover their transportation costs. Most of interviewed returnees state that they intended to spend the cash grant to pay transportation costs to their places of origin/intended destination and buy food and other basic commodities. In addition to cash grants, a range of multisectoral services are provided to returning refugees at the ECs with inter-agency approach, including basic health and malnutrition screening and vaccination (by the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) supported by WHO and UNICEF), mine risk awareness (by the Danish Demining Group supported by UNMAS), information on school enrolment (by the Ministry of Education supported by UNICEF), and overnight accommodation when needed."

Return of undocumented asylum seekers from Pakistan to Afghanistan

IOM, [Bi-Weekly Flow Monitoring Report: Spontaneous Return of Undocumented Afghan Migrants from Pakistan \(29 January to 11 February 2022\)](#), 11 February 2022

"From 29 January to 11 February 2022, 2,805 undocumented Afghan migrants returned to Afghanistan, including 311 through the Torkham border point and 2,494 through the Chaman border point."

IOM, [Quarterly Flow Monitoring Report: Spontaneous Return of Undocumented Afghan Migrants from Pakistan \(October–December 2021\)](#), 4 February 2022

"From October to December 2021, 16,398 undocumented Afghan migrants spontaneously returned to Afghanistan, including 2,874 through the Torkham border point and 13,524 through the Chaman border point. The average family size of returnees was 10 individuals and 12% of all returnees recorded during the reporting period were categorized as vulnerable persons. All returnees were carrying household items, personal belongings and cash when surveyed. They also traveled with additional items, such as productive assets (99%), transportation vehicles (28%) and livestock (3%). The top 3 challenges returnees expected to face in Afghanistan were: arranging livelihood, settling into a new city and finding better income opportunities."

What are the challenges to moving freely across the Afghanistan-Pakistan border?

United States Institute of Peace, [Five Things to Watch in the Islamabad-Pakistani Taliban Talks](#), 21 June 2022

"A third camp, mainly dotted by families and extended tribal networks of refugees linked to TTP rank-and-file who moved to Afghanistan after Pakistan's last major military operation called Zarb-e-Azb, seems to favor any settlement with Pakistani government that will ensure their swift and safe return to Pakistan from Afghanistan. Many in this camp have suffered from extreme poverty in eastern Afghanistan for several years — and the Taliban's support remains insufficient for them. Amid Afghanistan's growing humanitarian crisis, this camp's access to food and other public goods has decreased."

The Khaama Press, [Terrorism Resurges in Pakistan: Terrorists Shoot Two Members of Sikh Community Dead](#), 20 May 2022

"On Sunday, Islamic State terrorists shot and killed two Sikh businessmen in Pakistan's northwest, the latest targeted murder against the minority group in the restive area bordering Afghanistan. [...] The Islamic State's Khorasan unit (ISKP) claimed responsibility for the attack in Peshawar through its propaganda news service 'Amaaq.' The ISKP is a South Asian and Central Asian affiliate of the Islamic State (IS). [...] In addition, there have been multiple incidences of targeted killings of Sikh and Shia populations in the Peshawar region in recent years, but the police have failed to develop a strategy to prevent such incidents from occurring again."

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"A February 2022 practice note based on the aforementioned study co-authored by Mielke indicated that 'the fear of abuse and detention keeps Afghans immobilised in their place of residence in Pakistan'. Furthermore, the GoP's efforts to seal the Afghan-Pakistani border alongside the introduction of rigorous visa requirements for (re)entry increasingly hamper their cross-border mobility"

"With the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, lockdowns of refugee villages and urban areas restricted the freedom of movement of Afghan refugees, severely impacting the livelihoods of this group, most of whom depend on daily wages."

"Amid the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO forces from Afghanistan and the subsequent Taliban advance, several media outlets cited Pakistani government officials in July and August 2021 and reported that in the event of a large influx of refugees, Pakistan planned on settling newly arriving Afghan refugees in camps along the border to prevent them from moving further into the country and into Pakistani cities. As reported by the U.S. magazine Foreign Policy (FP) in November 2021, in a settlement in the area of Peshawar with a sizeable Afghan population, dozens of new arriving Afghans tried to remain under the radar - due to fear of being stopped by authorities if they moved too far from the neighbourhood."

"The measures that Pakistan has taken to manage the border have impacted the Afghan refugee population in the country. A survey conducted by Mielke and other researchers between October 2020 and March 2021 with 299 respondents found that in comparison to other situations of long-term displacement around the world, Afghans were more mobile and 'regularly engaged in circular mobility to and from their country of origin but also across territorial borders within the region'. However, the survey also found that the tightening of the GoP's border policies was leading to increased transnational immobility of Afghans. Khalid Khan Kheshgi stated in March 2022 that unregistered and undocumented Afghans who live in Pakistan or want to enter Pakistan via the Torkham or Chaman border crossing into Balochistan were required to pay 'heavy bribes and money' to police officers and lawenforcing staff."

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan State of Human Rights in 2021](#), 29 April 2022

"Following the takeover of Kabul by the Afghan Taliban, there was an influx of Afghan refugees, many of whom reported instances of harassment, such as border officials extorting money and refusing entry. [...] Cumbersome documentation requirements led to slower processing of visas and transit. [...] Several protest demonstrations were held on both sides of the border against the curbs. In August, after the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, the new regime in Kabul closed the border crossings with Pakistan, leaving thousands of people from both sides stranded. The restriction was lifted after a few weeks. [...] In August, the Taliban seized power in Kabul amid a chaotic pull-out by the international community and exodus of both wealthy and poor Afghans. Thousands of refugees transited through Pakistan with the wealthiest of them arriving by air in Islamabad and moving out to third countries. Over the last few months of 2021, thousands of refugees streamed through Peshawar into KP. The authorities seemingly kept the transit controlled by issuing visas to them on arrival. In September, the federal interior minister refuted reports that Pakistan had set up refugee camps along the Afghan border. He said that in the three weeks after the Taliban takeover, about 4,000 Afghans had entered Pakistan with valid travel documents and while an equal number of Afghans returned to their country. He said Pakistan had helped evacuate over 10,000 international and Afghan

residents from Kabul on humanitarian grounds and offered to issue 30-day transit visas to anyone seeking to travel beyond Pakistan. [...] In August a report by Dawn said that many Afghans seeking to return home after the Taliban takeover were facing multiple tiers of the immigration process, operated by at least three departments—including the Federal Investigation Agency, NADRA and National Logistics Cell—at the Torkham border. It said the returnees were being asked to pay bribes ranging from PKR5,000–30,000 for prompt passage. Another media report in October referenced Afghans living at Gohati and Gandaf refugee camps as saying they had no plans to return to Afghanistan until peace was restored. The two camps housed around 60,000 Afghans before the Taliban takeover but the number had gone up due to the arrival of their relatives and other groups. [...] After the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, there was an influx of Afghan refugees from the Chaman border crossing point. Most of these refugees settled in Quetta. Some of them even travelled as far as Karachi. In September, the Balochistan government deported 200 Afghan refugees because they had entered illegally. [...] Despite the state's assurances that Afghan refugees would be given asylum, reports of harassment of refugees from the border and cumbersome documentation requirements were a cause of concern for civil society. [...] After the Taliban occupation of Kabul, the state made assurances that Afghan refugees would be granted asylum and their visa requirements eased; however, reports of harassment at the border became cause for concern. [...] Reports of harassment were also common, such as extorting money, refusing entry, and even violence. Refugee camps suffered from poor hygienic conditions, and cumbersome documentation requirements led to slower processing of visas and transit. [...] On 13 October, Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry announced that the government had approved a code of conduct for visa issuance to Afghan nationals, thereby easing visa restrictions to encourage their legal entry. The visa process for Afghan nationals was also made available online for those wishing to seek a visa from the Pakistan Embassy in Kabul. [...] Travel across national borders became a prominent issue after the Taliban took over Kabul, especially in the Wakhan Corridor in Afghanistan which borders GB. The Wakhi community in GB has a long historical, cultural and linguistic relationship with their Wakkhi kinfolk living across the border. A couple of months after the takeover of the Taliban in Afghanistan on 18 August, residents of the Wakhan valley of Afghanistan, who hailed from the Gojal valley of Hunza, crossed the border and entered into the Chipurson valley of Hunza. Upon their arrival, they were arrested by the local police and handed over to the FIA in October 2021 under Section 14 of the Foreigners Act 1946. Later, they were allowed to live with their families in Gojal by the FIA. However, according to a local human rights activist, some women from Gojal who settled in Afghanistan after marriage are still stuck in Afghanistan and need help from the Government of Pakistan for their evacuation. This is illustrated in the case of a woman from Kabul, whose mother submitted an application to HRCP's office in Gilgit on 20 September, requesting that their case be taken up with government officials for the evacuation of her daughter who was in this predicament."

UNHCR, [Information for new arrivals](#), undated

"UNHCR is aware that many Afghans face a very difficult situation in Pakistan and desire to be resettled to another country. However, due to the extremely limited number of resettlement places available, only a small number of individuals may be considered for resettlement."

UNHCR, [Flash External Update: Afghanistan Situation #16](#), 15 April 2022

"In Pakistan, at Torkham border point, entry is limited to those Afghans with valid passports and visas. Children under the age of eight can now cross into Pakistan through Torkham without passports or visas, and up to 100 undocumented Afghan medical patients are permitted to enter each day. At Chamam border –the other main border crossing point between Pakistan and Afghanistan – entry is restricted to passport holders with valid visas, Tazkira holders from Kandahar province, persons with serious medical conditions and CNIC holders. Since early April, the exit of Afghans on Tazkira through Torkham border has not been permitted by the authorities. However, Afghans can exit to Afghanistan on ACC, PoR cards and visas. In addition, some exceptions are applied to allow critical health and other humanitarian cases who entered into Pakistan with Tazikras to travel back to Pakistan."

IOM, [Pakistan – Point of Entry Analysis Covid 19](#), 1 April 2022

"Between January and February 2022, the DTM REMAP team in Pakistan monitored 17¹ POEs. These included nine airports, six land borders and two blue borders. The status of various POEs changed significantly between January and February 2022 due to the 5th wave of COVID-19, changes to the security situation and fluctuations in national

and international mobility restrictions. At the end of February, fifteen POEs were fully operational, one was partially operational and one was fully closed.

On 15th January 2022 due to the increasing number of Omicron cases in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, the provincial Health Department doubled the number of its staff deployed at the Torkham crossing and Bacha Khan International Airport and an isolation ward was setup at Landi Kotal hospital. On 10th February 2022 new restrictions were imposed by Pakistani authorities at the Chaman border allowing only those with legal documents to cross the border. The Chaman border was closed from 24th to 26th February due to clashes on the border between the Afghan Taliban and Pakistani forces. However, the border was reopened on the 27 February. CAA issued revised guidelines for inbound travel abolishing the requirement for a PCR test for fully vaccinated individuals. However, non-vaccinated inbound passengers will be required to possess a mandatory negative PCR test result conducted within the 72 hours prior to commencement of travel to Pakistan. Moreover passengers between the age of 12 and 18 may travel to Pakistan without proof of COVID-19 vaccination upto March 31, 2022."

Aljazeera, [Afghans with correct legal documents may travel abroad: Taliban](#), 2 March 2022

"The Taliban says Afghans with legal documents could travel abroad after the United States and United Kingdom raised concerns over previous comments that travel restrictions would be put in place.

"Our countrymen who have legal documents and invitation can travel abroad," spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a tweet on Tuesday, adding that his previous announcement had been aimed at concerns over Afghans leaving without legal documents and travelling with smugglers."

"We expect that unchanged rules mean that there is no new requirement for women leaving Afghanistan to be accompanied by a male guardian," Shorter added."

Reuters, [Fresh clashes on Pakistan-Afghanistan border kill two, wound several](#), 25 February 2022

"Clashes between Afghan and Pakistani security forces have killed two people and wounded several in a border region of the two neighbours, officials said, the latest in a series of such skirmishes.

The forces started exchanging fire in a dispute over the setting up of a military check post in a southwestern border area that divides Chaman and Spin Boldak districts, three security officials told Reuters."

UNHCR Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP), [FLASH EXTERNAL UPDATE: AFGHANISTAN SITUATION #14](#), 22 February 2022

"In Pakistan, border entry at Torkham is limited to those with valid passports and visas. Afghans in critical medical condition with one caretaker at Torkham and two caretakers at Chaman are allowed to enter Pakistan without visas on humanitarian grounds at both border crossings. At Chamam border, Afghans with Tazkiras from neighbouring districts are also allowed to cross in Chamam."

UNHCR, [Pakistan: New Arrivals from Afghanistan Update \(7 February 2022\)](#), 11 February 2022

[UNHCR notes that it does not provide an overview of the overall flow of border movements and does not claim to quantify the total number of new arrivals in Pakistan during the reporting period]

International Crisis Group, [Pakistan's Hard Policy Choices in Afghanistan](#), 4 February 2022

"The Chaman-Spin Boldak crossing has been closed twice. In mid-July 2021, with uncertainty looming over the Afghan conflict's outcome, the Pakistani military, which had replaced paramilitary forces along the border, closed the crossing after the Taliban captured it. Pakistan soon reopened it for trade and to allow stranded Pakistani and Afghan citizens to return home. Taliban authorities then closed their side on 5 October, demanding visa-free travel on the basis of national identity documents for Afghan citizens. Islamabad was hesitant to acquiesce, concerned that Pakistani militants would exploit the absence of verification to enter Pakistani territory. The crossing reopened on 2 November after almost a month; Pakistani authorities agreed to allow Kandahar's residents to enter Pakistan, while Afghanistan allowed Pakistani residents in Balochistan's Qila Abdullah and Chaman districts to cross the border

solely on the basis of national identity documents. The accord was a slightly expanded version of “easement rights” granted to Pashtun tribes whose traditional lands this border cleaves in two.

Pakistan briefly closed the Torkham border crossing as well in mid-July, citing the need to contain the spread of COVID-19. The Taliban also sporadically shut this crossing the following month, reportedly to discourage thousands of Afghans hoping to leave the country. While Torkham is now open, Afghans entering Pakistani territory must have valid visas; such movement is also monitored by Pakistani authorities."

Australia – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, [DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan](#), 25 January 2022

"Afghan citizens are required to present their passports with valid visas for movement across the Pakistan-Afghanistan border but, in practice, tighter restrictions since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021 mean that even Afghans holding a valid Pakistan visa have often not been able to enter. A fence has been built along the border, but the length of the border and the rugged terrain mean that, in practice, undocumented movement occurs. Pakistani citizens from the Shi'a-majority Kurram Agency have historically transited through Afghanistan to reach Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Peshawar) to avoid militant groups in Kurram and Orakzai agencies. This has become harder following the fencing of the border. Cross-border back-and-forth movement by holders of tazkiras (Afghan identity documents from Kandahar/Spin Boldak) occurs. Border crossings open and close frequently.

...With the Taliban's seizure of power in Afghanistan in August 2021, there was a surge in Afghans seeking to cross into Pakistan. Pakistan tightened border restrictions, requiring valid visas or permission letters to cross the border. It discontinued accepting some documentation such as gate passes and Afghan identity documents (tazkira) from Kandahar/Spin Boldak. The border crossings at Torkham and Chaman largely remained open, albeit with crowding on the Afghan side. Pakistan has discouraged Afghans from entering Pakistan illegally and said it would return those doing so, noting that Pakistan was not in a position to host more Afghans."

Australia – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, [DFAT THEMATIC REPORT ON POLITICAL AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN \(AUGUST 2021 TO JANUARY 2022\)](#), 14 January 2022

"With the Taliban takeover, armed conflict in Afghanistan has essentially ceased for the first time in years, and road travel across Afghanistan is possible and relatively safe for the general population compared with risks in previous years. (Specific risks remain for certain groups, including in particular women.) Sources suggest a number of Afghans have been travelling by land to the various border crossings. These crossings are sometimes open and sometimes closed, and sometimes permit only a small number of people to cross the border. Some border crossing points that are open are at risk of terrorist attack."

UNOCHA, [Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022](#), 7 January 2022

"Undocumented returnees and deportees face critical health and protection needs, including severe injuries sustained from razor wire, gunshot wounds and car accidents whilst attempting to cross the border. This group of persons may also include persons who were not able to claim international protection, even though they may have wished to do so. Deprivation of basic services, violence and coercion such as forced recruitment are all threats forcing undocumented returnees to move again through unsafe and irregular pathways. For those undocumented persons, protection risks have escalated as outward movement picked up pace through unofficial crossing points with particular focus on Nimroz, Hirat and Kandahar provinces as a departure point. The record numbers of undocumented returnees continue to strain resources at Afghanistan's official borders, creating worrying downstream impacts for families who rely on remittances to survive."

IPC, Pakistan – [Balochistan, IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis](#), December 2021

"The current situation in Afghanistan is another factor that cannot be ruled out as Pishin, Killa Abdullah, Nushki and Chagai districts are all bordering Afghanistan, whereas Chagai, Washuk, Panjgur and Kech are bordering Iran. Formal and informal trade takes place between Pakistan and Afghanistan and Iran through Chaman, Taftaan and a porous border. However, after the closure and fencing of the border, the livelihoods of the communities are affected. The emerging conditions in Afghanistan may also push refugees to these areas."

Deutsche Welle, [Afghanistan: How a remote border crossing provides a lifeline for traders and nomads](#), 25 November 2021

"There are no systematic controls in place at Afghanistan's border crossings. At the Angoor Ada crossing, several vehicles and people enter Afghanistan without any check.

The Taliban lack the means to check all vehicles and persons thoroughly. Out of the handful of pedestrians who cross the border, several have no ID cards with them, but still manage to enter the country.

Tribespeople whose homeland straddles both countries don't recognize the Afghanistan-Pakistan border; they have crisscrossed it without papers for centuries. This has also been a major problem for the United States in tracking the movement of militants between Afghanistan and Pakistan."

FP, [Afghan Refugees Get Cold Welcome in Pakistan](#), 22 November 2021

"Official movement between Afghanistan and Pakistan's 1,640-mile border goes through two crossings: Torkham in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and Chaman in Pakistan's Balochistan province. The Torkham border only allows passage for Afghans with valid visas and for those seeking medical care, although doctors said this has become more difficult. Chaman, which usually allows visa-free transit for Afghans from certain border areas, has been intermittently closed for months.

Most of Pakistan's border with Afghanistan is fenced and manned by the army and other paramilitary forces. Still, Afghans are finding their way into Pakistan at the risk of being sent back. Qader's family paid for identity cards that said they were from Afghanistan's Kandahar district, which allowed them to pass through at Chaman according to border conventions there."

How do Taliban and/or armed groups at checkpoints affect free movement to Pakistan?

Committee to Protect Journalists, Taliban fighter beats freelance journalist Sadaqat Ghorzang at Afghanistan-Pakistan border crossing, 25 October 2021

"[...] a Taliban fighter patrolling the Torkham border crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan in the Nangarhar province of eastern Afghanistan beat freelance reporter Sadaqat Ghorzang on his head and arm with a rifle while he was on assignment for privately owned broadcaster TOLONews reporting about Afghans attempting to cross the border into Pakistan, according to a report by TOLONews and Ghorzang, who spoke with CPJ via phone."

Documentation

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, [Flash External Update: Afghanistan Situation #13](#), 15 January 2022

"Basic needs cited by those newly arriving Afghans interviewed in Iran and Pakistan include access to shelter, livelihoods, food and documentation, with a large majority of those undocumented Afghans in Iran also citing concerns regarding detention and forced return."

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA), [Hadis Afghanfar living in Toronto with grandparents while parents stuck in Pakistan](#), 19 May 2022

"Hadis's parents have been working with immigration consultant Kimia Moshiri since October to get the rest of the family to Canada. They were able to cross the border into Pakistan in January but since then, they've been waiting

for temporary resident visas from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Moshiri says they've already completed the mandatory paperwork, and gotten mandatory fingerprint ID and retinal scans but they were told by IRCC that their application had been placed on hold.

"No matter how many times we follow up with IRCC or call, we're just getting automated replies," she said.

"There's really no one to hold accountable for this case.""

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"In March 2022, Mudassar M. Javed clarified this further by giving an overview of the two scenarios: an Afghan woman who marries a Pakistan national has 'a slim chance' to get the Pakistani nationality but the 'process is lengthy and cumbersome'. The children of this couple are granted Pakistani citizenship if they do not have another citizenship already. By marrying a Pakistani national, the Afghan woman 'enters a new world since the Pakistani national has roots in the system and can take use of all the same opportunities as any other citizen'. An Afghan man marrying a Pakistani woman will not be granted Pakistani nationality."

"According to the Directorate General of Immigration and Passports (DGIP) which operates under the Pakistani Ministry of Interior (MoI), women who are married to Pakistani citizens and want to apply for Pakistani citizenship have to submit form 'F' to the relevant Home Departments at the headquarters in Islamabad or to the Regional Passport Offices at the provincial headquarters in Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar or Quetta and include:

- a copy of the Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC) and the passport of the husband
- one affidavit of the applicant and one of the husband, in which the 'facts of the case' are stated
- the submission fee of 200 Pakistani rupees (approximately EUR 1187F 187)
- two certificates in which the particulars are verified by class one officers
- a photocopy of the applicant's passport, the marriage certificate (nikah nama) and an evidence of a stay of five years in Pakistan in the aggregate as well as ten photos."

"According to information in the aforementioned form 'F', the form itself has to be handed in quadruplicate (plus a photocopy of the domicile certificate of the applicant's husband) and all the aforementioned documents have to be attested by an oath commissioner or a notary public. In contrast to the information on the DGIP website, form 'F' states that applicants have to hand in only six photographs. They have to have a light blue background, be in passport size and colored. One of the photos needs to be attested on the front and the others on the back. Women who are nationals of a country which is not a member of the Commonwealth have to further hand in their own domicile certificate and an oath of allegiance on 20 Pakistani rupees (approximately EUR 0.11) stamp paper, which has to be attested by a first class magistrate. In an undated article, the newspaper Dawn reported on an Afghan refugee woman who cited a NADRA official stating that 'dozens of female Afghan refugees fake a marriage in order to get a CNIC.' In 2016, the GoP announced its decision to repatriate the Afghan refugees, which complicated the situation for Afghans married to Pakistanis. The NADRA also blocked the identity cards of Afghan women who married Pakistani men."

See also: (1) Registration process and renewal, modification, and replacement of PoR cards; (2) Access to documents"

"Undocumented Afghans have limited access to housing.67F 663 When trying to get access to housing and property, they are vulnerable to exploitation.68F 664 As Mielke and her co-authors noted, a regulation of the Punjab provincial government 'punishes landlords who rent out to undocumented Afghans unless the Afghans provide an affidavit to the police, which can only be approved with proof of registration as PoR card- or ACC-holder. Large numbers of Afghans have little access to formal housing and live in katchi abadis (informal settlements) where they lack housing security, a study of Refugees in Towns found in September 2019."

WFP, [Global Report on Food Crises – 2022](#), 4 May 2022

"Despite the high degree of acceptance, Afghan refugees and Afghans of other status in Pakistan have several multifaceted protection needs. These include the need for access to registration and documentation to enjoy basic rights, to facilitate access to services, and to mitigate the risk of arrest and detention (UNCHR, January 2022). Around 54 percent of registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan are children and 22 percent are women. Violence against children and gender-based violence are largely under-reported, and access to justice for refugee girls and women is often impeded by the lack of family/community support. Intimate partner violence, child, early and forced marriage

and denial of resources, services, and opportunities are prevalent (UNCHR, January 2022). Gender inequalities result in lower levels of education, fewer work opportunities and lower levels of participation in decisionmaking processes and community-based planning. Children without documentation, including those whose births have not been registered, are also particularly vulnerable to trafficking and being detained and prosecuted as adults (UNCHR, January 2022)." **"Acute food insecurity forecast, 2022:** Although the security situation is stable in most districts of Balochistan, instability in a few districts, such as Kech, Panjgur and Killa Abdullah, might have adverse implications for food security. Khyber Pakhtunkwa is stable in most districts, but given its geographic situation and history, insecurity cannot be ruled out, which may result in a curfew-like situation and restriction of movement (IPC, December 2021). Any new influx of refugees fleeing instability in Afghanistan may directly affect the existing resources of local communities in districts bordering Afghanistan (UNHCR, February 2022)."

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan State of Human Rights in 2021](#), 29 April 2022

"Following the takeover of Kabul by the Afghan Taliban, there was an influx of Afghan refugees, many of whom reported instances of harassment, such as border officials extorting money and refusing entry. [...] Cumbersome documentation requirements led to slower processing of visas and transit. [...] In August, the Taliban seized power in Kabul amid a chaotic pull-out by the international community and exodus of both wealthy and poor Afghans. Thousands of refugees transited through Pakistan with the wealthiest of them arriving by air in Islamabad and moving out to third countries. Over the last few months of 2021, thousands of refugees streamed through Peshawar into KP. The authorities seemingly kept the transit controlled by issuing visas to them on arrival. In September, the federal interior minister refuted reports that Pakistan had set up refugee camps along the Afghan border. He said that in the three weeks after the Taliban takeover, about 4,000 Afghans had entered Pakistan with valid travel documents and while an equal number of Afghans returned to their country. He said Pakistan had helped evacuate over 10,000 international and Afghan residents from Kabul on humanitarian grounds and offered to issue 30-day transit visas to anyone seeking to travel beyond Pakistan. [...]

In August a report by Dawn said that many Afghans seeking to return home after the Taliban takeover were facing multiple tiers of the immigration process, operated by at least three departments—including the Federal Investigation Agency, NADRA and National Logistics Cell—at the Torkham border. It said the returnees were being asked to pay bribes ranging from PKR5,000–30,000 for prompt passage. Another media report in October referenced Afghans living at Gohati and Gandaf refugee camps as saying they had no plans to return to Afghanistan until peace was restored. The two camps housed around 60,000 Afghans before the Taliban takeover but the number had gone up due to the arrival of their relatives and other groups. [...] Despite the state's assurances that Afghan refugees would be given asylum, reports of harassment of refugees from the border and cumbersome documentation requirements were a cause of concern for civil society. [...] After the Taliban occupation of Kabul, the state made assurances that Afghan refugees would be granted asylum and their visa requirements eased; however, reports of harassment at the border became cause for concern. [...] On 13 October, Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry announced that the government had approved a code of conduct for visa issuance to Afghan nationals, thereby easing visa restrictions to encourage their legal entry. The visa process for Afghan nationals was also made available online for those wishing to seek a visa from the Pakistan Embassy in Kabul. [...] Afghan citizens were recently allowed to obtain permission letters or cards from the Ministry of Interior in Islamabad while in Afghanistan, which is impractical. HRCP urges the government to hasten the paperwork needed to secure safe transit and visas for asylum seekers. The government should also take UNHCR on board so that an easy and effective registration policy can be initiated without delay."

IOM, [Flow Monitoring of Undocumented Afghan Returnees from Pakistan \(9 – 22 April 2022\)](#), 29 April 2022

"From 09 April to 22 April 2022, 893 undocumented Afghan migrants returned to Afghanistan, including 72 through the Torkham border point and 821 through the Chaman border point. During the reporting period, border authorities

facilitated the return of 111 individuals due to the lack of legal documentation to remain in Pakistan. Therefore, information concerning these 111 individuals is not included in the report analysis."

UNHCR, [Flash External Update: Afghanistan Situation #16](#), 15 April 2022

"In Pakistan, at Torkham border point, entry is limited to those Afghans with valid passports and visas. Children under the age of eight can now cross into Pakistan through Torkham without passports or visas, and up to 100 undocumented Afghan medical patients are permitted to enter each day. At Chamam border –the other main border crossing point between Pakistan and Afghanistan – entry is restricted to passport holders with valid visas, Tazkira holders from Kandahar province, persons with serious medical conditions and CNIC holders. Since early April, the exit of Afghans on Tazkira through Torkham border has not been permitted by the authorities. However, Afghans can exit to Afghanistan on ACC, PoR cards and visas. In addition, some exceptions are applied to allow critical health and other humanitarian cases who entered into Pakistan with Tazikras to travel back to Pakistan."

UNHCR, [Report on the humanitarian and human rights situation of Afghan refugees in Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan](#), 31 March 2022

"Most notably, access to registration and documentation which would enable them to enjoy basic rights, facilitate access to services, and mitigate the risk of arrest and detention. Moreover, such access would protect against refoulement. Between September and November, 1,800 Afghans - predominantly undocumented Afghans, including some new arrivals – were reportedly deported. Among new arrivals: approximately 20 per cent reported a specific need and of this subset: 29 per cent had serious medical needs; 16 per cent had disabilities; 14 per cent were women-at-risk; 11 per cent were single parents; and 8 per cent were children-at-risk. The top concerns for the new arrivals residing in Pakistan were access to shelter (87 per cent), livelihoods (82 per cent), food (78 per cent) and medical assistance (42 per cent)"

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs News, [294 Afghans destined for the Netherlands arrive in Pakistan](#), 23 February 2022

"Over the past few days, 294 Afghans ultimately destined for the Netherlands have arrived in Pakistan. Some of the individuals and families concerned are not in possession of valid travel documents. The Pakistani authorities have made an exception for this specific group of people and have given permission for them to travel to the Netherlands via Pakistan...Following intensive diplomatic talks, Pakistan offered the Netherlands the opportunity to submit a list of Afghans who were eligible to be brought to the Netherlands but who were not in possession of valid travel documents. With the consent of those involved, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs submitted the names to the Pakistani authorities in November. During a recent visit to Pakistan by the Ministry's Secretary-General Paul Huijts, following a telephone conversation between Minister Hoekstra and his Pakistani counterpart, the green light was given...The group consists of a number of Dutch residents, Afghans who have performed high-profile duties for the Netherlands as interpreters or other officials in an international military or police mission, Afghan NGO staff covered by the special provisions as set out in the letter to parliament of 11 October 2021 and members of their immediate families. In January, the Netherlands was granted permission by the Pakistani authorities to allow the first group of 35 Afghans to enter the country without valid travel documents. Most of them were able to travel to the Netherlands on a German charter flight via Hannover last Friday.

For the time being, it is not possible to help other Afghans who are eligible to be brought to the Netherlands but have no passport. The Dutch government is continuing to seek a solution and advises people in the meantime to apply for a passport wherever possible. It is impossible to say exactly how many Afghans are still eligible for travel to the Netherlands as assessments are still being carried out in various parts of the Dutch government."

Australia – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, [DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan](#), 25 January 2022

"PoR and ACC cards are valid forms of identification for Afghans living in Pakistan."

Many younger Afghans were born in Pakistan. In 2018, Prime Minister Imran Khan declared that the children of Afghans and other refugees who were born in Pakistan were constitutionally entitled to citizenship, but in practice NADRA continues to refuse to issue identity cards for these people.

The border between Pakistan and Afghanistan is porous and, given the high rate of document fraud, it can be difficult to verify whether someone is a Pakistani or an Afghan national. The legal status of Afghans in Pakistan varies. Some hold documents issued by the Pakistani government, while others are registered as refugees or asylum seekers with the UNHCR. Many are completely undocumented.

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 the UNHCR under Pakistani refugee laws. PoR holders are entitled to stay temporarily in Pakistan, enjoy freedom of movement, and have access to public health and education. They can rent property, open bank accounts and register births.

In 2017, the government launched a further, six-month program to register undocumented Afghans by issuing them with a new Afghan Citizenship Card (ACC). The ACC is a temporary identity document for Afghans without other forms of identification and offers far more limited benefits than the PoR. ACC holders are entitled to stay temporarily in Pakistan and have freedom of movement but cannot access public health services or public education. Like PoR holders, they cannot legally work and, while many do work in the informal economy, they are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. During the registration period any self-declared Afghan could apply for an ACC, but PoR card holders and single males under 18 were excluded.

Many Afghan refugees in Pakistan hold neither an ACC nor PoR. Some are registered as refugees or asylum seekers with the UNHCR and can legally stay temporarily in Pakistan, although this is not always understood or respected by security forces. Afghans registered with the UNHCR can theoretically rent property, register births and access health services and education, but this usually requires intervention by the UNHCR and is unattainable for many. Others have no Pakistani or UNHCR documents, although they may hold a *tazkira* (Afghan national identity document) or Afghan passport. These undocumented Afghans are in breach of the Foreigners Act, 1946 and are liable to arrest, detention and deportation."

UNHCR – UN Refugee Agency, [Pakistan Country Factsheet \(January 2022\)](#), 14 January 2022

"The Documentation Renewal and Information Verification Exercise (DRIVE) successfully concluded its implementation phase on 31 December 2021. The final phase will be undertaken in the first quarter of 2022, including evaluation, data clean-up and reporting. A limited grace period will also be offered in January and February, during which any eligible applications who were unable to participate during the implementation phase may still be processed. New smart identity cards are being issued as part of this exercise. These cards, known as Proof of Registration (PoR) cards serve as an identity and residency document. DRIVE has been undertaken by the Government of Pakistan - the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), the Chief Commissioner for Afghan Refugees (CCAR), and the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) - with the support of UNHCR. It was designed to confirm and update government data relating to the registered Afghan refugees living in Pakistan, and to address the need for new identity documents by issuing biometric smartcards to all eligible refugees.

Pakistan does not have a national asylum system in place nor is it signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention. As such, UNHCR conducts registration of persons with heightened protection needs. In line with the registration strategy, the first step of the procedure envisages pre-screening of the applicants to ascertain their protection needs and risk profiles. In this way, the office prioritizes registration of those with sensitive refugee claims, minorities, children-at-risk, older persons-at-risk, single parents, persons with disabilities, GBV survivors, women-at-risk and those with specific and legal protection needs. Documentation is issued once the registration process is completed. Pakistan generally accepts UNHCR decisions to grant refugee status and allows asylum-seekers to remain in Pakistan pending identification of a durable solution."

UNHCR – UN Refugee Agency, [Pakistan concludes 'drive' to issue smartcards to registered Afghan refugees](#), 4 January 2022

"The data of 1.25 million Afghan refugees was updated and expanded as a result of the campaign, officially known as the documentation renewal and information verification exercise (DRIVE). Among them were 200,000 children under the age of five who were registered by their refugee parents.

More than 700,000 new smart identity cards have also been issued to date. The remaining cards will be printed and distributed in early 2022.

These cards, which will be valid until 30 June 2023, contain biometric data and are technologically compatible with systems used in Pakistan to authenticate the identities of nationals.

The new smart identity cards are an essential protection tool for Afghan refugees and give them faster and safer access to health and education facilities and to banking services."

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, [Bridging the Gaps - Migration Management and Policy Options for Afghan Refugees in Pakistan](#), December 2021

"More than 800,000 undocumented Afghans were also given Afghan Citizen Cards (ACC) by the Government of Pakistan, which protected the ACC holders against refoulement, and were valid for six months allowing Afghans to apply for an Afghan passport, and eventually a visa for staying in Pakistan (Mielke et al., 2021). The introduction of ACCs was another effort at registration of Afghans with the objective of surveillance as the core driving force. In addition, as the ACCs did not offer de facto protection as refugees, many Afghans were reluctant to sign up because of fear of being deported. Moreover, the Afghan Government also struggled to provide Afghan passports to the ACC holders in Pakistan, which further led to the lack of success of the ACC scheme. Currently, there is an ongoing process of offering new PoR cards to Afghan refugees which require biometric registration. While a number of benefits are associated with the biometric verification such as easy access to services, the essence of the biometric feature is enhanced security and surveillance of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Moreover, the validity dates and delays in extensions for the PoR cards and ACC registrations have dire consequences for the access to social services for the Afghans in Pakistan, including for health, education, the right to work, open a bank account, have a driving licence, own a SIM card, mobility, and renting arrangements (Mielke et al., 2021)."

Legal status (including access to citizenship) of Afghan asylum seekers in Pakistan

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

[Javed, M.M., email, 2 March 2022; Javed, M.M., email, 3 March 2022]

"In March 2022, Mudassar M. Javed clarified this further by giving an overview of the two scenarios: an Afghan woman who marries a Pakistan national has 'a slim chance' to get the Pakistani nationality but the 'process is lengthy and cumbersome'. The children of this couple are granted Pakistani citizenship if they do not have another citizenship already. By marrying a Pakistani national, the Afghan woman 'enters a new world since the Pakistani national has roots in the system and can take use of all the same opportunities as any other citizen'. An Afghan man marrying a Pakistani woman will not be granted Pakistani nationality"

Ministry of Interior, Directorate General of Immigration & Passports, Government of Pakistan, [Grant of Pakistan Citizenship](#), 2022

Pakistan, [Pakistan Citizenship Act, 1951, 13 April 1951](#)

"Article 4 of the Pakistan Citizenship Act, 1951 stipulates that: '4. Citizenship by birth. Every person born in Pakistan after the commencement of this Act shall be a citizen of Pakistan by birth: Provided that a person shall not be such a citizen by virtue of this section if at the time of his birth: (a) his father possesses such immunity from suit and legal process as is accorded to an envoy of an external sovereign power accredited in Pakistan and is not a citizen of Pakistan; or (b) his father is an enemy alien and the birth occurs in a place then under occupation by the enemy.'"

[Article 10(2) of the Pakistan Citizenship Act 1951 provides that a foreign woman may acquire citizenship through marriage to a Pakistani man]

“10. Married women. (1) Any woman who by reason of her marriage to a [British subject] before the first day of January, 1949, has acquired the status of a British subject shall, if her husband becomes a citizen of Pakistan, be a citizen of Pakistan. (2) Subject to the provisions of sub-section (1) and subsection (4) a woman who has been married to a citizen of Pakistan or to a person who but for his death would have been a citizen of Pakistan under section 3, 4 or 5 shall be entitled, on making application therefore to the Federal Government in the prescribed manner, add, if she is an alien, on obtaining a certificate of domicile and taking the oath of allegiance in the form set out in the Schedule to this Act, to be registered as a citizen of Pakistan whether or not she has completed twenty-one years of her age and is of full capacity. (3) Subject as aforesaid, a woman who has been married to a person who, but for his death, could have been a citizen of Pakistan under the provisions of sub-section (1) of section 6 (whether the migrated is provided in that sub-section or is deemed under the proviso to section 7 to have so migrated) shall be entitled as provided in sub-section (2) subject further, if she is an alien, to her obtaining the certificate and taken the oath therein mentioned. (4) A person who has ceased to be citizen of Pakistan under section 14 or who has been deprived of citizenship of Pakistan under this Act shall not be entitled to be registered as a citizen thereof under this section but may be registered with the previous consent of the Federal Government.”

New York Times, [Born and Raised in Pakistan, but Living in Legal Limbo](#), 28 December 2021

“Pakistan has refused to grant the children of Afghan refugees full rights as citizens. A lack of identification documents limits their livelihoods and puts them at risk of deportation.”

Dawn, [Peshawar High Court seeks govt response to plea against Citizenship Act](#), 4 December 2021

“The Peshawar High Court has admitted to full hearing a petition against the Citizenship Act’s provision, which allows the country’s citizenship for the foreign wives of Pakistani men and not the foreign husbands of Pakistani women. [...] The lawyer said the petitioner’s husband had been working in Kuwait for a long time and he had only been granted Pakistani visa for a short period of one month or so to visit his family. He said that the woman’s husband had not been given an appointment in Kuwait for visa due to Covid-19 pandemic, so he could not visit his family. Mr Kakakhel contended that the petitioner had visited the Nadra and immigration offices to seek citizenship for her husband, but was told that Section 10(2) of the law applied only to the foreign wife of a Pakistani citizen. He contended that the Federal Shariat Court had declared in 2008 the impugned provision repugnant to the injunctions of the Holy Quran and Sunnah, and called it discriminatory, against gender equality, and a violation of articles 2(a) and 25 of the Constitution. The counsel argued that Pakistan was home to millions of refugees from Afghanistan, who shared the same culture and language, and a large number of them had contracted marriages with Pakistanis especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, but only the spouses of men are granted nationality of Pakistan and Pakistani women were deprived of the same. He referred to several international conventions to which Pakistan is a signatory, including Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and said by not amending the Citizenship Act, the government had been violating all those international laws, which declared that there should be no discrimination on basis of gender. The respondents in the petition are Nadra through its director-general, interior ministry through its secretary, and directorate-general of immigration and passport through its director-general.”

Dawn, [Woman moves PHC against denial of citizenship to Afghan husband](#), 29 October 2021

“A Pakistani woman on Thursday moved the Peshawar High Court requesting it to declare unconstitutional a provision of the Pakistan Citizenship Act, 1951, which allows citizenship to the foreign wife of a Pakistani man but does not extend the same to the foreign husband of a Pakistani woman. In the petition, Peshawar resident Sameena Roohi sought the court’s orders for the respondents, including interior ministry and National Database and Registration Authority, to grant citizenship to her Afghan husband, Naseer Mohammad. She claimed that the law discriminated against the country’s women citizens. The petitioner requested the court to declare unconstitutional and discriminatory Section 10(2) of the Citizenship Act, under which the wife of a Pakistani resident is entitled to the country’s citizenship but the same is denied to the foreign husband of a Pakistani woman. She sought orders to declare that Section 10(2) of the Citizenship Act was not brought in conformity with the fundamental rights within two years of the commencement of the Constitution, which was a mandatory requirement under Article 8(4) of the Constitution. The petition is filed through senior lawyer Saifullah Muhib Kakakhel and Mehwish Muhib Kakakhel. The petitioner contended that Section 10(2) of the law was discriminatory and didn’t treat men and women equally. The

respondents in the petition are Nadra through its director-general, interior ministry through its secretary, and directorate-general of immigration and passport through its director general. The petitioner said she belonged to a respectable family, was married to an Afghan national, Naseer Mohammad, in 1985 and had five children from the marriage and they all were Pakistani nationals. She said her husband had been working in Kuwait for a long time and he had only been granted Pakistani visa for a short period of one month or so to visit his family. The woman claimed that her husband had not been given an appointment in Kuwait for visa due to Covid-19 pandemic, so he could not visit his family. She said she had visited the Nadra and immigration offices seeking citizenship for her husband, but was told that Section 10(2) of the law applied only to the foreign wife of a Pakistani man. The petitioner contended that the Federal Shariat Court had declared in 2008 the impugned provision repugnant to the injunctions of the Holy Quran and Sunnah, and called it discriminatory, against gender equality and a violation of Articles 2(a) and 25 of the Constitution. She said Pakistan was home to millions of refugees from Afghanistan, who shared the same culture, language, etc. and large number of them had contracted marriages with Pakistanis especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, but only the spouses of men are granted nationality of Pakistan and Pakistani women were deprived of the same. The petitioner also referred to several international conventions, to which Pakistan was signatory including Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and said by not amending the Citizenship Act, the government had been violating all those international laws, which declared that there should be no discrimination on basis of gender."

How do people obtain ID, birth registrations, passports and visas in Pakistan?

Gandhara, [Gandhara Briefing: Pakistani Visas, Taliban Taxes, Afghan Bodybuilders](#), 17 June 2022

"Radio Mashaal and Radio Azadi report on the thriving black market for Pakistani visas in Afghanistan, which can cost up to \$1,000. The exorbitant prices line the pockets of corrupt Pakistani officials and their Afghan go-betweens. There is no shortage of Afghans willing to do whatever it takes to flee Taliban persecution and the economic meltdown in their homeland.

"People can get a monthlong visa by paying \$300, a five-month visa for \$500, and \$700 for a yearlong visa," said Farhad Salehi, a resident of Herat who has already spent \$500 in bribes without success.

Pakistani officials have clamped down on corruption and fired 12 embassy staff during the past three months. A senior embassy official told us that the employees were sacked after a "thorough investigation" that established that they were "minting money from Afghans."

Islamabad has also unveiled a new visa policy, making it easier for Afghans seeking asylum in Western countries to transit through Pakistan."

Ariana News, [Pakistan PM approves on arrival transit visas for Afghans](#), 13 June 2022

"Pakistan's Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif has approved a new on arrival visa policy for Afghan nationals going abroad via Pakistan, local media reported on Saturday.

Salman Sufi, head of the Prime Minister's Strategic Reforms Initiatives, said that under the new policy a transit visa of 30 days would be issued within 24 hours by the Pakistan government to Afghan nationals, Dawn newspaper reported."

UNOCHA, [Pakistan Humanitarian Response Plan 2021](#), 9 June 2022

"Pakistan has hosted millions of Afghan refugees for 40 years, reaching the figure of 4-5 million at the peak. Pakistan continues to generously host some 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees (holding Proof of Registration (POR) cards issued by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan), and approximately 0.6 million unregistered Afghans, providing them with assistance, basic necessities and protection. This protracted refugee situation, together with the existence of Afghans of other categories, needs to be supported by the international community in line with more equitable responsibility-sharing central to the Global Compact on Refugees. [...] Out of the 11 million people

identified as in need in the 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview, the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan will target the most vulnerable 4.3 million people out of this group, including 1.4 million Afghan refugees (POR card holders), approximately 0.84 million Afghan Citizenship Card Holders (ACC) and between 0.4-0.6 million unregistered Afghans,⁵ who mainly live within the most vulnerable districts, with food security, livelihood, nutrition programmes, primary health services, including women's health, WASH and education support, as well as shelter for those displaced. To do this, the HRP is requesting 332 million USD to respond to these humanitarian needs."

Gandhara, [Afghan Musicians Who Fled Taliban Face Deportation From Pakistan](#), 3 June 2022

"Zaryali is among the hundreds of Afghan musicians who have fled to neighboring Pakistan since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. Soon after seizing power in August, the Taliban outlawed music and footage emerged of its fighters publicly beating and humiliating musicians and burning their instruments. The incidents have confirmed the worst fears of Afghan artists, who have said the Taliban is treating musicians with the same disdain it had shown during its first stint in power in the 1990s when it banned music as "un-Islamic." But even in Pakistan, Afghan musicians say they are not safe. Authorities have cracked down on undocumented Afghan migrants and refugees and deported them back to Afghanistan. Pakistan, which already hosts over 1 million Afghans, has been keen to avoid another major influx of refugees. Police in the northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa recently arrested four Afghan musicians for living illegally in the country. The arrests in the provincial capital, Peshawar, triggered protests by Pakistani musicians and activists who urged authorities not to deport them over fears for their safety. [...] The singer says many Afghan musicians in Peshawar, located near the Afghan border, are afraid to go outside and remain largely confined to their temporary accommodations. "Some of them have expired passports while others have expired visas," said Zaryali. "They cannot perform or find any work. They live in fear of being deported back to a country where they cannot live safely because their lives are in danger. [...] Even as authorities have cracked down on undocumented Afghans, some Pakistani musicians and activists have stage rallies in support of Afghan musicians."

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA), [Hadis Afghanfar living in Toronto with grandparents while parents stuck in Pakistan](#), 19 May 2022

"Hadis's parents have been working with immigration consultant Kimia Moshiri since October to get the rest of the family to Canada. They were able to cross the border into Pakistan in January but since then, they've been waiting for temporary resident visas from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Moshiri says they've already completed the mandatory paperwork, and gotten mandatory fingerprint ID and retinal scans but they were told by IRCC that their application had been placed on hold.

"No matter how many times we follow up with IRCC or call, we're just getting automated replies," she said.

"There's really no one to hold accountable for this case."

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"A report by the Danish Refugee Council stated in September 2018 that the Government of Pakistan distinguishes between refugees with a recognised status, meaning the Proof of Registration (PoR) cardholders or RIC holders] and those without this status. This differentiation is relevant to the protection, the rights and assistance that Afghan refugees receive and are entitled to, even though officially no rights other than protection from refoulement are attached to the status of being a PoR cardholder."

"As reported by the U.S. magazine Foreign Policy in November 2021, Pakistan has not registered any new refugees since 2007, despite UNHCR being present in the country. According to a study published by the Afghan Displacement Solution Platform (ADSP) in June 2019, UNHCR did not conduct group status determination or grant prima facie status to Afghans in Pakistan, instead, most Afghan refugees were left in legal limbo. Until 2006, Afghan refugees in Pakistan did not need to be in possession of legal documents. In late 2006-early 2007, the Pakistani government, together with UNHCR, started the registration of Afghan refugees and issuance of PoR cards. The PoR cardholders are considered as registered refugees. In addition to this group, the Afghan population living in Pakistan can be divided into three additional categories: Afghan Citizens Cards (ACC) holders, undocumented Afghans and visa holders. In 2017, Pakistan started issuing ACC to document a part of the unregistered Afghan refugees as a means of indefinitely legalising their stay without granting them refugee status. Still, there were also undocumented Afghan refugees who were not in possession of any Pakistani documents. (For more information on the various registration

and documentation exercises, please see section 2 Documentation of registered and unregistered Afghan refugees.) Another category of Afghans living in Pakistan were the ones holding an Afghan passport with a Pakistani visa (e.g. study or work). Figure 1 shows the four main categories of Afghans living in Pakistan according to their legal status as described by the study of ADSP."

Regarding the legal situation of Afghans arriving in Pakistan after August 2021, refugee rights advocates reported in November 2021 that the lack of policies for new arrivals made it difficult for aid organisations to assist them. As a result, many new arriving Afghans had to rely on informal networks and try to keep a low profile for fear of being stopped by Pakistani authorities."

"There is no legal provision that deals with the citizenship of refugees and especially, Afghan refugees in Pakistan. The status of citizenship is not extended to Afghan refugees in Pakistan even if a child of an Afghan refugee is born in Pakistan. Some Afghan refugees sought to become naturalised citizens in Pakistan, but their requests were rejected at administrative and judicial levels. The Express Tribune reported in March 2020 that an Afghan refugee has filed a petition in the Islamabad High Court (IHC) appealing for Pakistani citizenship on the basis of Article 4 of the Pakistani Citizenship Act, 1951. Within the time constraints of this report, no information could be found on the progress or outcome of the petition."

"According to the study of ADSP, Afghan refugees who fulfil the criteria have not been granted naturalisation at discretion of the Federal government."

WFP, [Global Report on Food Crises – 2022](#), 4 May 2022

"Despite the high degree of acceptance, Afghan refugees and Afghans of other status in Pakistan have several multifaceted protection needs. These include the need for access to registration and documentation to enjoy basic rights, to facilitate access to services, and to mitigate the risk of arrest and detention (UNCHR, January 2022). Around 54 percent of registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan are children and 22 percent are women. [...] Children without documentation, including those whose births have not been registered, are also particularly vulnerable to trafficking and being detained and prosecuted as adults (UNCHR, January 2022)."

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan State of Human Rights in 2021](#), 29 April 2022

"Following the takeover of Kabul by the Afghan Taliban [...] Cumbersome documentation requirements led to slower processing of visas and transit. [...] Over the last few months of 2021, thousands of refugees streamed through Peshawar into KP. The authorities seemingly kept the transit controlled by issuing visas to them on arrival. In September, the federal interior minister refuted reports that Pakistan had set up refugee camps along the Afghan border. He said that in the three weeks after the Taliban takeover, about 4,000 Afghans had entered Pakistan with valid travel documents and while an equal number of Afghans returned to their country. He said Pakistan had helped evacuate over 10,000 international and Afghan residents from Kabul on humanitarian grounds and offered to issue 30-day transit visas to anyone seeking to travel beyond Pakistan. [...] In August a report by Dawn said that many Afghans seeking to return home after the Taliban takeover were facing multiple tiers of the immigration process, operated by at least three departments—including the Federal Investigation Agency, NADRA and National Logistics Cell—at the Torkham border. [...] Despite the state's assurances that Afghan refugees would be given asylum, reports of harassment of refugees from the border and cumbersome documentation requirements were a cause of concern for civil society. [...] After the Taliban occupation of Kabul, the state made assurances that Afghan refugees would be granted asylum and their visa requirements eased; however, reports of harassment at the border became cause for concern. [...] On 13 October, Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry announced that the government had approved a code of conduct for visa issuance to Afghan nationals, thereby easing visa restrictions to encourage their legal entry. The visa process for Afghan nationals was also made available online for those wishing to seek a visa from the Pakistan Embassy in Kabul. [...] Afghan citizens were recently allowed to obtain permission letters or cards from the Ministry of Interior in Islamabad while in Afghanistan, which is impractical. HRCPU urges the government to hasten the paperwork needed to secure safe transit and visas for asylum seekers. The government should also take UNHCR on board so that an easy and effective registration policy can be initiated without delay."

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA), [Some Afghan refugees settling into life in Canada, but others still stranded](#), 4 May 2022

"For former interpreter Fida and his family, a stalled application has meant eight months trapped in a room in Pakistan, their VISAs expired, desperate for any word on an escape to Canada.

"I am really concerned for future of my children," he said. "They are deprived from school, have never been to school."

Australia – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, [DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan](#), 25 January 2022

"The most reliable forms of documentation in Pakistan are passports and Computerised National Identity Cards (CNICs), predated by the MNIC (Manual National identity Card) and to be replaced by the SNIC (Smart National Identity Card). Other common forms of identification include domicile, birth, death and marriage certificates. Drivers' licences are a less reliable form of identification.

The Directorate General of Immigration and Passports issues passport documentation, and NADRA issues CNICs and SNICs. Both have offices across the country. All Pakistani citizens over the age of 18 are eligible to apply for passports and CNICs. The Pakistani government has dual nationality arrangements with 16 countries. Under Section 10 of the Citizenship Act of 1951, it is possible for foreign women to obtain Pakistani citizenship by marrying a Pakistani man, but the reverse is not true; that is, a Pakistani woman cannot transmit her citizenship to her foreign husband by marriage.

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 and no automatic registration process captures the many babies who are not born in hospital. While technically compulsory, large numbers of births are not registered. UNICEF estimated there were about 60 million unregistered children in Pakistan in 2019. 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 computerised and contain a complete birth record in English and Urdu. NADRA certificates and local government certificates are stamped and signed by local officials. Children born in Pakistan to Afghan parents can receive Pakistani birth certificates with the assistance of the UNHCR. In 2018, Prime Minister Khan declared that the children of Afghans and other refugees who were born in Pakistan were constitutionally entitled to citizenship, but in practice NADRA continues to refuse to issue identity cards for these people.

CNICs and SNICs are the most common form of identification in Pakistan. They 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 gain entry to college or university. NADRA began a program in 2012 to replace all CNICs with SNICs, with a view to completion by 2020. However, as SNICs are more expensive and are linked to other basic services such as bill payment, mail and taxation, many Pakistanis do not obtain SNICs. CNICs and SNICs both remain valid.

To obtain a CNIC or SNIC, applicants need to submit the CNIC or MNIC number of a blood relative along with their own birth certificate, school, university certificate or citizenship certificate. An applicant who was previously registered and had an MNIC is required to submit the original or a copy of their MNIC. An applicant who has turned 18 and holds a child registration certificate (CRC) must submit the CRC or a copy.

It is possible to apply for identity documents through NADRA's Pak-Identity online issuance service, but applicants seeking a CNIC for the first time are required to present in-person at any NADRA registration centre to submit their paperwork, have their photograph taken, and provide their signature and an impression of their thumb.

Applicants with an existing computerised CNIC can apply online to renew, replace or modify their CNIC, without having to attend a NADRA office, although they may be required to attend in-person to have certain documents certified. Applications to renew, replace or modify non-computerised CNICs must be made in-person at any NADRA

office. DFAT is aware of reports CNIC applicants have been told they must travel to a NADRA office in their district of origin to apply, but this is not official policy. In some cases it may be necessary for applicants to travel to their district of origin to obtain other documents required for a CNIC application. For example, a birth certificate can only be issued by the union council of the district of origin. CNICs are valid for five or ten years; CNICs issued to citizens over the age of 65 are valid for life.

NADRA can block a CNIC, PoR card or ACC for suspicious use – or allegedly for certain groups as a form of harassment, e.g. Afghans. DFAT understands individuals have found it impossible to reverse a decision to block a card, and blocking is a precursor to cancelling a card.

Pakistan issues machine-readable ordinary, official and diplomatic passports. These contain biometric and security features, including a photograph of the holder, fingerprints, and watermarks. Passports contain information about the holder's religion. Manual passports are no longer issued.

Children under 10 do not require supporting documentation to obtain a CRC, but those over 10 are required to provide a copy of a birth certificate or school record.

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, but Pakistan has no centralised criminal database, so these documents are not reliable."

UNHCR, [Asylum in Pakistan](#), undated

"If you have already applied for asylum and were part of the registration exercise done by the Government of Pakistan and were given a Proof of Registration (PoR) card, you do not need to apply for registration again. This card gives you temporary legal stay in Pakistan and freedom of movement.

The Government of Pakistan, with support from UNHCR, is currently working on the Documentation Verification and Information Verification (DRIVE) exercise. All PoR card holders verified through this exercise will receive new smart PoR cards valid for 2 years. If you have a PoR card, please follow the instructions you will receive as part of this exercise."

UNHCR, [Pakistan concludes 'drive' to issue smartcards to registered Afghan refugees](#), 4 January 2022

"UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, commends the Government of Pakistan for its country-wide campaign to verify and update the data of some 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees and to issue them with smart identity cards. Following a short pilot, the campaign, supported by UNHCR, began on 15 April 2021 and ended on 31 December 2021. It was the first large-scale verification of refugees in Pakistan in the last 10 years.

According to early provisional results, the data of 1.25 million Afghan refugees was updated and expanded as a result of the campaign, officially known as the documentation renewal and information verification exercise (DRIVE). Among them were 200,000 children under the age of five who were registered by their refugee parents.

More than 700,000 new smart identity cards have also been issued to date. The remaining cards will be printed and distributed in early 2022.

These cards, which will be valid until 30 June 2023, contain biometric data and are technologically compatible with systems used in Pakistan to authenticate the identities of nationals.

The new smart identity cards are an essential protection tool for Afghan refugees and give them faster and safer access to health and education facilities and to banking services.

DRIVE also provided an opportunity for Afghan refugees to flag any specific protection needs or vulnerabilities. More detailed information about refugees' socioeconomic data will allow for better tailored assistance in Pakistan and for support in case refugees decide to return home, when conditions allow.

Over 40 verification sites were operational across Pakistan during DRIVE, while mobile registration vans facilitated verifications for Afghan refugees living in remote areas. A mass information campaign was also carried out to explain to Afghan refugees about the purpose of the campaign and how to participate.

Strict measures were in place at all sites to mitigate COVID-19 risks through enhanced hygiene, physical distancing, and the scheduling of set numbers of appointments each day during the exercise.

DRIVE is part of a wider effort to assist and protect Afghan refugees, including through the support platform for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR). The support platform was launched in 2019 to help refugee host countries while also sought to invest in former refugee return areas in Afghanistan."

FP, [Afghan Refugees Get Cold Welcome in Pakistan](#), 22 November 2021

"For decades, Pakistan has received displaced Afghans, creating one of the most protracted refugee crises in the world; it hosts 1.4 million officially registered refugees and as many as 3.5 million displaced Afghans in total, according to government estimates. But since the Taliban takeover, Pakistan has pushed back against new arrivals from Afghanistan, tightening its border restrictions and deporting some people who have crossed over without visas. Many Afghans are being turned back from borders they previously crossed with ease. [...] Pakistan has facilitated passage for some Afghan arrivals by issuing short-term transit visas, but it has resisted addressing the humanitarian situation for those who entered the country by other means. [...] Despite the UNHCR operating there, Pakistan hasn't registered new refugees since 2007. "We are under very serious pressures," said Tammi Sharpe, a UNHCR representative during a panel last week about the Afghan crisis."

What are the Taliban's capabilities to track individuals in Pakistan?

Targeted Groups

Individuals who are critical or in opposition of the Pakistan (e.g. peaceful protesters) or those going against Pakistan's prescribed way of life

Dawn, [SAC holds protest against builders, refugee influx in Sindh](#), 6 September 2021

"Activists of Sindh United Party, Jeay Sindh Mahaz and other component parties of Sindh Action Committee protested in Sindh towns on Sunday against occupation of land by 'builder mafia' and arrival of Afghan refugees and other outsiders in the province. The nationalist parties' activists took out a motorcycle rally from Zero Point to press club in Nawabshah to record their protest against reports that Sindh government had doled out thousands of acres to builders. SUP central general secretary Roshan Ali Buriro said while speaking to protesters that nationalist parties' protest outside Bahria Town Karachi's gate on June 6 was a referendum against the Sindh government, which had registered over 30 FIRs against nationalist leaders and activists. He said that Sindh police had been turned into "Zardari's personal force", which the Pakistan Peoples Party had let loose on nationalist leaders and activists. Police had arrested a number of activists after attack on a rally in Nawabshah about five days back, he said. He announced that SUP would continue to hold more rallies and demonstrations across Sindh on Sept 8 in protest against registration of FIRs against nationalist parties' leaders and activists. Sindh Taraqqi Pasand Party chairman Dr Qadir Magsi said that Sindhis had rejected all anti-Sindh projects and their struggle for the rights of Sindh would continue. He said that since Sindh was already facing economic crisis it would not bear burden of more Afghan refugees. Sindhi people had rejected the provincial government's plans for illegally handing over land to the 'mafia', he said. JSM chairman Riaz Chandio warned PPP rulers to stop victimisation of nationalist leaders and activists. Awami Tehreek leader Sajjad Chandio, Nawaz Khan Zour of Jeay Sindh Qaumi Party, Awami Jamhoori Party's general secretary Noor Nabi Rahujo and Aslam Khairpuri of JSQM also spoke at the gathering. MIRPURKHAS: Scores of workers and office-bearers of JSM held a demonstration outside local press club in protest against arrival of Afghan refugees and other outsiders in Sindh and demanded authorities immediately stop their influx in the province. Zahoor Leghari and Taj Baloch, who led the protest, condemned the Sindh government for allowing Afghan nationals and other outsiders to land in the province."

Individuals (formerly) affiliated with the Afghan government or international governments

(Former) prosecutors, judges and lawyers

(Former) Journalists

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [HRCP demands economic stability, political rights](#), 18 June 2022

"It noted the worsening instances of police brutality against peaceful protestors across Pakistan with arrests of activists and political workers on anti-state charges becoming a common feature. Freedom of press is in continuous stress and journalists have been persistently targeted."

Committee to Protect Journalists, [96 Journalists and Media Workers Killed in Pakistan between 1992 and 2022](#), 11 June 2022

"96 Journalists and Media Workers Killed in Pakistan between 1992 and 2022 / Motive Confirmed or Unconfirmed"

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA), [Exiled Afghan journalists need technical assistance](#), 19 May 2022

"Needs of the Afghan journalists in exile have been spotlighted in a research study conducted by the Pakistan-based media watchdog Network in cooperation with Deutsche Welle (DW) Akademie. The study underlines the need to extend humanitarian and professional aid to exiled Afghan journalists in Pakistan, who fled their country in August last year. Iqbal Khattak, executive director of the Freedom Network, told reporters: "The study's findings point to the urgent and high degree of demand for humanitarian and professional assistance to dozens of Afghan journalists, including female media practitioners. Dawn quoted him as saying Pakistan's ambivalent policy on refugee status for Afghans who have arrived in Pakistan after August 2021, including dozens of and their families, is delaying humanitarian aid."

Committee to Protect Journalists, [Journalists assaulted, harassed amid political transition in Pakistan](#), 5 May 2022

"Hayat told CPJ that he believes the assault and detention were acts of retaliation for his work as a journalist, including his reporting on crime and alleged police malfeasance, which CPJ reviewed.

"Punjab police officers' assault and detention of Jahangir Hayat, as well as their detention and harassment of his family, underscores the significant dangers that Pakistani journalists face for simply doing their jobs," said CPJ Program Director Carlos Martinez de la Serna. "Authorities must conduct an immediate and impartial investigation into this incident, hold the perpetrators accountable, and demonstrate that such attacks will not continue with impunity."

Committee to Protect Journalists, [Pakistan police assault, detain journalist Jahangir Hayat in Punjab province](#), 10 May 2022

"Since that political transition, journalists have faced physical assault and online and legal harassment, according to multiple news reports and the journalists, who spoke to CPJ by phone. The new PML-N government has also announced several bureaucratic and legislative reforms that will impact press freedom and freedom of expression."

Committee to Protect Journalists, Taliban fighter beats freelance journalist Sadaqat Ghorzang at Afghanistan-Pakistan border crossing, 25 October 2021

"[...] a Taliban fighter patrolling the Torkham border crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan in the Nangarhar province of eastern Afghanistan beat freelance reporter Sadaqat Ghorzang on his head and arm with a rifle while he was on assignment for privately owned broadcaster TOLONews reporting about Afghans attempting to cross the border into Pakistan, according to a report by TOLONews and Ghorzang, who spoke with CPJ via phone."

Human rights defenders, NGO representatives

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan State of Human Rights in 2021](#), 29 April 2022

"After the fall of Kabul to the Afghan Taliban in August [2021], despite Pakistan's assurances that Afghan refugees would be given asylum, civil society was perturbed by reports of harassment of refugees at the border and cumbersome documentation requirements. The case of Idris Khattak was a grim reminder of how the Official Secrets Act and Army Act can be weaponized against human rights defenders (HRDs)."

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs News, [294 Afghans destined for the Netherlands arrive in Pakistan](#), 23 February 2022

"Over the past few days, 294 Afghans ultimately destined for the Netherlands have arrived in Pakistan. Some of the individuals and families concerned are not in possession of valid travel documents. The Pakistani authorities have made an exception for this specific group of people and have given permission for them to travel to the Netherlands via Pakistan...Following intensive diplomatic talks, Pakistan offered the Netherlands the opportunity to submit a list of Afghans who were eligible to be brought to the Netherlands but who were not in possession of valid travel documents. With the consent of those involved, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs submitted the names to the Pakistani authorities in November. During a recent visit to Pakistan by the Ministry's Secretary-General Paul Huijts, following a telephone conversation between Minister Hoekstra and his Pakistani counterpart, the green light was given...The group consists of a number of Dutch residents, Afghans who have performed high-profile duties for the Netherlands as interpreters or other officials in an international military or police mission, Afghan NGO staff covered by the special provisions as set out in the letter to parliament of 11 October 2021 and members of their immediate families. In January, the Netherlands was granted permission by the Pakistani authorities to allow the first group of 35 Afghans to enter the country without valid travel documents. Most of them were able to travel to the Netherlands on a German charter flight via Hannover last Friday.

For the time being, it is not possible to help other Afghans who are eligible to be brought to the Netherlands but have no passport. The Dutch government is continuing to seek a solution and advises people in the meantime to apply for a passport wherever possible. It is impossible to say exactly how many Afghans are still eligible for travel to the Netherlands as assessments are still being carried out in various parts of the Dutch government."

Hazara Shi'a

EUAA, [EUAA COI Report – Pakistan – Situation of Afghan Refugees](#), 19 May 2022

"Journalist and researcher Zia Ur Rehman mentioned that Hazara activists fear that ISKP could target the Hazara refugees in Pakistan. In 2021, ISKP already claimed responsibility for the killings of several Afghan Taliban leaders in Pakistan. According to Mielke, there are certain overlaps between the TTP and the ISKP in contrast to the Taliban in Afghanistan. These concern the ideological orientation and personnel affiliations. The latter manifests in various relations and roles of members of the Haqqani network in both the TTP (as mediators in TTP-GoP meetings) and ISKP. Ideologically, both organisations differ from the Afghan Taliban, which have a nationalist agenda while the TTP seeks the overthrow of the Pakistani government and the establishment of an (unspecified) caliphate, while the ISKP seeks to establish a worldwide caliphate. The Taliban's Hanafi ideological orientation, even in its Deobandis extreme variation is distinct from the Salafists' who, e.g., employ the principle of Takfir to declare certain groups like Shia-Hazaras non-Muslims. According to this logic, Shiite Afghans (Hazara) and their institutions, such as schools or mosques, constitute potential targets of ISKP attacks in Pakistan's cities. The same holds true for militant groups under the TTP umbrella, who have a record of attacks against Shia Muslims in Pakistan, in particular in the Parachinar area. In both cases, persecution is based on sectarian grounds and not because of national origin as Afghans."

Other religious minorities (e.g. Sikhs, Hindus, Christians, Jews)

The Khaama Press, [Terrorism Resurges in Pakistan: Terrorists Shoot Two Members of Sikh Community Dead](#), 20 May 2022

"On Sunday, Islamic State terrorists shot and killed two Sikh businessmen in Pakistan's northwest, the latest targeted murder against the minority group in the restive area bordering Afghanistan. [...] The Islamic State's Khorasan unit (ISKP) claimed responsibility for the attack in Peshawar through its propaganda news service 'Amaq.' The ISKP is a South Asian and Central Asian affiliate of the Islamic State (IS). [...] In addition, there have been multiple incidences of targeted killings of Sikh and Shia populations in the Peshawar region in recent years, but the police have failed to develop a strategy to prevent such incidents from occurring again."

ABC News, [Suicide bomber kills 6, gunmen kill 2 Sikhs in NW Pakistan](#), 15 May 2022

"There was no immediate claim of responsibility. Police were investigating but Khan said it appeared the two Sikhs were targeted because of their ethnicity. Sikhs are a tiny minority in northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and have been targeted by militants in the past."

Deutsche Welle (Pakistan), [Pakistan: Critics warn over blasphemy case against Imran Khan](#), 3 May 2022

"Activists and rights groups believe that Pakistan's blasphemy laws are too draconian and can easily be misused. The laws are often employed in cases that have little to do with blasphemy and are used to settle petty disputes and personal vendettas. Critics say that in particular Christians, Hindus and Ahmadis — a minority Islamic sect — are often targeted. While rights organizations have long called on the government to amend or repeal the contentious laws, conservative and right-wing outfits have strongly opposed allowing any amendment to the laws. [...] Blasphemy is a sensitive issue in the Muslim country where people have been killed merely on the suspicion of insulting religion or blaspheming against Islam's prophet Muhammad."

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan State of Human Rights in 2021](#), 29 April 2022

"After the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, there was an influx of Afghan refugees from the Chaman border crossing point. Most of these refugees settled in Quetta. Some of them even travelled as far as Karachi. In September, the Balochistan government deported 200 Afghan refugees because they had entered illegally. However, most refugees were allowed to remain in Balochistan. There was also a significant number of Hazara refugees who took temporary shelter in Hazara Town and Marriabad areas of Quetta. However, the condition of these refugees was deplorable and no major programmes were started for their relief."

USCIRF, [US Commission on International Religious Freedom Pakistan USCRIF-Recommended for Countries of Particular Concern \(CPC\)](#), April 2022

"In 2021 religious freedom conditions in Pakistan continued their negative trajectory. The year was filled with reports of targeted killings, lynching, mob violence, forced conversions, and desecration of houses of worship and cemeteries. These violations targeted religious minorities, including the Ahmadiyya Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Sikh, and Shi'a Muslim communities. The government continued systematically enforcing blasphemy, anti-Ahmadiyya, and cybercrime laws while failing to protect religious minorities from nonstate actors such as Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), a farright Sunni Islamist organization with growing influence in Pakistan."

Amnesty International Report 2021/2022, [The State of the World's Human Rights](#), 29 March 2022

"Blasphemy cases continued to be registered against the beleaguered Ahmadi Muslim community in Pakistan, putting them at risk of danger or even the death penalty. At least 10 places of worship for Ahmadi Muslims were desecrated — often by the police or with their acquiescence." "There were continued reports of forced conversions to Islam of young Hindu and Christian girls. The Ministry of Human Rights drafted an Anti-Forced Conversion Bill, but this was rejected by a parliamentary body in October."

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada - National Documentation Packages , [The crime and security situation in Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, and Hyderabad, including in the context of the resurgence of the Taliban and the Islamic State Khorasan Province \[ISIS-K, IS-K, Daesh-Khorasan\] \(ISKP\) in Afghanistan in 2021](#), 21 December 2021

"The journalist noted that TTP and ISKP target "law enforcement agencies, pro-Afghan Taliban leaders, and Shias" (Journalist 27 Nov. 2021). AFP reports that ISKP "has been responsible for some of the deadliest attacks in the region in recent years, massacring civilians in Afghanistan and Pakistan, at mosques, shrines, public squares and even hospitals" (AFP 3 Nov. 2021). The same source further states that ISKP has "especially targeted Muslims from sects it considers heretical, including Shiites" and "remains bent on eradicating groups it considers apostates" (AFP 3 Nov. 2021)."

LGBTQI+ people

Treatment of family members of those sought by the Taliban

SECTION 2 - COI Sources

This section is a list of potentially relevant COI sources that we scanned systematically for this report. The list is non-exhaustive and will be regularly reviewed and updated. The date in brackets shows the last time a researcher consulted this source.

International Organisations

- [International Labour Organization \(ILO\) \(Pakistan\)](#) [22.06.2022]
- [International Organization for Migration \(IOM \(Pakistan\)](#) [22.06.2022]
 - [Displacement Tracking Matrix \(DTM\) \(Pakistan\)](#) [22.06.2022]
- [IPC - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification](#) [22.06.2022]
- [United Nations Children's Fund \(UNICEF\)](#) [22.06.2022]
- [United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner \(UNOHCHR\) \(Pakistan news\)](#) [22.06.2022]
- [United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs \(UNOCHA\) \(Pakistan\)](#) [22.06.2022]
 - [Humanitarian Response \(Pakistan\)](#) [22.06.2022]
- [United Nations Refugee Agency \(UNHCR\) \(Pakistan\)](#) [22.06.2022]
 - [Pakistan Country Website Page](#) [22.06.2022]
 - [Operational Data Portal](#) [22.06.2022]
- [United Nations Secretary-General Reports](#) [22.06.2022]
 - [Press Releases](#) [22.06.2022]
- [United Nations World Food Programme \(Pakistan\)](#) [22.06.2022]
- [United Nations World Health Organisation \(Pakistan\)](#) [22.06.2022]
- [United Nations Population Fund - UNFPA \(Pakistan\)](#) [22.06.2022]

Intergovernmental Sources

- [European Asylum Support Office \(EASO\) COI Portal](#) [22.06.2022]
See EUAA, [COI Report - Pakistan - Situation of Afghan refugees](#), 19 May 2022
See EUAA, [Pakistan / MQM-Londonin rakenne ja toiminta // Pakistan / MQM-London's structure and political activities](#), 20 June 2022 (note the report is in Finnish)

Government sources

- [Danish Immigration Service](#) [22.06.2022]
 - [Country Reports \(2021-2022\)](#) [22.06.2022]
- [Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) [22.06.2022]
 - [Ambtsbericht](#) [22.06.2022]
- [Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service](#) [22.06.2022]
 - [landen rapporten](#) [22.06.2022]
- [Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada](#) [22.06.2022]
 - [Responses to Information Requests \(2021-2022\)](#) [22.06.2022]
- [The Norwegian Country of Origin Information Centre Landinfo](#) [22.06.2022]
- [French Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) [22.06.2022]
- [United States Commission on International Religious Freedom](#) [22.06.2022]

NGOS and think tanks

[Note: This list focuses on local and national organisations as well as those international organisations with a local presence]

- [Assessment Capacities Project \(ACAPS\) \(Afghanistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Amnesty International \(Afghanistan and Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project \(ACLED\) \(Afghanistan and Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Care International \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Chatham House \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Center for Strategic & International Studies \(CSIS\) \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Committee to Protect Journalists \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Congressional Research Service \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Council on Foreign Relations \(CFR\) \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
 - [Global Conflict Tracker \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Danish Refugee Council \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Heinrich Boll Stiftung \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Human Rights Watch \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [International Crisis Group \(ICG\) \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
 - [CrisisWatch Database \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [International Committee of the Red Cross \(ICRC\) \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [International Disability Alliance \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [International Federation for Human Rights \(FIDH\) \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [International Institute for Strategic Studies \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [International NGO Safety Organisation \(INSO\) \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [International Rescue Committee \(IRC\) \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Jamestown Foundation \(Central Asia\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Long War Journal \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Medecin Sans Frontieres \(MSF\) \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Norwegian Refugee Council \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Refugees International \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Royal United Services Institute \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Samuel Hall \(South and Central Asia\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Save the Children \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
 - [Blog \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [United States Institute of Peace \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)

Media

[Additional media sources may be included in this report but have not been systematically checked on a weekly basis]

- [Afghan Voice Agency \(AVA\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Al Jazeera \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Ariana News \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [BBC News \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Deutsche Welle \(Pakistan\) \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [EurAsia.net \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Inter Press Service News Agency \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Jurist.org \[22.06.2022\]](#)
- [Kabul Now \[22.06.2022\]](#)

- [Khaama Press \(Afghan News Agency\)](#) [22.06.2022]
- [Pajhwok Afghan News \(Afghan News Agency\)](#) [22.06.2022]
- [Qantara.de](#) [22.06.2022]
- [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Gandhara](#) [22.06.2022]
- [The New Humanitarian \(Pakistan\)](#) [22.06.2022]
- [Thomson Reuters Foundation News \(Pakistan\)](#) [22.06.2022]
- [UN News](#) [22.06.2022]

Databases

- [Ecoi.net \(Pakistan\)](#) [22.06.2022]

Additional useful COI databases or sources for case-specific country research (non-exhaustive)

Databases

- [Asylos's research notes](#) [Subscription only]
- [COI Forum](#) [Subscription only]
- [EASO COI Portal](#) [European Asylum Support Office's portal]
- [Electronic Immigration Network](#) [Subscription only]
- [ECOI.net](#) [European Country of Origin Information Network]
- International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP): [Visa and Refugee Information Reports](#) ["provide information on the refugee protection program, if any, in the countries of flight; the ability of refugees in those countries to work, pursue an education, and live freely; and the penalties, if any, imposed upon individuals living in the countries of flight without lawful immigration status"]
- [Refworld](#) [UNHCR's portal]
- [ReliefWeb](#)

Sources

- [Afghan Islamic Press](#) [Subscription only]

For useful sources arranged by theme consult ARC Foundation's free [Thematic COI Sources toolkit](#).

For any case-specific research requests please get in touch with [Asylos](#).

Additional useful databases and sources to find expert witnesses

Please note that these experts have not been vetted by us and each database/source will have its own vetting process.

- EIN Experts Directory – The Electronic Immigration Network Directory of Experts gives access to detailed information from a wide variety of experts in a fully searchable database.
- Rights in Exile Programme's "Country of Origin Information Experts database".
- The Centre for Gender and Refugee Studies' [Expert Witness database](#) [requires registration]
- Country experts cited in relevant UK country guidance determinations
- Interlocutors cited in EASO COI products
- Interlocutors cited in fact-finding mission (FFM) reports. These are published by a range of country of asylum/receiving country's governments. You can find them through a Google search or on ecoi.net.
- Academics and/or (I)NGOs who are cited in this COI Repository
- Ask an expert who you have worked with in the past to suggest other relevant individuals

who may be in a position to comment.

- Global Experts – Global Experts is a UN database of academics, analysts, former officials, faith leaders, civil society activists, private sector/business and media experts around the world. You can search for experts by area of expertise as well as by geographical area.
- Expertise Finder – Expertise Finder is a directory of experts in a variety of subjects. Search by keywords, for instance country, to find experts and their contact details.
- SheSource – Same concept as the two sources above, except that this website only lists female experts.
- CGRS – The Center for Gender and Refugee Studies – California features a webpage with a list of experts providing practice advisories and declarations for US Courts hearings regarding vulnerable groups (LGBTI, Women, Children etc.).
- Google Scholar / Microsoft Academic – Google Scholar and Microsoft Academic are search engines for academic publications, although you will find media articles on there as well. On Google Scholar, clicking on an author's name will typically take you to his / her profile page. Contact details are not provided, but affiliation is; you can then search on his / her institution's website.