

Press Release

Afghanistan security situation

PR 01/2015
13 February 2015

EASO publishes a Country of Origin Information report on security situation in Afghanistan

Today, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) published a Country of Origin Information (COI) Report entitled 'Afghanistan security situation'. The report provides a comprehensive overview of the security situation in Afghanistan, and provides information relevant for the protection status determination of Afghan asylum seekers. Amongst other things, the report reveals that armed insurgent groups, such as the Taliban and Hezb-e Islami Afghanistan, have increasingly conducted large scale attacks on the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). The insurgents have been increasingly succesful in conquering and holding territory, but the ANSF generally still manage to control large city centres and towns in most of the country. Moreover, the report looks into the significant geographical differences in the security situation. EASO aims to update the security report every six months.

In 2014, Afghanistan ranked 9th in the top countries of origin in the EU+ countries¹, with a total number of almost 42,000 applicants. The Afghan caseload affected 26 out of 30 EU+ countries. This report is the third COI report on Afghanistan published by EASO. In 2012, EASO published the following reports: "[COI Report Afghanistan, Taliban Strategies: Recruitment](#)" and "[COI Report Afghanistan, Insurgent Strategies: Intimidation and targeted violence against Afghans](#)".²

The EASO COI '[Afghanistan security situation](#)' report provides a general description of the security situation in Afghanistan, covering the following topics: a brief historic overview; actors in the conflict; security trends and armed confrontations; description of tactics and arms used; ability of the state to secure law and order; impact of the violence on security forces, civilian population and the political process; and the geographical overview of the security situation. In addition, the report provides a description of the security situation for each of the 34 provinces and Kabul. In these chapters, a general overview of the province is given, followed by a view on the impact of violence in the province and data on violent incidents. Qualitative information on the type of violence is also provided. Finally, a short overview on violence-induced displacements is given, followed by a description of the armed actors in the province. The reference period for the security report runs from 1 January 2014 until 31 October 2014.

¹ EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland

² Both reports are available via EASO's website: (<http://easo.europa.eu/asylum-documentation/easo-publication-and-documentation/>).

Main Findings

Information provided in the report shows a new trend in the security situation. In the light of the withdrawal of foreign troops, the closure of international military bases and the transition of the security tasks to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), **armed insurgent groups, such as the Taliban and Hezb-e Islami Afghanistan, have increasingly conducted large scale attacks on the ANSF.** The insurgents have been increasingly successful in conquering and holding territory, but the ANSF generally still manage to control large city centres and towns in most of the country. As from 2013, this increase in attacks has led to more civilian casualties mainly inflicted by crossfire, mortar and artillery shelling, in contrast to previous years when Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs, for example: roadside, car and suicide bombs) represented the greatest threat to civilians.

Another important finding of the report is that **there are still significant geographical differences in the security situation.** Sources indicate Helmand, Kandahar and Nangarhar as the provinces with most violent incidents between January and October 2014. When comparing the number of violent incidents with the population in a province, Kunar is the most volatile province. Sources also indicate Faryab as increasingly violent with a high number of civilian casualties. The most tranquil areas are situated in central and northern Afghanistan.

Researchers from Austria, Belgium, France, Greece, Hungary, Slovak Republic and EASO participated in the joint drafting process of this COI report. The report was written in accordance with the EASO [COI Report Methodology](#). It was reviewed by other experts (from Sweden, the Netherlands and UNHCR) in order to ensure the highest quality.

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

Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office by contacting Mr Jean-Pierre Schembri on the following e-mail address: jean-pierre.schembri@easo.europa.eu