



## Press Release

PR 16/2015

28 August 2015

### EASO publishes a Country of Origin Information report on Pakistan: Country Overview

*The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) published a Country of Origin Information (COI) report entitled 'Pakistan Country Overview'. The report provides both general background information and more detailed information on topics relevant for international protection status determination in regard to Pakistani asylum seekers.*

Pakistan has figured in the top 10 of countries of origin for many years, taking between third and sixth position in the years 2011-14<sup>[1]</sup> while absolute numbers have been steadily increasing over time. In 2014, 22 355 Pakistani nationals applied for international protection in the EU, a 5% increase compared to 2013. In the first six months of 2015, according to provisional EASO data, close to 15 000 applicants from Pakistan were registered in the EU, indicating a further increase.

Intended as a reference document and a resource for preparing asylum interviews and asylum decision-making, the report includes general country Information (geography, demography, short history, state structure and political landscape, education, media and telecommunication, health care, socio-economic and humanitarian situation, documents), as well as more detailed information on the general and regional security situation in Pakistan. A chapter on the human rights situation provides an overview of common violations and focuses on specific risk groups, ethnic minorities, religious groups and sexual and gender minorities. A last chapter is dedicated to migration, displacement and internal mobility. The report covers the period up until May 2015.

The Pakistan Country Overview was written using the EASO Network Approach whereby networks of national COI experts work jointly to provide common COI at EU level in accordance with the EASO COI Report Methodology. The Pakistan report was drafted by COI specialists from Austria, Belgium, France, Hungary and the UK, together with EASO. A quality review was undertaken by COI specialists from Ireland, Lithuania and EASO, and UNHCR has reviewed the report in relation to information for which UNHCR is quoted as the source, relating to persons of concern to UNHCR in Pakistan.

EASO will continue to produce such reports on important countries of origin and to update them on a regular basis in order to raise and harmonise COI standards in the EU and use of common COI to further support the practical implementation of the Common European Asylum System.

<sup>[1]</sup> Cf. EASO, Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the European Union 2014, July 2015.

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