

## **Afghanistan - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Monday 6 November 2023**

### **Information on Life at present in 2023 for young males under the Taliban.**

A report issued by *Human Rights Watch* in September 2023 states that:

“The Taliban's ban on education for women and girls beyond sixth grade also limits their opportunities for future employment, risking their complete elimination from many important areas including health care, education, technology, and law. Men and boys face no such bans.” (Human Rights Watch (8 September 2023) *Afghanistan Under the Taliban: The Crime Against Humanity of Gender Persecution*, p.4).

*Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD)* in September 2023 notes that:

“Over the last 18 months, the Taliban have organized village-wide arbitrary arrests of adult men and older boys, detained them without charge, and subjected many of those so detained to beatings and other abuse.” [...] (Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD) (5 September 2023) *ecoi.net featured topic on Afghanistan: Overview of recent developments and key players in Afghanistan*).

The report further points out that:

“Secondary schools have reopened for boys but remain closed to the vast majority of girls.” [...] (Ibid, p.41).

The *Irish Times* in August 2023 reported that:

"Afghanistan is now just a nation of men. Girls are at home, watching their male classmates graduate. Their only option left is to become brides to the Taliban." (The Irish Times (30 August 2023) '*Afghanistan is now just a nation of men*'; *After fleeing life under Taliban rule, Manizha Khan feels she is 'one of the lucky ones'*)

*BBC News* in August 2023 points out that:

“The first indication of the Taliban's attitude to women came a month after the takeover. Secondary schools opened for boys following a ministry of education statement which made no mention of girls.” (BBC News (15 August 2023) *Five key moments in the crushing of Afghan women's rights*).

*BBC Radio 4* in August 2023 notes that:

“Right now, you know, Afghans has had to resort to very negative coping mechanism. Child marriage is on the rise. We are seeing increased child leave we are seeing more and more young boys being pulled out of school. Having to work to try to provide for their families...” (BBC Radio 4 (13 August 2023) *BBC Radio 4 - 12:05 AM GMT*).

The *US Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report* in June 2023 mentioned that:

“During the reporting period, there was a pattern of employing or recruiting child soldiers and a pattern of sexual slavery by the Taliban (bacha bazi – a practice in which men exploit boys for social and sexual entertainment).” (US Department of State (15 June 2023) *Trafficking in Persons Report 2023: Afghanistan*).

The same report states that:

“International organization experts have indicated that child labor increased after the Taliban takeover, noting that 25 percent of children are involved in child labor and boys are more vulnerable than girls to be victims of trafficking, especially in bacha bazi.” (Ibid).

*Amnesty International* in June 2023 reported that:

“Over the last 18 months, the Taliban have organized village-wide arbitrary arrests of adult men and older boys, detained them without charge, and subjected many of those so detained to beatings and other abuse.” (Amnesty International (7 June 2023) *“Your sons are in the mountains”: The collective punishment of civilians in Panjshir by the Taliban*).

The report further notes that:

“Armed members of the Taliban are escorting the detainees. Several of the detainees appear to be young and may be older boys, based purely on their appearance and absence of facial hair, although Amnesty International was not able to confirm their ages.” (Ibid).

“A third person, a witness, independently corroborated that the Taliban arbitrarily detained civilians and used them as hostages so as to force the surrender of NRF fighters whose relatives were being held:

All the people were taken hostage, this included whitebeards. After the ones who had gone to mountains to fight the Taliban came back and surrendered, the Taliban released [the civilians they had detained]. In fact, even boys above the age of 12 or 14 years were arrested...” (Ibid).

In May 2023 *United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)* reported that:

“Kidnapping for ransom has been a common method of revenue generation for Taliban commanders and other terrorist and violent extremist groups such as ISIL-K and the TTP for many years. This practice continues, with reports of children or young males from wealthy families being kidnapped and released in exchange for ransom. This is particularly prevalent in the western provinces of Herat and Farah, as well as various locations in the north, including Kabul.” (United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) (29 May 2023) *Afghanistan's Security Landscape under the Taliban and its Effects on Regional and International Stability*).

*BBC Radio 4* in April 2023 mentioned that:

“Place if it gives you the impression of a country that seems to be running normally, but the reality is that this is the country in economic collapse millions of Afghans don't know where their next meal will come from. And one of the things we have seen repeatedly on the

ground. On our visit to Afghanistan, not just here in Kabul. But in a remote provinces of the country in rural areas is increasingly children being put to work so that they can earn some money and add to the families earnings." (BBC Radio 4 (18 April 2023) *BBC Radio 4 - 12:34 AM GMT*).

This same document states that:

"We've seen children have been sent to pick through rubbish. We've seen children who have been begging on the streets and now we're in this area year where there are a lot of blacksmith workshops where we are going to meet a family which has two young boys working is because of their earnings that their families 11 year-olds live earlier by beat a moat an iron Rod into shape, less than 4 feet tall. He uses a hand that almost as big as he is his faces streaked with dirt and sweat for 9 hours every day. He must work at a blacksmith shop, so that his family can afford food he is to go to school under last year and was in the sixth, agreed. I really like to school. I miss it. This is very hard work. But I've got used to it now, he says. Next door, his older brother Ali thinner does the same work together the earn 150 Afghanis the day less than two dollars." (Ibid).

The *New Arab* in February 2023 reported that:

"The Taliban arrested Samir, a 21-year-old gay man from Faryab province, for the first time back last November after he had been repatriated to Afghanistan from Iran. They abused him with homophobic slurs and sent private photos from his phone — of him in women's clothes and with his boyfriend — to his family." (New Arab (7 February 2023) *Afghanistan's LGBTQ+ may prefer death to life under Taliban*).

The document further notes that:

"He was soon released, but weeks later the Taliban returned and detained him again. This time the abuse was physical — he was tortured so severely that he's now deaf in one ear. "After this happened, my parents disowned me and threw me out," he said. "I can't afford medical treatment." (Ibid).

"Now living in fear, some Afghan LGBTQ+ individuals have altered their appearance to blend into the crowd, while others have gone into hiding." (Ibid).

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. All COI Query Responses are compiled in line with the Common EU Guidelines (2008) and the EUAA Report Methodology (2023). This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to international protection. Please refer to all documents cited.

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