



Genocide Watch
The Alliance Against Genocide

Pakistan Country Report March 2026 By Alžběta Frommerová

Pakistan's present-day human rights crisis stems from its [colonial legacy](#), inherited at its 1947 independence. This legacy has [hindered](#) the growth of democratic institutions and led to an autocratic rule, leaving the media fragile, politics volatile, and the military dominant. In this context, human-rights abuses have deepened, especially for the most vulnerable groups.

Women face the most severe consequences of Pakistan's structural inequalities in the form of a growing [femicide crisis](#). Gender-based violence remains widespread and [includes](#) acid attacks, forced and child marriage, rape, trafficking, forced conversion, and domestic abuse. Hundreds of women are killed annually in so-called "[honor killings](#)," often by relatives, over perceived family shame. At least [405 cases](#) were recorded in 2024, but the real figures are [likely higher](#), due to low reporting and [weak, inconsistent](#) enforcement. Also in 2024, over 2,000 domestic violence cases and 5,000 accounts of rape were [recorded](#), reinforcing Pakistan's status as one of the [most dangerous](#) countries in the world for women. According to a 2025 United Nations [report](#), two out of every three Pakistani women are denied reproductive autonomy and are subjected to abuse and pressure regarding their reproductive health. Additionally, in September 2025, the Lahore High Court [ruled](#) that marriages after puberty are valid under Islamic law, as girl marriage remains widespread in Pakistan, with [millions](#) married before 18.

Pakistan also ranked last in the World Economic Forum's [Global Gender Gap Index](#), and it faces a massive education crisis, with more than [21 million children](#) reportedly out of school due to poverty, social pressures, child labor, and discrimination.

Beyond gender inequality, [religious minorities](#) also remain deeply vulnerable. Blasphemy laws, combined with weak enforcement, expose Ahmadis, Christians and Hindus to discrimination, violence, and social exclusion. At the same time, journalists, activists, and academics [face](#) censorship, [violence](#), threats, arrests, and [murder](#), all [perpetrated](#) by the Pakistani government and contributing to growing self-censorship and restricted public discourse.

Security challenges further complicate Pakistan's human rights, as [deadly attacks](#) were carried out by militant groups in 2025 and 2026, including , the [Islamic State of Khorasan Province](#), Al-Qaeda, and the [Balochistan Liberation Army](#).

Furthermore, same-sex activity between men remains [criminalized](#), placing homosexual individuals and [transgender women](#) at heightened [risk](#) of police abuse, discrimination, and violence.

Regional instability leads to the worsening of human rights conditions. Rising tensions between [India and Pakistan](#) over Kashmir have led to military strikes, cross-border gunfire, and worsening security risks between the two nuclear-armed states. The long-standing dispute has involved repeated wars, killed civilians, displaced communities, and restricted freedoms. Simultaneously, [escalating fighting](#) between Pakistan and Afghanistan has caused serious human rights violations. In 2024, Pakistan deported 315,100 undocumented [Afghan refugees](#), with thousands arrested amid harassment and coercion.

Because discrimination against women and minorities is deeply embedded in society, and violence against them is both widespread and tolerated, Genocide Watch considers Pakistan to be at **Stage 3: Discrimination** and **Stage 5: Organization**. Deepening divisions along religious, gender, and political lines, reinforced by restrictive laws, censorship, and weak protections, place the country at **Stage 6: Polarization**. The continued targeting of vulnerable groups through violence, persecution, and displacement further reflects elements of **Stage 9: Persecution**.

Genocide Watch recommends that:

1. The European Union should use GSP+ review procedures to press Pakistan on narrowly defined reforms in freedom of expression, religious freedom, and women's rights.
2. Partner states should expand emergency relocation, humanitarian visas, and protection of referrals for journalists, defenders, and religious minorities at immediate risk.
3. Security and diplomatic engagement with Pakistan should include public human rights benchmarks but should not assume major conditionality beyond what existing bilateral channels can support.

4. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights should campaign to consider Pakistan as a country of special concern, because of the country's concerning record of human rights abuses against ethnic and religious minorities.
5. Pakistan's diplomatic and economic partners, such as the United States, China, and the United Kingdom, should urge and incentivize the country to combat honor killings and implement structural and systemic changes that would protect the lives and futures of women.