

The Afghan Refugees: Who Are They?

by Gary Fouse



As I write, the US and several Western European countries are scrambling to get their citizens and Afghan allies out of Afghanistan. It's not only a mess for the US, but a mess for Europe as well. Europe is bracing for a wave of Afghan refugees, by some estimates up to 3 million. Already, many Western European countries are dealing with massive numbers of young, unaccompanied Afghans who have significantly raised the rate of violent crime in Europe. Last month, a 13-year-old Austrian girl was kidnapped, drugged, gang-raped, and murdered in [Vienna](#). Four young Afghan men are charged.

The Europeans, like the Americans, feel the moral obligation to get not just their own countrymen out of Afghanistan, including naturalized Afghans, but those Afghans who worked with our forces and embassies, people who are at extreme risk

from the Taliban. At the same time, we need to carefully screen those Afghans we bring to our countries.

This week, I have just finished translating two European news articles, one from Belgium (via a Dutch newspaper) and the other from France. In [Belgium](#), police have been warned that extremist Afghans with Taliban sympathies may well be among the refugees. In [France](#), they have already identified 5 Afghan refugees-already arrived in France- who are members of the Taliban.

President Biden has assured us that Afghans evacuated will be thoroughly screened before they land on American soil. I would like to feel reassured by that, but how do you do an adequate background check on these people (I am not talking about those who assisted us as interpreters, etc)? Do we ask the Taliban to check their data bases? That, given all the other assurances Biden has given us, leave me feeling less than reassured. My gut feeling is that it is going to be just like the Somalis, many of whom have gone back to join al Shabaab, and the Syrians in 2015 who flooded into Europe. Innocent blood is going to be spilt. This is not to say that all refugees will pose a danger, but there will be some.

One thing I find interesting about the Americans who are still trapped in Afghanistan. Am I wrong in assuming that they are almost all naturalized Afghans with US passports who, perhaps, were visiting their families when the place collapsed? That, of course, does not lessen our obligation to get them out, but I find it interesting that the media never speculates about that.

I pray for the safety of our troops, Afghan colleagues, and all Americans in Afghanistan (naturalized or not). The same goes for our allies. May they all come home safely. They have been badly served by this president and this administration.