



AFGHANISTAN



INTRODUCTION

Afghanistan served as a buffer between the British and Russian Empires until it won independence from British control in 1919. A UN-sponsored conference in 2001 established a process for political reconstruction that included the adoption of a new constitution.

GOVERNMENT

Chief of State

President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Ashraf GHANI Ahmadzai

Head of Government

President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Ashraf GHANI Ahmadzai

Government Type

presidential Islamic republic

Capital

Kabul

Legislature

bicameral National Assembly consists of the Meshrano Jirga or House of Elders (102 seats) and the Wolesi Jirga or House of People (249 seats)

GEOGRAPHY

Area

Total: 652,230 sq km
Land: 652,230 sq km
Water: 0 sq km

Climate

arid to semiarid; cold winters and hot summers

Natural Resources

natural gas, petroleum, coal, copper, chromite, talc, barites, sulfur, lead, zinc, iron ore, salt, precious and semiprecious stones, arable land

as of April 2021

ECONOMY

Economic Overview

recovering from decades of conflict, living standards still among the lowest in the world, highly dependent on foreign aid, and suffering from shortages of housing, water, electricity, and jobs

GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) \$78.557 billion (2019 est.)

GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) \$2,070 (2019 est.)

Industries - brick production, textiles, soap, furniture, shoes, fertilizer, apparel, food products, non-alcoholic beverages, mineral water, cement, handwoven carpets, natural gas, coal

Agricultural products - wheat, milk, grapes, vegetables, potatoes, watermelons, melons, rice, onions, apples

Exports \$784 million (2017 est.)

gold, grapes, opium, fruits and nuts, insect resins, cotton, handwoven carpets, soapstone, scrap metal (2019)

partners: UAE 45%, Pakistan 24%, India 22%, China 1% (2019)

Imports \$7.616 billion (2017 est.)

wheat flours, broadcasting equipment, refined petroleum, rolled tobacco, aircraft parts, synthetic fabrics (2019)

partners: UAE 23%, Pakistan 17%, India 13%, China 9%, US 9%, Uzbekistan 7%, Kazakhstan 6% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY

Population

37.5 million (July 2021 est.)

Population Growth

2.34% (2021 est.)

Ethnicity

Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, other (includes smaller numbers of Baloch, Turkmen, Nuristani, Pamiri, Arab, Gujar, Brahui, Qizilbash, Aimaq, Pashai, and Kyrgyz) (2015)

Language

Afghan Persian or Dari (official) 77% (Dari functions as the lingua franca), Pashto (official) 48%, Uzbek 11%, English 6%, Turkmen 3%, Urdu 3%, Pashayi 1%, Nuristani 1%, Arabic 1%, Balochi 1% (2017 est.)

Religion

Muslim 99.7% (Sunni 84.7 - 89.7%, Shia 10 - 15%), other 0.3% (2009 est.)

