



Diaspora engagement mapping

TURKMENISTAN

Facts & figures

Terminology: Although the terms 'diaspora' or 'diaspora members' are used by state media and some official speakers in reference to the activities of the Humanitarian Association of World Turkmens (a state institution), there is no use of the term 'diaspora' in national legislation.

Political rights



Dual citizenship¹



Right to vote in national elections for citizens residing abroad



Remittances



Remittances as a share of GDP: -
Remittances inflow (USD billion): -

Voting from abroad:²

Online/at embassies or consulates



Data disclaimer

As diaspora definitions vary widely, we have chosen to use comparable data on emigration as a proxy. This does not include all who consider themselves diaspora and is not necessarily aligned with national definitions of diaspora. Emigration data comes from UNDESA (2024) and remittances from the World Bank (2024).

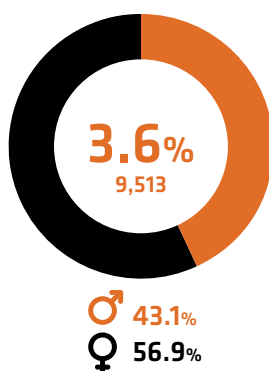
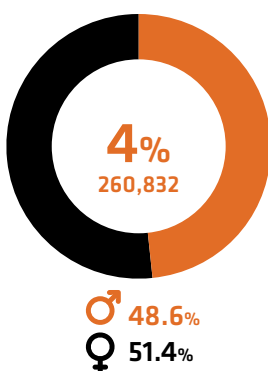
Emigration



% of emigrants in total population



% of which in the EU



Top countries of destination³



Russia	185,620
Ukraine	22,828
Germany	6,124
Belarus	5,395
Iran	4,821

1 Art. 5. Section 2 of the Citizenship Law of Turkmenistan states that Turkmenistan does not recognize multiple citizenship for its citizens
2 Art. 24 Section 5 of the Law on the Election of President of Turkmenistan ; Art 26 Section 5 of the Law of Turkmenistan on the election for Mejlis of Turkmenistan.

3 Afghanistan and Turkey also have a significant Turkmen diasporas not included in the UN data. This is explained by the fact that this is an 'old' diaspora. Historically, Turkmens account for 3% (1 million) of the population of Afghanistan. These Turkmens originate from amongst the Turkic tribes of Central Asia who arrived in Afghanistan as refugees in the 1920s and 1930s in order to escape penalties following their participation in the Basmachi Revolt. The Turkmen population in Afghanistan is concentrated mainly along the northern border with Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. See more: ISW (2020): Turkmenistan and Afghanistan. The official statistical data of Turkey states that approx. 60,000 Turkmen nationals hold different types of residence permits in Turkey. Turkey remains the only country where Turkmen citizens do not need visas for crossing borders. Therefore, the actual number of Turkmens currently residing in Turkey can be several times higher than the mentioned figure. Turkey (2016): Annual Migration Reports. Official statistical data of 2016.

Overview of the policy and legislative framework



- 2016** ● **Law on Migration № 437-V** defines the term emigrant as “a national of Turkmenistan that left the country and is residing abroad.”
- 2018** ● **Law About employment of the population №. 411-V** (18 June 2018, amended 1 December 2018) states that citizens of Turkmenistan have the right to search for a job abroad Turkmenistan in the manner prescribed by the legislation of Turkmenistan (Art. 15).

Practices

Explore 520+ practices by country, SDG or sector of engagement in the [interactive database!](#)



Annual conferences & forums of the Humanitarian Association of World Turkmens

Events take place in Ashgabat and are attended by delegates from all the regions of Turkmenistan and the representatives of Turkmen diasporas living in foreign countries. On 14 September 2024, the 25th Conference of the Humanitarian Association of the World Turkmens was held in the capital of Turkmenistan and discussed the further development of effective economic, cultural, scientific, educational, healthcare, and business cooperation of the world's Turkmens. Every year, the most distinguished foreign members of HAWT are presented with the sign of the Humanitarian Association of World Turkmens “Honoring Humanism” and diplomas.

Türkmen Dünýäsi (World of Turkmen newspaper)

The newspaper is published twice per month; it is designed to inform the world and Turkmen nationals residing abroad about the economic, social, and political achievements of Turkmenistan. It was founded by the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan, together with the Humanitarian Association of World Turkmens.

Days of Culture of Turkmenistan

Cultural events take place in Tajikistan,⁴ Russia,⁵ Ukraine,⁶ and Uzbekistan.⁷ They are intended to create a never-ending bond between Turkmen peoples scattered throughout the world and their native land.

4 <https://turkmenportal.com/blog/16098/tvorcheskaya-delegaciya-turkmenistana-otbyla-v-tadzhikistan-na-dni-kultury>

5 Turkmenistan (2019): V Stavropol'skom kraye otmelili Den' pamyati turkmenskogo poeta Makhtumkuli Fragi (Russian). See also: <https://turkmenportal.com/blog/4805>

6 <http://www.turkmenistan.ru/ru/articles/44983.html>

7 <https://turkmenportal.com/blog/9160>



Observations

The “Observations” and “Obstacles” sections contain additional information on the context of diaspora engagement that does not fit directly into the other sections. They are based on a combination of literature review and comments from the authors. New information is incorporated during the annual updates. Readers are invited to verify the relevance of the information at the time of reading, as the context may have evolved.

Engaging with its diaspora is not a priority of Turkmenistan.

The Turkmen diaspora is autonomous and not engaged with the homeland. The government of Turkmenistan is also maintaining a low profile. Its efforts are mainly limited to providing consular services and enabling remittance transfers. However sending remittances is not seen as very attractive to Turkmens residing abroad due to dual (official and unofficial) rates of foreign currency in Turkmenistan and a fear of being controlled by the national intelligence service.

Obstacles



- **Lack of information:** Data and information on the Turkmens living abroad are not publicly available. The available information is scattered and often contradictory.
- **Limited interest:** Review of available laws of and media news from Turkmenistan shows that the country has not engaged much with its diaspora abroad. The absence of a specific policy framework for diaspora engagement further shows the government’s lack of interest on this topic.

Annex: List of actors

Diaspora related institutions

- **National institutions**

- At ministerial level

President of Turkmenistan

The first president of Turkmenistan established the Humanitarian Association of World Turkmens (HAWT) in 1991.⁸

- At sub-ministerial level

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan

The ministry organises and administrates annual conferences of the Humanitarian Association of Turkmens of the World in order to consolidate Turkmens of the world and increase connections in spheres such as economy, culture, science, education, healthcare, tourism, sport, entrepreneurship

State Migration Service of Turkmenistan

The State Migration Service of Turkmenistan is the state agency that provides regulations of the migration system of Turkmenistan, the implementation of state policy in the field of migration, and ensures Turkmenistan's adherence to international agreements on migration issues.

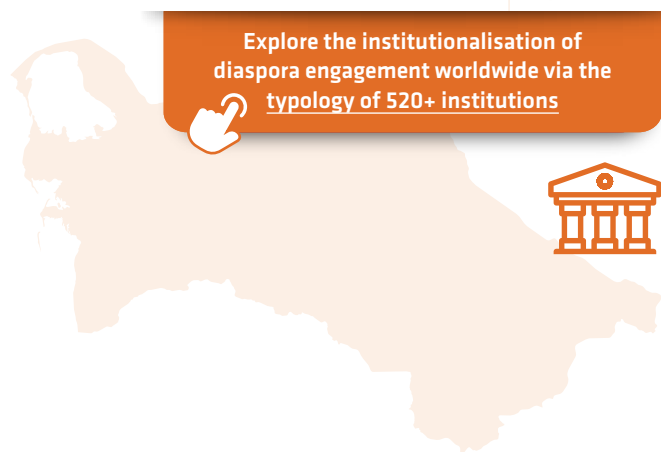
Humanitarian Association of World Turkmens – HAWT (Dünýä türkmenleriniň ynsanperwer birleşigi) (1991) (Global organisation)

HAWT aims at popularizing the history, culture, traditions and customs of the Turkmen nation and strengthen international cooperation and further consolidate the world's Turkmens⁹, by strengthening their brotherhood and unity. The HAWT was established in May 1991 by Saparmurat Niyazov, the first President of Turkmenistan. It is also referred to as the World Turkmen Humanitarian Association and the Association of Turkmens of the World. It has 27 branches in 15 countries around the globe¹⁰, including the UK, Germany and Sweden.

8 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humanitarian_Association_of_World_Turkmens#:~:text=The%20Association%20of%20Turkmens%20of,1991%20at%20a%20council%20meeting. Accessed July 15, 2020.

9 MFA Turkmenistan (2018): The XXI conference of HATW was held in the capital of Turkmenistan <https://www.mfa.gov.tm/ru/news/982>; <https://migration.gov.tm/en/xxii-conference-of-humanitarian-association-of-turkmen-of-the-world-held-in-ashgabat/>

10 <https://uia.org/s/or/en/1100049054>



Diaspora organisations in Europe

Österreich -Turkmenische Gesellschaft (Austrian-Turkmen Society) 2011 Austria

Read more about diaspora organisations in "[Starting guide: What is a diaspora organisation](#)"



- ✓ Development activities
- ✓ Integration activities

The society organises many cultural and business events, including five Vienna Balls in Ashgabat, the performance of the Galkynysh Orchestra; the Days of Culture of Turkmenistan in Austria, international conferences, meetings of the joint Turkmen-Austrian commission. The society has also published a booklet "GALKYNYSH", literally meaning 're-born'.

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