

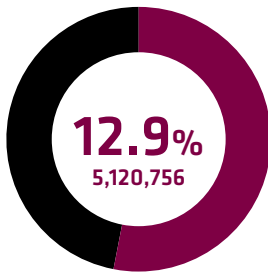


Diaspora engagement mapping AFGHANISTAN

Facts & figures

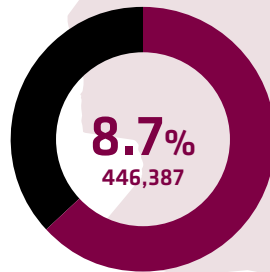
Emigration

% of emigrants in total population



♂ 53.3%
♀ 46.7%

% of which in the EU



♂ 63.1%
♀ 36.9%



Remittances as a share of GDP: 4.1%
Remittances inflow (USD million): 789



Top countries of destination

Islamic Republic of Iran	2,310,292
Pakistan	1,589,146
Saudi Arabia	469,324
Germany	208,732
United States	80,026



Political rights



Dual citizenship¹



Right to vote in national elections for citizens residing abroad²



2017: Afghanistan National Diaspora Policy³



President Ashraf Ghani prioritised the National Diaspora Policy as a mean of achieving development and self-sufficiency for Afghanistan. The policy seeks to create an institution to act as a focal point for diaspora organisations wishing to be active in Afghanistan, in addition to encouraging investment from diaspora businesses. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is assisting the government with collating data on the Afghan diaspora, identifying critical areas of diaspora engagement and capacity building (see Spotlight section).

¹ Report on Citizenship Law: Afghanistan p12 https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/45933/GLOBALCIT_CR_2017_09.pdf

² Voting from Abroad <https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/voting-from-abroad-the-international-idea-handbook.pdf>
However, this is not implemented due to lack of funding and operational capability

³ 'Afghanistan looks to Diaspora to Promote Development', International Organisation for Migration, 2018 <https://www.iom.int/news/afghanistan-looks-diaspora-promote-development>

Overview of the policy and legislative framework



- 2005** ● **Law on Domestic and Foreign Private Investment in Afghanistan**⁴ promotes economic development and allows domestic or foreign entities to invest in all sectors of Afghanistan. The law has done away with sector restrictions regarding foreign investment, guarantees equal treatment with nationals for foreign investors and allows them to lease land for up to 30 years. Companies can also be wholly foreign-owned.
- 2019** ● **Comprehensive Migration Policy**⁵ was developed by the Afghan government in partnership with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). The policy focuses on four key areas: the safe reintegration of returnees, promotion of regular and labour migration, prevention of irregular migration and efforts to maximise the development potential of migration. In June 2019, the final draft of the policy was officially presented to Afghanistan's chief executive and the Displacement and Returns Executive Committee. ICMPD plans to support policy implementation, after the final endorsement by the government.



Trends:

The government is aiming to use diaspora engagement to attract foreign investment and skills transfer. During the Senior Officials Meeting in 2017, President Ghani discussed the 11 top constraints facing the private sector in Afghanistan. Since then, business licensing has been improved, punitive tax penalties abolished and public-private partnerships legislation developed. The government views diaspora engagement as productive for both the government and society due to transfer of knowledge and skills acquired by the diaspora as well as remittances and business investments.

Obstacles



- **Context:** Afghan diaspora organisations have highlighted insecurity, insufficient knowledge about development policies in Afghanistan and the need for greater government cooperation as priority areas to enhance diaspora engagement.⁶ Furthermore, diaspora organisations without sufficient local connections face difficulties implementing projects, especially in rural areas.
- **Heterogeneity of the diaspora:** The Afghan diaspora varies in terms of ethnicity, political views, time of arrival, and generational or religious beliefs. This limits membership, collaboration and coordination within and among diaspora organisations. Members of the diaspora are often looked upon with suspicion by some locals when returning home, as they are perceived to have abandoned the country.⁷
- **Funding:** The voluntary nature of work in diaspora organisations means that they struggle to have adequate time dedicated to operational issues and are unable to attract technical staff to help with proposal writing, funding bids and project cycle management.

4 Law on Domestic and Foreign Private Investment in Afghanistan, Government of Afghanistan, <https://www.lexadin.nl/wlg/legis/nofr/oeur/arch/afg/PrivateInvestmentLaw.pdf>

5 Comprehensive Migration Policy for Afghanistan, November 2019, <https://www.budapestprocess.org/component/attachments/download/400>, Project News: Comprehensive Migration Policy for Afghanistan presented in Kabul, Afghanistan, 2019.

6 Meshkovska, Biljana, Nasrat Sayed, Katharina Koch, Iman Rajabzadeh, Carole Wenger & Melissa Siegel, 2019, *Afghan Diaspora in Europe: Mapping engagement in Denmark, Germany, Sweden, and the United Kingdom*, Study commissioned by Danish Refugee Council <https://www.merit.unu.edu/publications/uploads/1576769428.pdf>

7 Ibid

Spotlight: effective practices



IOM Support for Implementation of National Diaspora Policy

IOM funds and implements a project to support the roll out of the Afghanistan National Diaspora Policy, with the backing of the Afghan president. The project consists of:

1. A mapping of the Afghan diaspora in selected countries;
2. Diaspora engagement needs assessment;
3. Capacity building for the government.

POLICY

Return of Qualified Afghans (RQA) programme, 2001-present⁸

The IOM initiated the RQA programme in December 2001 to tap into the expertise of qualified Afghans abroad and to engage them in the reconstruction process. The programme helped Afghans abroad to return home and to place them in key positions within ministries, government institutions and the private sector, thus enabling them to contribute to national development. By 2018, 1665 Afghan experts had returned home from 29 countries.

HUMAN CAPITAL

Afghan Diaspora for Development Forum, 2018.

<https://www.cimonline.de/en/html/cim-forum-2018-afghan-diaspora-for-development.html>

The Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM) hosted the event to facilitate diaspora engagement, networking and support the involvement of the diaspora in policy making. The event, which seems to have been a one-off initiative, brought together more than 100 participants from several Afghan diaspora organisations to discuss their work, establish new contacts and reinforce existing networks.⁹

NETWORKS

Danish Refugee Council's Diaspora Programme

<https://drc.ngo/relief-work/diaspora-programme/what-we-do/diaspora-project-support>

Since 2018, the Danish Refugee Council has been engaging the Afghan diaspora in Europe to promote local humanitarian assistance, contribute to development through skills training, vocational training, and market development and improve coordination. It also commissioned the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance/United Nations University, MERIT, to conduct a study of the Afghan diaspora and diaspora organisations in Denmark, Germany, Sweden and the UK to support an improved coordination and collaboration with the Afghan diaspora.¹⁰

NETWORKS

⁸ Return of Qualified Afghans (RQA) Programme, IOM Afghanistan, https://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/activities/countries/docs/afghanistan/rqa_programme_08.pdf <https://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/activities/countries/docs/afghanistan/IOM-Afghanistan-RQA-Factsheet-January-2012.pdf>

⁹ Other conferences include 'Knowledge Transfer and Support. The Role of the Afghan Diaspora in Europe', 2019. <http://www.vidc.org/en/topics/global-dialogue/2019/networking-conference-the-role-of-the-afghan-diaspora-in-europe/> and 'The Afghan Diaspora's Role in Afghanistan's Social, Economic and Political Development Process', 2019 <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-academic-diaspora-conference-afghanistan-by-the-farkhunda-trust-tickets-57722306974#>

¹⁰ Meshkovska, Biljana, Nasrat Sayed, Katharina Koch, Iman Rajabzadeh, Carole Wenger & Melissa Siegel, 2019, *Afghan Diaspora in Europe: Mapping engagement in Denmark, Germany, Sweden, and the United Kingdom*, Study commissioned by Danish Refugee Council <https://www.merit.unu.edu/publications/uploads/1576769428.pdf>

Annex:

List of Actors

Diaspora related institutions



- **At regional level**

World Bank Afghanistan <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/afghanistan/overview#2>

Afghanistan became a member in 1955 but operations were suspended in 1979, shortly after the Soviet invasion. The World Bank continued to provide assistance through its office in Pakistan and operations resumed in 2002. To date, the World Bank has provided over \$4.48 billion for development and emergency reconstruction projects, \$4.14 billion in grants and \$436.4 in no-interest loans. The bank has 10 active International Development Association (IDA) projects worth \$908 million and 14 projects jointly funded with the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund valued at over \$2.3 billion from IDA. The International Finance Corporation (private sector development arm of World Bank) has a current cumulative committed investment portfolio of over \$238 million and advisory services portfolio of \$11.5 million.

International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) <https://www.icmpd.org/home/>

Founded in 1993, ICMPD is an international organisation with 17 member states, 300 staff members and is active in more than 90 countries worldwide. It takes a regional approach in its work to create efficient partnerships along migration routes. It has signed an MoU with Afghanistan's Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation to develop a Comprehensive Migration Policy (CMP). They have also partnered to set up a Migrant Resource Centre in Kabul, Afghanistan, to provide clear information on possibilities for orderly migration and pre-departure information to potential migrants. This was officially presented in 2019 in Kabul. ICMPD is also the implementing partner of the project "support to the Silk Routes Partnership for Migration under the Budapest process". The Silk Routes Partnership Project aims to strengthen the migration management capacities of the Silk Routes countries – Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan – and is funded by the EU, Bulgaria, Hungary (lead), Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK. ICMPD also engages extensively with the Ministry of Labour on their labour migration practices and policies and supports the Ministry of Interior Affairs in regional law enforcement cooperation initiatives.

International Organisation for Migration Afghanistan <https://afghanistan.iom.int>

The IOM Afghanistan works closely with national and local government institutions, NGOs, community organisations and donor communities to deal with migration management, humanitarian emergencies and improved living conditions for vulnerable communities.

Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/358.html>

GIZ's work is mainly commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Federal Foreign Office (AA). It also works for international donors such as the World Bank and the Government of the Netherlands. GIZ's work in Afghanistan focuses on improving living conditions for the population and in the northern provinces of Kunduz, Takhar, Badakhshan, Baghlan, Balkh and Samangan.



United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Afghanistan

<https://www.af.undp.org/content/afghanistan/en/home.html>

The UNDP has been working in Afghanistan on challenges related to climate change and resilience, gender, governance, health, livelihoods and rule of law. Its work is guided by the government, its development councils and is carried out in close coordination with partner UN agencies.

USAID in Afghanistan <https://www.usaid.gov/afghanistan>

USAID's goal in Afghanistan is to promote a stable, inclusive and prosperous country. The key elements of USAID's strategy going forward call for sustaining the significant achievements in health, education, and women's empowerment; stimulating agriculture-led economic growth and fiscal sustainability; and supporting legitimate and effective Afghan governance.

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) <https://unama.unmissions.org/activities>

UNAMA was established by the UN Security Council in 2002 at the request of the Government of Afghanistan. Its mandate is reviewed annually with the latest mandate renewal in September 2019 when resolution 2489 was adopted to continue to lead and coordinate international civilian efforts in full cooperation with the Afghanistan government.

Southern Western Afghanistan & Baluchistan Association for Coordination (SWABAC)

<http://www.swabac.org>

The association was established in 1988 by 12 international NGOs in Pakistan based on the needs of having a coordination mechanism to harmonise their activities. Its activities fall within three categories: coordination, advocacy and capacity building.

- **National institutions**
 - At ministerial level

Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled <https://molisa.gov.af/en/about-ministry-0>


The ministry has four key programmes: labour welfare & skills development; welfare of the families of martyrs & disabled; social welfare; and administration & finance capacity development. This is currently the lead ministry responsible for diaspora engagement and it is responsible for administration and management.

Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR), <https://morr.gov.af/en>

The ministry addresses issues related to returned refugees, reintegration and internally displaced person (IDP) management.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), <https://www.mfa.gov.af>

The ministry focuses on bilateral and multilateral relations with migrant host countries and deals with cross-border issues that might stem from migration or returning diaspora.



Ministry of Interior (Moi), <https://moi.gov.af/en>

The ministry is responsible for issuing legal documents, such as passports and visas, as well as handling the prevention of irregular migration.

- At sub-ministerial level

Da Afghanistan Bank, <https://dab.gov.af/index.php/>

The Central Bank of Afghanistan has introduced a lot of legislation related to international money transfers and remittance transfers. It introduced the Law of Da Afghanistan Bank (2003/4) which contains 134 articles focusing on aspects such as currency, securities services and transfer systems, foreign exchange controls and exchange rate policy.

High Commission for Migration <https://president.gov.af/en/about-high-commission-for-migration/>

After being mooted by the Minister of Refugees and Repatriations, the formation of a High Commission for Migration was discussed and approved in an Afghanistan cabinet meeting in 2015. The High Commission is assigned to manage affairs related to refugees, provide rights and social services to refugees and those returning to the country and also garner aid from countries, especially that of host countries.

- At local level

Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organisation, 2008, <https://appro.org.af>

It is an independent social research organisation with a mandate to promote social and policy learning to benefit development efforts in Afghanistan through conducting research, monitoring, evaluation, training and mentoring. They are registered with the Ministry of Economy in Afghanistan as a non-profit NGO.

**Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR), 1988
<http://www.acbar.org/page/3.jsp?title=background>**

The agency was created in Pakistan in response to the demand from NGOs working with Afghan refugees in Pakistan and across the border in Afghanistan to coordinate assistance and delivery of services more efficiently. It focuses on information sharing, coordination, advocacy with NGO members, the government, UN, donors and wider civil society.

Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society, 2014, <https://aicsafg.org/>

It aims to support a credible and competent civil society sector in Afghanistan by linking civil society organisations, donors, government and capacity building services through culturally appropriate certification schemes. It seeks to encourage the growth of a vibrant civil society, promoting pluralism and participatory development in Afghanistan.

Afghan NGO Coordination Bureau, 1991, <https://www.ancb.org/index.php>

It was founded as a network of national NGOs in Afghanistan coordinating the activities among its members, the government, international organisations, UN and donor Agencies. It strives to enhance the capacity of member organisations through workshops, seminars and building partnerships with other or-

organisations to boost technical capacity. It has 200 members in health, agriculture, human rights, women empowerment, education, environment, civic education sector and capacity building.

Afghan Civil Society Forum-organization (ACSFo), 2001, <https://acsf.af/>

The organisation was established in partnership between Afghan civil society actors and 'Swisspeace' (a Swiss private foundation for the promotion of peace). It aims to coordinate, expand and foster civil society networks in Afghanistan and identify, raise and incorporate the needs, concerns and views of Afghan citizens into the social, economic and political development processes.

American University of Afghanistan, 2006, <https://www.auaf.edu.af/>

The American University of Afghanistan is Afghanistan's only nationally accredited, private, not-for-profit, non-partisan and co-educational university. It enrolls more than 1700 full and part time students and has produced 29 Fulbright scholars. It also maintains partnerships with American universities. The university was founded by Dr Sharif Fayeze who was from the Herat province in Afghanistan and pursued his graduate education in the US.

Diaspora organisations in Europe



Afghan Academy International early 1980s UK <https://www.afghanacademy.org.uk>

This independent, non-political and non-tribal organisation was set up to serve and support newly-arrived Afghans in the U.K. with early personal and social needs as well as to provide and promote cultural and educational activities to the new Afghan community.

Afghan Council of Great Britain (ACGB) UK <http://a-cgb.co.uk>

ACGB is the first national council of the British Afghan community in the UK affiliated with regional public, private and nongovernmental organizations from across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It promotes consultation, cooperation, and collaboration on Afghan affairs in the UK. It also founded the Federation of European Afghan Associations, which is the largest independent non-political union of Afghan diaspora organisations from across Europe.

Afghan-German Doctors Association-Weimar (ADAV) 2004 Germany <https://www.afghan-telemedicine.org/en/adav-weimar>

Development activities

ADAV is a registered voluntary association in Germany which provides scientific and practical help with establishing medical facilities and efficient healthcare in Afghanistan. It trains Afghan doctors and medical staff by sending doctors from Germany and other European countries to Afghanistan or by finding scholarships for Afghan doctors. It also engages in the psychological support of Afghans living in Germany.

Afghanisches Kommunikations-und Kulturzentrum (Afghan Communication and Culture Centre) 1987 Germany <https://afghan-kultur.de>

Promotes Afghan culture in Germany to assist with the integration of recent Afghan arrivals in Berlin, including German lessons. It also offers social and psychosocial counselling, cultural activities and social events, and Dari and Pashto courses.

Afghan Medical Staff Association 2002 Germany <http://www.afghanmedstaff.de/>

Development activities

Combining Afghan and German medical expertise, AMSA supports the continuous training and qualification of Afghan doctors through capacity building either in Germany or in Afghanistan. It carries out projects that are intended to contribute to the development and modernisation of the healthcare system in Afghanistan.

Association of Afghan Healthcare Professionals 2011 UK <http://aahpuk.org>

Development activities

This organisation assists with the education and training of healthcare professionals of Afghan origin in the UK and works with other medical organisations in the UK and Afghanistan to promote clinical awareness and contribute to the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan's healthcare sector. The Wheelchair project was a joint charitable venture between AAHP, The Karen Woo Foundation and Baaz Foundation (Afghanistan). The Clean Drinking Water project was implemented in Balkh province (2013) and Provincial Hospitals set up in Ghor (2015) and Chaghcharan Ghor (2014). It has also supported the Khwaja jam clinic in providing healthcare services to its local population for nearly three decades. The association also organises fund-raising events.

Bildung, Kultur, Begegnung (Education, Culture, Encounter) (YAAR) 2012 Germany
<http://yaarberlin.de/english/>

This organisation offers German, Dari/Farsi and Pashto language courses and legal advice for refugees from Afghanistan in Germany, in addition to social activities for women empowerment and political participation.

Dachverband des Afghanischen Medizinischen Fachpersonals (DAMF) (Association of Afghan Medical Professionals) 2002 Germany <http://damf-ev.com/Startseite/>

Development activities

This organisation functions as a coordinating NGO of all medical and other Afghanistan-focused NGOs based in Germany. They focus particularly on providing books for Afghan universities, have built and fund the running costs of the Dewanbegi clinic in Kabul and organise the annual Hamburg-Afghan week. The organisation coordinates activities with the German Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Education and the German institutions, including GIZ in Afghanistan.

Farkhunda Trust for Afghan Women's Education 2016 UK <http://www.farkhundatrust.org>

Farkhunda Trust supports Afghan women with exceptional academic records by providing mentorship and scholarships to attain their education in the UK. The trust has institutional links with Kabul University and Gawharshad Institute of Higher Education in Kabul.

Freundeskreis Afghanistan (Friend's Circle Afghanistan) 1980s Germany <https://www.fk-afghanistan.de>

 **Development activities**

Freundeskreis is a result of cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Defence in Afghanistan for transportation services, school equipment and other materials. It also partners with humanitarian NGOs from Germany and Afghanistan.

Katib Kultur Forening (Katib Cultural Association) 2007 Denmark <http://www.katib.dk>

KKF supports younger generations of Afghans to preserve culture and prevent cultural clashes between newcomers and the general population in Denmark.

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