AFGHANISTAN

INTRODUCTION
Afghanistan served as a buffer between the British and Russian Empires until it won independence from British control in 1919. In August 2021, the Islamic fundamentalist Taliban overran the country; the latest group to rule in this war-torn country since 1979.

GOVERNMENT
Chief of State  to be determined
Head of Government  to be determined
Government Type  Islamic fundamentalist state
Capital  Kabul
Legislature  to be determined

GEOGRAPHY
Area
Total: 652,230 sq km
Land: 652,230 sq km
Water: 0 sq km
Climate  arid to semi-arid; 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

ECONOMY
Economic Overview  extremely low-income South Asian economy; import drops, currency depreciation, disappearing central bank reserves, and increasing inflation after Taliban takeover; increasing Chinese trade; hit hard by COVID; ongoing sanctions
GDP (Purchasing Power Parity)  $77.04 billion (2020 est.)
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity)  $2,000 (2020 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  $1.48 billion (2020 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  $6.98 billion (2020 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) 78% (Dari functions as the lingua franca), Pashto (official) 50%, Uzbek 10%, English 5%, Turkmen 2%, Urdu 2%, Pashayi 1%, Nuristani 1%, Arabic 1%, Balochi 1%, other <1% (2017 est.)
Religion  Muslim 99.7% (Sunni 84.7 - 89.7%, Shia 10 – 15%), other 0.3% (2009 est.)

as of October 2021