

4.8.7. Turkmen

4.8.7. Turkmen

Turkmen originate from Turkic-speaking tribes and adhere to the Sunni Hanafi school of thought.[1854] They speak Turkmen and Dari.[1855] Although their exact number is 'uncertain',[1856] some sources have estimated that they make up 1 % to 3 % of the Afghan population.[1857] Turkmen predominantly reside in northern Afghanistan,[1858] in provinces bordering Turkmenistan.[1859] Large numbers of Turkmen were reportedly residing in Jawzjan Province, as well as smaller numbers in the provinces of Faryab,[1860] Takhar, Samangan, Sar-e Pul, Balkh, Kunduz,[1861] Badghis,[1862] and Herat.[1863] They live mainly in rural areas.[1864]

Since the Taliban takeover, ethnic minorities, including Turkmen, have faced marginalisation,[1865] and Turkmen have also reportedly been affected by forced evictions.[1866] According to the UN Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, there were 'persistent reports of a deliberate and seemingly organized campaign by Pashtuns to dislodge ethnic Tajik, Turkmen and Uzbek communities from rich agricultural land in the north'.[1867] Forced evictions were reported in several provinces across Afghanistan,[1868] but particularly in the northern parts of the country, as reported by Maliha Shirzay for RWI.[1869] In many cases, forced evictions occurred as a result of land disputes and claims by persons and groups perceived to have Taliban support,[1870] such as Kuchis.[1871]

A UN report published in September 2023 noted that members of *inter alia* the Turkmen community has continued to allege that the removal of their languages as official curriculum languages constitutes an 'attack' on their linguistic heritage.[1872]

In June 2025, Sheikh Samiullah Farahmand, a Turkmen cleric, was appointed by the de facto authorities as their ambassador to Türkiye.[1873] Before this appointment, he served as the de facto provincial head of the military court in Kunduz Province.[1874]

- 1854

  MRG, Uzbeks and Turkmens in Afghanistan, n.d., url

- 1855

  SCA, The Afghan Population, n.d., url

- 1856

MRG, Uzbeks and Turkmens in Afghanistan, n.d., url

- 1857

  USCIRF, Afghanistan, April 2022, url, p. 2; MRG, Uzbeks and Turkmens in Afghanistan, n.d., url; SCA, The Afghan Population, n.d., url

- 1858

  Deccan Herald, Dominant ethnic groups in Afghanistan, 18 August 2021, url; MRG, Uzbeks and Turkmens in Afghanistan, n.d., url; SCA, The Afghan Population, n.d., url

- 1859

  Jamestown Foundation, Afghanistan’s Ethnic Turkmens: Enemies or Allies for Ashgabat?, 4 October 2015, url

- 1860

  Jamestown Foundation, Afghanistan’s Ethnic Turkmens: Enemies or Allies for Ashgabat?, 4 October 2015, url; Obaid, A., and Ruttig, T., Elections 2014 (22): How disenchantment with General Dostum split the Uzbek vote bank, 22 May 2014, url

- 1861

  Obaid, A., and Ruttig, T., Elections 2014 (22): How disenchantment with General Dostum split the Uzbek vote bank, 22 May 2014, url

- 1862

  Jamestown Foundation, Afghanistan’s Ethnic Turkmens: Enemies or Allies for Ashgabat?, 4 October 2015, url

- 1863

  Rasekh, M. S., A Study of the Turkmen Dialects of Afghanistan: Phonology – Morphology – Lexicon – Sociolinguistic Aspects, PhD Thesis, 7 October 2016, url, p. 12

- 1864

  Rasekh, M. S., A Study of the Turkmen Dialects of Afghanistan: Phonology – Morphology – Lexicon – Sociolinguistic Aspects, PhD Thesis, 7 October 2016, url, p. 33

- 1865

  AI, The State of the World's Human Rights; Afghanistan 2023, 24 April 2024, url, p. 71; UN, General Assembly, Situation of human rights in Afghanistan, 1 September 2023, url, para. 50

- 1867

UN Security Council, Thirteenth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, 26 May 2022, url, para. 19

- 1868

  UN, General Assembly, Situation of human rights in Afghanistan, 1 September 2023, url, para. 50; UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in Afghanistan, 23 February 2024, url, para. 62

- 1872

  UN, General Assembly, Situation of human rights in Afghanistan, 1 September 2023, url, para. 53

- 1873

  Afghanistan International, Taliban Appoints Turkmen Cleric As Ambassador To Türkiye, 26 June 2025, url; MEI, Taliban Leadership Tracker: Sheikh Samiullah Farahmand, n.d., url

- 1874

  MEI, Taliban Leadership Tracker: Sheikh Samiullah Farahmand, n.d., url

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu