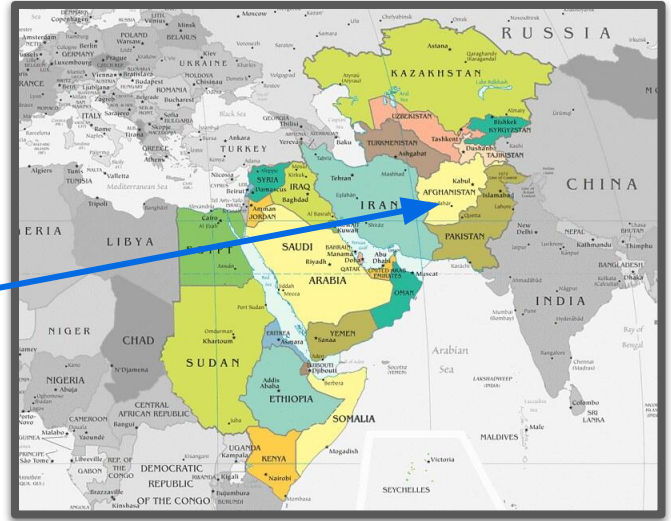


Teacher Fact Sheet

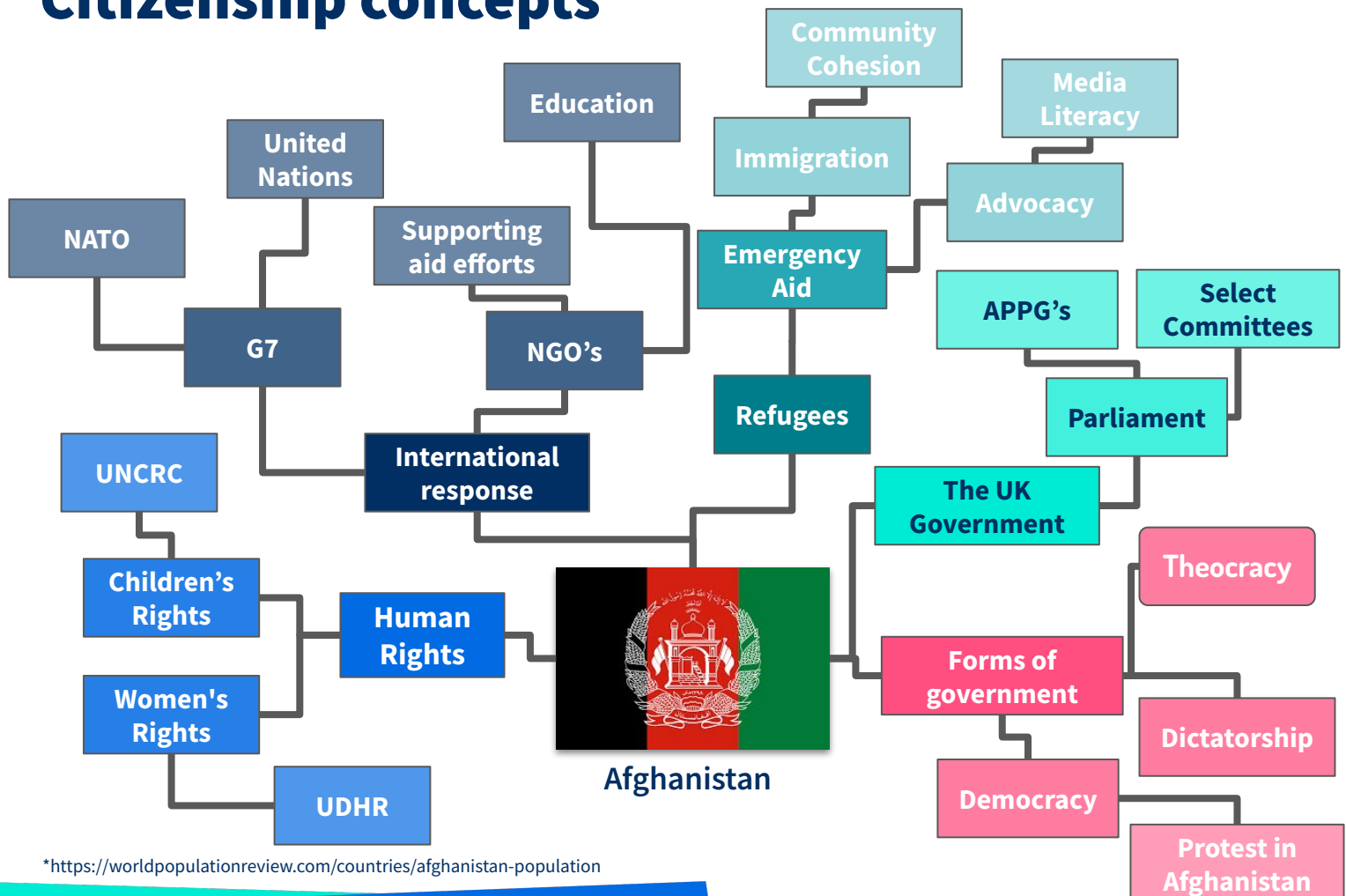
Afghanistan

Note: When discussing this with students, be aware that it is a sensitive topic - students may well have relatives living in the region, or family members who are in the military and this may cause anxiety. Guidance on teaching sensitive and controversial issues is available from the ACT website.



- Afghanistan is a country in Asia.
- Capital City - Kabul
- Main religion - Islam 80-89% Sunni, 10-19% Shia.
- Population - 30.04 Million (2019)
- Only 55% of the population have access to clean drinking water and only 31% have access to improved sanitation facilities.*
- Literacy among the population of Afghanistan is only at 38.2% of the population over the age of 15 years, with males at 52% and females at 24%.*

Citizenship concepts



*<https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/afghanistan-population>

Teacher Fact Sheet

Afghanistan History

The Taliban held Afghanistan from 1996 until 2001, when the USA and allied forces invaded. This intervention by the US was as a result of the 9/11 attack. (Twin Towers). The USA found out that it was a terrorist group called Al Qaeda who planned and carried out the attacks. Their leader was a man named Osama Bin Laden. They found out that the Taliban in Afghanistan were hiding Bin Laden, so the USA and allied forces' mission was to topple the Taliban and find Al Qaeda's leader. A new government was put in place in Afghanistan and Bin Laden was killed by the USA, but the Taliban have regrouped and continued to vie for power. Now the US have completed withdrawal, Taliban forces have re-established themselves as the leaders of the country, leaving thousands of Afghan citizens who oppose the regime in danger.

Afghanistan since the Soviet occupation

Main developments

1979-1989 Soviet occupation

Moscow invades in December 1979 to support a communist regime. The Afghan mujahideen resistance, backed by the West, fights the Soviet Army for a decade until it withdraws in February 1989



1992-1996 Civil war

Nearly 100,000 killed in two years. The Taliban movement, supported by Pakistan, begins to emerge



1996-2001 Taliban rule

Hardline Islamic regime takes power. Led by Mullah Mohammad Omar, regime becomes close to Al-Qaeda, sheltering its leader Osama bin Laden. Women and girls mostly denied education and employment, unable to leave home without male companion and full face coverings



2001 Western intervention

US-led invasion topples Taliban. Hamid Karzai appointed to lead interim government. Up to 130,000 soldiers eventually deployed to help secure the country against the resisting Taliban



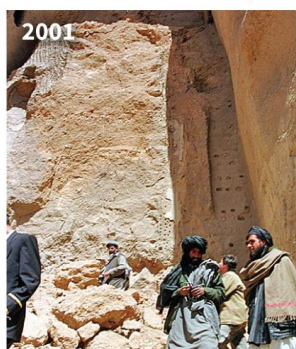
1980
Afghan women attend a workplace literacy course in Kabul in the 80s



2021
Taliban fighters in Laghman province, Aug 15, 2021



1988
Soviet soldier given flowers near Kabul, 1988



2001
Afghan Taliban militia soldiers stand near the dynamited Buddha statue, Bamiyan, 2001



2002
US soldiers arrive at Bagram airbase, 2002

2021 US withdrawal, Taliban in control

US President Joe Biden sets delayed drawdown deadline to September 11

Violence surges as NATO begins final withdrawal in May

Taliban make rapid gains through districts and border posts, and in August begin taking control of key provincial capitals

Ghani flees the country

Taliban enter Kabul on August 15



2020 US-Taliban deal

The two sides sign a historic deal following talks that started in 2018, paving the way for the withdrawal of all foreign troops

2004-2014 Karzai era

Karzai wins Afghanistan's first presidential election based on universal suffrage

Karzai is reelected in 2009 in a poll marred by massive fraud, low turnout and Taliban violence

2014-2016 US withdrawal

NATO completes handover of security to Afghan army and police. New Afghan President Ashraf Ghani signs deal allowing some US-NATO forces to stay on

Security degenerates. In July 2016 US President Barack Obama slows the planned withdrawal of US troops

2017 US reinforcements

New US President Donald Trump scraps pullout timetable and re-commits thousands of soldiers

Attacks on Afghan forces multiply while US steps up air strikes

Teacher Fact Sheet

Glossary

Taliban	In 1994 the 'Taliban' (student in Pashto) were formed. They wanted to remove corruption and illegality from Afghanistan and these views were very popular, boosting their power. Their harsh interpretation of Islam meant that women bore the brunt of their abusive control. The Taliban has retaken control of Afghanistan, after 20 years of democracy.
Civil War	A war between citizens of the same country.
Refugee	A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster and who has an asylum application.
Asylum	The protection granted by a state to someone who has left their home country as a political refugee.
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is an intergovernmental military alliance between 28 European countries and 2 North American countries.
Intervention	The action of becoming intentionally involved in a difficult situation, in order to improve it or prevent it from getting worse

Links to useful resources

[Imperial War Museum - How did 9/11 lead to a 20 year war?](#)

[Afghanistan: A guide to the country's troubled history - CBBC Newsround](#)

[Afghanistan: How could Taliban rule affect women, girls and education? - CBBC Newsround](#)

[War in Afghanistan](#)

[Watch Newsround's 2014 Special - Children of Kabul - CBBC Newsround](#)

[FYI Episode 136 A girl and her family face an uncertain future in Afghanistan](#)

[Amnesty UK - Using fiction to teach Human Rights SHADOW by Michael Morpurgo](#)

[UNHCR issues a non-return advisory for Afghanistan](#)

[BBC Radio 4 - The Briefing Room, Who's supporting the Taliban?](#)