Afghan people in south east Melbourne
Perspectives of a migrant and refugee community

A community profile provided by
South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre
March 2009
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1. INTRODUCTION

This document aims to present readers with a collection of perspectives by members of the various Afghan communities on their settlement experiences in Australia. No settlement experience is the same for any two individuals. Despite the commonalities of people’s backgrounds, the relationship between communities and their environment is indeed a unique experience.

Accordingly, we have documented aspects of community development by the Afghan communities in Victoria, specifically in the south-eastern region of Melbourne. There have been Afghans living and working in Australia for almost 150 years, longer than any other community still receiving recognition as a refugee producing nation. It was in 1860, when the first cameleers arrived as transportation workers. Since that time, people have arrived from Afghanistan mostly as refugees, principally after the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and then in the late 1990s during the time of the oppressive Taliban regime.

Refugees face many challenges. A new and unfamiliar home provides both sanctuary and threat to people’s traditional ways of life. Adapting to new laws, customs and social standards, and needing to learn about unfamiliar monetary, regulatory, medical, educational, and employment systems places enormous pressure on individuals and families. For these reasons, we have designed this document to assist readers develop a greater understanding of specific Afghan refugee needs. In particular, we hope that improved knowledge will shape the ways in which providers can deliver better and more culturally appropriate services to the various Afghan communities.

We have sought to include a broad representation of views from the Afghan communities. People respond to their new life in Australia in different ways. Some arrive from the same country of origin, but not always with the same, linguistic, ethnic and cultural background, and their life experiences are often just as diverse. We hope to demonstrate, through the voices of Afghanistan-born and Afghan-descended people in this region, some aspects of settlement. By giving readers a selection of opinions and experiences, we hope to illustrate the scope and diversity of this community. To that end we believe this document will prove a useful resource for service providers, educators, students, government agencies and general readers.

**Aims of this profile**

- To explore themes relevant to Afghan communities settling in the south-east of Melbourne
- To provide information on issues affecting the settlement of Afghan communities in the south east region
- To assist service providers in developing culturally appropriate services to meet Afghan communities’ needs
- To assist in the development of more effective relationships between Afghan community members and service providers
2. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Edited by Mr Bill Collopy, Client Services manager
Co-editor, Ms Molica Ouk, researcher/social work student

This profile would not have been possible without the assistance of the 41 Afghan community leaders and members who have contributed their time and comments during interviews for this publication. We thank them for their generosity and their patience.

The profile has been developed with the assistance of funding from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship

DISCLAIMER

Opinions expressed by community leaders, representatives and residents in this document are personal perspectives only. These opinions do not necessarily reflect Australian Government policy on migration or settlement, policies of the Afghanistan Government or policies of the Migrant Resource Centre.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DIAC</td>
<td>Department of Immigration and Citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIMA</td>
<td>Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRC</td>
<td>Migrant Resource Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERMRC</td>
<td>South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHS</td>
<td>Department of Human Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMEP</td>
<td>Adult Migrant Education Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHSS</td>
<td>Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMES</td>
<td>Adult Multicultural Education Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VFST</td>
<td>Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (Foundation House)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPV</td>
<td>Temporary Protection Visa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIHRC</td>
<td>Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3. GEOGRAPHY, POPULATION and HISTORY

**Where is Afghanistan?**

Afghanistan is a landlocked country situated between the Middle East, Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent along the ancient "Silk Route". Afghanistan has been described as a highway connecting East and West (Cigler, 1986). Due to its strategic location it has been an ancient nexus of trade and migration, not to mention the target of several waves of invading hordes (Cigler, 1986). Through the ages, this area of the world has been known by various names. Afghanistan’s present borders have only existed for the past century.

The territory was known and linked to Persia, Central Asia, the Indian subcontinent and the Middle East by shifting empires. Frontiers were mostly demarcated only towards the nineteenth century (Ewans, 2002). Afghanistan shares its borders with the republics of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to the north, and China to the north east. From the east to the south of Afghanistan it shares a border with Pakistan. North to west marks the borders Afghanistan shares with Iran. Physically, Afghanistan is a land of rugged beauty, snow-covered mountains, barren deserts and rolling steppe. It also is home to the infamous Hindu Kush. Afghanistan is about the size of Texas, larger than France, and smaller than Turkey. It has a continental climate, its summer hot and dry, and it winters harsh with daily and even seasonal variations. Most of the country is barren, rainfall is light and water is scarce (Ewans, 2002).
Area:
*total area*: 647,500 sq km

Land boundaries:
Total 5,529 km
- China 76 km
- Iran 936 km
- Pakistan 2,430 km
- Tajikistan 1,206 km
- Turkmenistan 744 km
- Uzbekistan 137 km

Coastline: 0 km (landlocked)

**The Afghan people**

Afghanistan has a population of mixed origin. The country’s high mountains and deep and narrow valleys not only separate different regions but also different peoples, peoples of different cultures and lifestyles (Emadi, 2005). Different migratory groups have left their mark on the inhabitants of Afghanistan, subsequently shaping the people’s character and way of life. Today inhabitants are ethnically, linguistically and culturally diverse. Recent estimates suggests that Afghanistan may have a population of over 32 million (CIA, 2008). It is also estimated that the population is divided into 20 or so main ethnic groups with more than 50 in all. (Ewans, 2002). Although not an exhaustive list, the following covers various major ethnic groups, listed in order of numerical strength.

**Pashtun:**

Pashtuns (also known as Pushtuns, Pushtoons, Pakhtuns, Pukhtuns, Pathans) constitute the majority of the country’s population as a single ethnic group, and have been dominant in the country’s political sphere since the rise of Ahmad Shah Durani who came into power in 1747 (Emadi, 2005). Non-Pushtun ethnic communities refer to Pashtuns as ‘Afghans’. The different variations of this ethnic
name often depend on “soft” and “hard” dialects of the language, used by western and eastern tribes, respectively (Emadi, 2005; Ewan, 2002). Pashtuns reside primarily in the south and south eastern regions of the country, although there is also a significant number who reside in the Northern parts of the country and western regions of Pakistan which were previously Afghan territories (Emadi, 2005; Ewan, 2002). Pashtuns are divided into numerous tribal groups, such as Durani, Ghilzai, Afridi, Sadozai, Yusufzai, Waziri, Mohammadzai and Qandahari (Emadi, 2005). Each tribe speaks its own dialect of Pashtu (or Pushto) language, a variant of the Indo-European language family related to Persian (Emadi, 2005; Ewan, 2002). Pashtuns are mainly Sunnis of the Hanafi School of Islam, however there are a small number of Shias also (Emadi, 2005). Pashtuns believe they are descendants of the original Aryan people, along with Greeks, Persians, Turkic, and Arab peoples, and some trace their origins to the children of Israel (Emadi, 2005). Until recently the term “Afghan” was synonymous with “Pashtun”, and Afghanistan meant ‘land of the Pashtuns.’

**Tajiks:**

Tajiks trace their ancestry to the Greco-Bactrian dynasties that flourished in the oases around the Oxus River (Emadi, 2005). It has also been suggested that they are decedents of Mongol or Turkic hordes (Marsden, 2001). Tajiks speak various dialects of the Persian language. Most are Sunnis, while some are Shia-Isma’ili. They reside mainly in Badakhshan, Parwan, and Kabul. Tajiks in remote northern parts of Afghanistan, in places like Pamir, Darwaz, Shughnan. They speak their own languages, which are called by their respective regional names. (Emadi, 2005). Most also speak Dari, and live in the northern and western half of Afghanistan. Tajiks also live in Tajikistan, a northern neighbour of Afghanistan and an ex-Soviet republic.

**Hazaras:**

The Hazaras, like the Tajiks, are thought to be of Turkic origin; possibly descendants of Mongol and Turkic hordes (Marsden, 2001). Their Mongolian-like features have led some scholars to argue that Hazaras are direct descendants of the Mongols from the time when Genhis Khan’s army invaded Afghanistan in the early thirteenth century (Emadi, 2005). Hazaras form a native community of Afghanistan residing mainly in the central region known as Hazarajat (Emadi, 2005). Hazaras led a semi-autonomous life until King Abd al-Rahman subjugated them to his rule. He suppressed the Hazaras, enslaved the men and women, and coerced them to follow the Sunni faith of Islam. Thus, in contrast to many other ethnic groups, Hazaras have traditionally been marginalised, politically and economically (Marsden, 2001; Emadi, 2005). A significant number of Hazaras also reside in towns and villages in Samangan, Balkh, Takhar, Qunduz, and Banghlan as well as in Kabul (Emadi, 2005). They speak Hazaragi, a dialect of the Persian language, which has many similarities to Dari. Most Hazaras are Shias, though some are Isma’ili (Emadi, 2005).

**Uzbeks:**

Uzbeks are divided between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan. They sought refuge in Afghanistan during the 1920s and 1930s along with the Turkmen people to escape suppression by the Soviet Union of the Masmachi revolt by Islamic rebels.
Afghan Community Profile – south eastern Melbourne

(Marsden, 2001). They constitute the largest Turkic-speaking community in Afghanistan, and speak their own language, Uzbeki, though most also understand Persian and Pashtu languages (Emadi, 2005). Uzbeks are Sunnis, and most of them are sedentary farmers (Emadi, 2005). It is mostly the Uzbek riders who play Buzkashi, Afghanistan’s national sport.

Turkmen/Turkoman:

Turkmen are divided between Afghanistan and Turkmenistan, originating from the Turkic tribes of Central Asia (Marsden, 2001; Emadi, 2005). Their mother tongue is the Turkic dialect; however most understand and speak either the Persian or Pashtu languages (Emadi, 2005). Turkmen are Sunnis and have maintained their literature, culture and traditions, they are known for breeding qaraqul sheep, and weaving carpets and rugs (Marsden, 2001, Emadi, 2005).

Other ethnic groups:

There are other, smaller separate ethnic groups also living in Afghanistan; such as Chahar Aimaks, Turkmen, Baluchis, Aimaqs, Kirgiz, Nuristanis, Sayeds and Tartars to name just a few. For more information on some of these please refer to “Culture and Customs of Afghanistan” by Hafizullah Emadi (2005).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic groups</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pashtun: 42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajik: 27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazara: 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbek: 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aimak: 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmen: 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baloch: 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: 4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(CIA World Factbook)
Languages

While the majority of people speak at least one of two official languages – Pashtu and Dari (a form of Persian) – over 30 different languages also exist (Ewans, 2002). Eastern dialects of the Persian language are known as "Dari". The name derives from "Pārsī-ē Darbārī", meaning Persian of the royal courts. The ancient term Dari is one of the original names of the Persian language.

For more details on Afghan languages, see Appendix.

Afghanistan history

Afghanistan has a history dating back more than five millennia. From 1929 to 1978, it was one of the most peaceful countries in Asia, maintaining neutrality even during World War Two (Maley, 2002). The 1978 Marxist coup marked the beginning of 25 years of bloodshed; from the Soviet invasion and ensuing civil war, to the fundamentalist Taliban regime. In the aftermath of terrorist attacks on the United States on Sept 11th 2001, an international spotlight fell on Afghanistan. The country has become associated with terrorism and labelled as a country in turmoil. Western media regularly feature articles associating Afghanistan with terrorism or radical Islamic politics, and yet little is understood by outsiders about Afghanistan’s culture, politics and history. Andrew Lawler (2002), a reporter on Middle Eastern and Central Asian archaeology, states: “Afghanistan, though poor and fractured today, has a richer past than almost any place on Earth”.

Early History:

50,000 BC

Before the Soviet invasion in 1978, archaeological research in Afghanistan was in its infancy, so there is little known about pre-history and proto-history of the country before 500 B.C (Vogelsang (2002). However, excavations by Louis Dupree (1980) suggest that northern Afghanistan was inhabited by humans at least 50,000 years ago. Stone Age settlements have been discovered in Afghanistan. Fossil remains in the foothills of the Hindu Kush suggest that it was
one of the earliest places where plants and animals were domesticated (Clements, 2003; Dupree, 1980).

6000 BC

Blue-coloured lapis lazuli stone from Badakhshan is exported to India. Recent excavations in Sistan and Afghan Turkestan suggest evidence of a culture allied to the Indus civilizations of that time (Ewans, 2002).

4000 BC to 2000 BC

Urban centres arise in the area. Mundigak, located 35km northwest of modern Kandahar, slowly developed from a small agricultural village to an economic centre for raising wheat, barley, sheep, and goats – possibly a regional capital for the Indus Valley Civilisation (Clements, 2003; Dupree, 1980; Schaffer, 1978).

2000 BC

Accounts from India and Iran testify to the arrival of immigrants in large numbers on the Iranian Plateau (including Afghanistan) and Indian subcontinent. Newcomers bring with them Indo-Iranian languages, still the dominant languages in Iran, Afghanistan and the Indian subcontinent. Indo-Iranian languages constitute a branch of the large Indo-European language family. Speakers of proto-Indo-European originated in the steppes of Russia and the Ukraine between the 5th and 3rd century BC (Vogelsang, 2002).

600 BC

Achaemenids adopt Zoroastrianism, introduced by great Sage into Bactria, now Balkh Province, (Clements, 2003). Not until 6th century BC does the region appear in recorded history in as Persian dynasty (Ewans, 2002).

330 BC to 327 BC

Alexander the Great arrives, defeats Darius III and conquers the region (Ewans, 2002; Clements, 2003).

255 BC

Mauryan king Asoka introduces Buddhism to Afghanistan

150 BC to A.D 300

5 merging tribes align under Kushan tribe, beginning the Kushan Empire

Arrival of Islam in Afghanistan

642 to 652

Arabs invade Afghanistan from the west, and introduce Islam.
Islamic rulers develop a rich artistic and intellectual life. Ghazni empire extends from the Tigris to the Ganges (Runion, 2007; Clements, 2003).

Genghis Khan invades, leaving the country in ruins, and slaughtering thousands.

Mongol conqueror Timor-e-Lang defeats Afghanistan and begins the Timurid dynasty.

Afghanistan is split between the Mongul and Safavid empires

Afghans invade Persia and overthrow the Safavid Empire, but their control is short-lived. Nadir Shah retakes Kandahar. Persian rule re-established over most of Afghanistan (Runion, 2007; Clements, 2003)

Emergence of Modern Afghanistan

Ahmad Shah Abdali (Durrani), campaigns for control of the territory now called Afghanistan (Clements, 2003). Refered to as the “Father of Afghanistan”, Ahmad Shah Durrani captures more territory after securing Kandahar, defeats the Moguls and expels the Persians. He thus secures an empire from Central Asia to Delhi and from Kashmir to the Arabian Sea. It becomes the greatest Muslim empire in the 18th century (Clements, 2003).

Timur Shah, a humane ruler, more scholar than soldier, moves the capital of Kandahar to Kabul because of tribal opposition. (Runion, 2007; Clements, 2003).

Zamn Shah comes to power. Internal unrest constantly threatens his rule. An authoritarian ruler, he is eventually overthrown by Shah Mahmud (Clements, 2003), who reigns until 1803, is then replaced by Shah Shuia until 1809, but later returns to power (Clements, 2003). Sons of Timur Shah fight to seize the throne during a period of anarchy and civil war. Dost Muhammad Khan, the ‘Great Amir,’ takes the throne and rules until ousted by Britain in 1834.
European Imperialism

Britain is increasingly interested in Afghanistan for strategic reasons; proximity to Russia and the latter’s potential for domination of central Asia. Britain sees Afghanistan as a buffer state between the increasing power and interests of the Russian Empire, and aims to protect the security of the Indian Empire. (Clements, 2003).

1834 to 1839

British troops invade Afghanistan, Dost Muhammad surrenders to the British and is exiled to India.

1839 to 1846

First Anglo-Afghan War. Shah Shuja returns to the throne with the support of Britain until his assassination.

1842-1863

Dost Muhammad restored to the throne. In 1859 Britain captures Baluchistan and Afghanistan becomes a landlocked country.

1863-1866

Shir Ali Khan succeeds his father Dost Muhammad, and counters revolts from half-brothers Azam and Afzal and his brother Muhammad. (Vogelsang, 2002).

1867-1878

Shir Ali travels to India to obtain support against Russian aggression and secure recognition for his son as successor. Meanwhile tensions heighten between Russia and Britain over Afghan territory (Clements, 2003; and Vogelsang, 2002).

1878-1881

Second Anglo-Afghan War. Abdur Rahman recognised by Britain as the Amir of Afghanistan. British completely withdrew from Afghanistan.

1892

Hazara uprising against Abdur Rahman suppressed.

1901-1919

Abdur Rahman dies and his son Habibullah succeeds. He rules Afghanistan for 18 years until his assassination in 1919.

1919

Amanullah proclaims himself Amir in Kabul and declares Afghanistan’s independence. Third Anglo-Afghan War begins. Britain signs Rawalpinidi Peace
Treaty and recognises Afghanistan’s independence. August 19th is commemorated as Afghanistan’s Independence day.

1923-1929

King Amanullah introduces a new constitution, a criminal code, statutes governing marriage, and other modernising programs. In addition he encourages people to wear western clothing. There is a revolt against these reforms by Shinwari Pushtan tribes and an uprising is led by Habibullah Kalakani (Emadi, 2005).

1929

King Amanullah renounces the throne and abdicates; replaced by his brother Enayatullah who abdicates three days later. Habibullah Kalakani is proclaimed as Amir. Nadir Khan seizes Kabul, Habibullah is captured and executed.

1933-1973

In 1947 Afghanistan becomes a founding member of the United Nations. In 1964 a constitutional monarchy is introduced, providing legal equality for men and women, though this is also a source of political unrest (Misra, 2004).

1973

Backed by the USSR, ex-Prime Minister and the King’s cousin, Muhammed Daoud, stages a coup while the King is on vacation, and declares Afghanistan a republic.

The Saur Revolution and Soviet Intervention

1978

Consistent with global trends, a radical movement emerges in intellectual circles: one favouring the Soviet socialist model and the other favouring an Islamic movement, which itself is split between two groups – Parchams, from Persian-speaking urbanised and cultural elite, and Khalqis, largely educated Pashtuns from rural areas (Marsden, 2001). Saur revolution (named after Saur, the month of revolt): People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) assumes power in a military coup. The Saur revolt brings in a Marxist government, totally dependent on the Soviet Union (Clements, 2003). For 20 years the Soviets had been infiltrating and building a power base in Afghanistan (Marsden, 2001). PDPA declares Afghanistan a democratic republic, and the army forms a revolutionary council to govern. Noor Muhammed Taraki is elected President and Prime Minister (Emadi, 2005; Misra, 2004). Babrak Karmal (Parcham faction of PDPA) becomes Deputy Prime Minister, Abdul Qadir becomes Minister of Defence, and Hafizullah Amin becomes foreign Minister. The Khalq (Taraki, and Amin) faction of the PDPA controls the critical ministry for the Soviet Union. The new regime seems incapable of understanding the need for balance in foreign and domestic policy and the importance of gradual change. It fails to create a national democratic revolution in a country that is yet to become a nation and is unable to
recognise the conservative nature of traditional Afghan rural communities (Clements, 2003).

1979-1989

Political instability increases: mass arrests, killings and factional unrest in the military. The party suffers internal divisions and in Sept 1979 the clash between Taraki and Amin comes to a head, with Amin succeeding. Opposition to the Marxist regime develops in rural areas. Authority of the PDPA is challenged in the provinces by a resistance based on national, social, ethnic and religious grounds. Resistance developed with covert aid from Pakistan (Clements, 2003). On December 27, Soviet paramilitary troops storm Amin’s palace, kill him and install Barbrak Karmal (Parcham faction of PDPA) as head of state. The situation in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate. Soviet occupation, intended to last a few months, endures for 10 years. Some describe it as the Soviet Union’s Vietnam. The USSR miscalculates and underestimates their major enemy the mujahideen who are from a traditional warrior society. The Soviets face an enemy with a love of freedom and immutable faith in Islam (Clements, 2003). The mujahideen also have the support of the population, and mainly operate from bases outside the country with the largest groups in Pakistan. Soon aid from the west reaches the mujahideen as the struggle becomes part of Cold war politics. By the late 1980s the Soviets are losing the war. In 1985 Barbrak Karmal is replaced by Najibullah. In 1987 Najibullah tries to negotiate a ceasefire but the mujahideen refuse as they consider him a puppet of the Soviet Union. The UN begins negotiations in 1982 in Geneva between Afghanistan and Pakistan, the Soviet Union and the US are present. In 1988 the Geneva accords are signed, with the US and Soviet Union as guarantors. These agreements also contain provisions for a timetable for withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. In 1989 the Soviet Union departs from Afghanistan, leaving the Najibullah government to its own devices (Clements, 2003).

1991

Collapse of the Soviet Union. Najibullah survives after Soviet withdrawal but is forced to resign. In 1992 and the Kabul government comes under the control of Babrak Karmal.

1994

Taliban militia capture Kandahar where they establish their base of operations.

The Rise of the Taliban

1994-2001

The mujahideen are not a unified force. They represent the factional interests of Afghan society; including Sunni and Shi’a Muslim groups, Islamic radicals and moderates. Their only unifying agency is their past opposition to Soviet presence (Clements, 2003) and related governments. The first three years of mujahideen rule are characterized by the total inability of its leaders to agree on lasting political settlement. Personal ambitions clash with ethnic, tribal and religious antipathies (Ewans, 2002). Amid this anarchy and chaos, the Taliban movement
emerges. A few mujahideen leaders, disillusioned with the anarchy following their victory, join the mullahs. The movement centres on former mujahideen commander, Mullah Muhammad Omar, from the village of Singesar in Kandahar Province (Clements, 2003). Swelling the group are commanders from other Pashtun parties, Klaq PDPA members, students from Afghan religious schools and refugee camps (Clements, 2003). Taliban objectives are to restore peace, disarm civilians and establish Shari’a law. The Taliban militia captures Kandahar, Maidan Shahr and Eardak, Heart and Ghor and then in 1996, Kabul. By 1997, the Taliban controls 90% of the country (Clements, 2003; Runion, 2007). In 1996, Osama bin Laden returns to Afghanistan following his expulsion from Sudan. He organises training camps for terrorists in eastern Afghanistan and attracts recruits from the Islamic world to his al-Qaeda organisation. He is accused of complicity in a number of terrorist attacks, including the attempted bombing of the World Trade Centre and attacks on US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. He was a mujahideen leader during the jihad against the Soviets and was a recipient of US aid at that time. The military campaign of the Taliban is marked by abuses of human rights, particularly against women, and ethnic cleansing. The Taliban regime seeks to ‘stabilise’ the country through a policy of ferocious repression, carrying out daily atrocities sanctioned under the guise of a harsh brand of Islamic law. It is estimated that 2000-5000 ethnic Hazara Shia Muslims were massacred by the Taliban militia in Mazar, Balkh. Incidents of massacres, mutilations, prisoners being suffocated in containers and other abuses have been recorded by the United Nations (Clements, 2003). In March 2001 the Taliban destroys all statues and monuments relating to Afghan pre-Islamic heritage, including the world famous statues of the Buddha in Bamiyan province. On September 11 2001, al-Qaeda carries out attacks the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, using commercial airplanes as weapons of mass destruction.

The War on Terror

2001

Attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon result in 4,000 deaths of civilians from several countries (Clements, 2003). US and British governments name al-Qaeda as responsible for the attacks, with Osama bin Laden as the instigator and financier. Reinforcing this allegation is a video released by bin Laden in which he welcomes the attacks on the US. It is broadcast by the Arab satellite television station al-Jazeera operating outside of Qatar (Clements, 2003). In October, the US begins a military assault on Taliban positions in Afghanistan. The campaign against the Taliban includes air assaults to destroy Taliban installations and infrastructure and attacks on al-Qaeda training camps. On Nov 7th, Taliban surrenders their main stronghold of Kandahar, and its leaders escape to the countryside. During Nov to Dec, The Bonn Conference is held in Germany, where representative Islamic groups agree on a post-Taliban power-sharing scheme. On December 22nd, with help from the US and UN, Afghanistan adopts a new constitution and establishes the country as an Islamic Republic. Afghanistan’s presidential elections are held and more than 8 million Afghans vote. Hamid Karzai is elected Interim President with 55.4% of the vote. In Dec 7th 2004 he becomes the first ever democratically elected president of Afghanistan.
A Quarter Century of War and Displacement

Since the Marxist coup of 1978, over 2 million people have been killed in Afghanistan, many of whom were civilians (Farr, 2001, cited in Misra, 2004). Over 5 million people have fled to Pakistan, Iran and India, and over 1 million have been displaced internally. Afghans still hold the record for being the single largest refugee group in the world (Misra, 2004).

The Afghan narrative of displacement:
- Arrival of Soviet forces,
- Violence between rival mujahideen factions,
- Ferociously repressive Taliban regime, combined with worst drought in 30 years
- International military campaign under the aegis of the USA
4. AFGHANISTAN TODAY

The people of Afghanistan are working to re-unify and rebuild their war-torn country (Johnson, C. and Leslie, J., 2004). They are also struggling to eradicate terrorism and illegal poppy cultivation, as the Afghanistan government seeks the assistance and support of neighbouring countries and other democratic nations (Chayes, 2007). One of the biggest challenges Afghanistan faces is to restrict external interference in its domestic and international policies from other countries in the region (Afghanistan Online, 2008). Even though Afghanistan is on the road to recovery after decades of war, its environment remains in a state of crisis. Since the 1980s, it has lost over 70% of forests, with widespread soil erosion and a dramatic fall in the water table (Afghanistan Online, 2008). At the same time, the country is suffering from poverty and poor infrastructure, with unemployment hovering around 40% (Johnson, C. and Leslie, J., 2004). There are large numbers of uncleared landmines and other undetonated materials which pose a deadly threat to citizens. There have been delays in implementing a reconciliation action plan in spite of UN Security Council resolutions, while political threats are growing from a Taliban insurgency and remaining al-Qaeda operatives (Chayes, 2007).

The constitution states that the Afghanistan government consists of a popularly elected president, two vice-presidents, and a national assembly consisting of two houses: the House of People (Wolesi Jirga), and the House of Elders (Meshrano Jirga). There is an independent judiciary consisting of a Supreme Court (Stera Mahkama), high courts and appeal courts (Johnson, C. and Leslie, J., 2004). The president appoints members of the Supreme Court with the approval of the Wolesi Jirga. The country is divided into 34 provinces (welayats), and each province has a capital. Below each province are provincial districts, and each district administers a city or several townships. The Governor of the province is appointed by the Ministry of the Interior, and the Prefects for each district of the province are appointed by the provincial Governor, who is the representative of the central government of Afghanistan, and responsible for all administrative issues (Chayes, 2007). The provincial Chief of Police is appointed by the Ministry of Interior, who works with the Governor on law enforcement for all cities and districts of that province; except for the capital city, Kabul, where the Mayor is selected by the President of Afghanistan, and is independent from the prefecture of Kabul Province (Chayes, 2007).

In the area of education, 7,000 schools were severely damaged during more than two decades of civil war (Chayes, 2007). Only half the schools have clean water, and even fewer have adequate sanitation. Yet although adult literacy levels remain low relative to other countries in the region, classic Persian poetry continues to play an important role in the culture of Afghanistan. Poetry has long been a major educational pillar, to the extent that it is integrated into the fabric of the culture, as in Iran, where Persian culture continues to exert great influence over the national culture. Private poetry competition events known as musha‘era are common even among ordinary people. Almost every home owns one or more poetry collections, though these may not often be read (Dupree, 1980). As for recreation, the national sport is Buzkashi. Similar to polo, the game is played by horsemen in two teams, each trying to grab and hold off a goat carcass. In earlier times, people of the steppes were skilled riders able to snatch up a goat or calf
from the ground while riding at full tilt. The aim in *Buzkashi* is to grab the carcass of a headless goat or calf, clear it from other players, and then pitch it over a goal line or into a target circle or vat. The sport is highly dangerous and very popular (Dupree, 1980).

A former staff member of the MRC, Zabi Mazoori, has recently returned to live and work in Kabul. The following is an extract of an on-line interview with his Australian-born wife, Dallas, a former editor of the quarterly newsletter for The Association of Hazaras in Victoria, who now works for the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) in Kabul:

“Despite the security threat, we have always felt that we have a responsibility to Afghanistan and the people of Afghanistan, and our desire to make a meaningful contribution to human rights and justice in Afghanistan far outweighed the security threat. So we decided to return on a permanent basis and we both now work for AIHRC and live in Kabul with our 4-year old daughter Soraya, and Zabi’s family... It is a sad fact that West Kabul has acquired something of a notoriety for the atrocities that were committed here during the civil war. Indeed, more than a few associates have questioned our decision to call the ‘Wild, Wild West’ home, believing that it is still characterised by lawlessness and destruction. In my experience, the reverse is true. The absence of government institutions and foreign NGOs in the area means that it has so far been spared attack by Taliban suicide bombers. Likewise, being one of the poorest parts of Kabul it has been spared the kidnappings for ransom that are so commonplace and that so often result in public shoot-outs elsewhere in the city. The area’s ethnic homogeneity also contributes to a sense of security for the inhabitants of West Kabul...’

‘Unfortunately the future of Afghanistan has been severely compromised by the failure of the international community and the Afghan government to genuinely commit itself to the rehabilitation of the country. The needs of the Afghan people have been treated as subservient to the needs of the international community. As a result we see the war continuing in the south and east of the country; a significant deterioration in security in other parts of the country including Kabul; the continued reign of warlords and a culture of impunity; bad governance and corrupt institutions; ongoing large-scale human rights abuses; a thriving narco-economy; and the majority of the population still living in abject poverty without access to basic services. This failure to consolidate a transition has led to overwhelming resentment and despair among the people of Afghanistan, and we see the result of this as far away as Australia where Afghans continue to risk their lives in large numbers to seek asylum in the West in Indonesian fishing boats...’
‘30 years of conflict have left a legacy of endemic violence in Afghan society. We need to address not only the current violence but also the past crimes from the conflict era if we want to see a peaceful future and a culture of human rights in Afghanistan…’

‘Life in Kabul is certainly not as comfortable as that in Melbourne. Electricity supply in Kabul is still sporadic at best. Until very recently we only had electricity every third night for around 4 hours. Also being winter, we are seeing minimum temperatures of -15 at night which means that the water freezes in the taps so you have to pump water from the well. Afghanistan also experiences frequent earthquakes so you soon get accustomed to running out of the house half asleep into heavy snow at 2am…’

‘Security is obviously a big concern here in Kabul. Every time you reach an army checkpoint or are stuck in traffic next to a military vehicle, you can’t help but get a little apprehensive about the potential for a suicide bomb. We try to avoid the city centre, much of which has disappeared behind reinforced concrete walls, barbed wire and swathes of Afghan and foreign troops, due to the suicide bombings…’

‘Despite these challenges, Kabul is an amazing (and slightly crazy) place and it is an honour to call here home, to work for AIHRC and to serve the beautiful and resilient people of Afghanistan.’
5. AFGHAN MIGRANTS IN AUSTRALIA

1838

Idea first proposed to ship camels with skilled handlers to Australia for expeditions into uncharted areas of the continent (Fazal, 2004).

1858

Burke and Wills expedition requests George James Landells, former British Army officer who served in the Anglo-Afghan war, to purchase camels and suitably qualified cameleers. Landells travels to Afghanistan to purchase the camels, though recruiting cameleers proves to be less easy (Cigler, 1986).

1860

Three cameleers eventually recruited to be included in the ill-fated Burke and Wills expedition. They travel with the team for much of the way, suffering from heat exhaustion, other illness and the fracturing of Burke and Wills teams into different groups (Fazal, 2004).

1865

Thomas Elder and Samuel Stuckey import 124 Afghan camels and 31 skilled cameleers to Australia as contract labour in the transportation industry (Rajowski, 1987).

1887-1896

A shipment of 600 camels and an uncounted number of cameleers arrives in Fremantle, though the workers are not welcomed by the local population, who regard them as a threat to local jobs and businesses. Newspaper reports praise the usefulness of the camels but are critical of the Afghan workers. Two entrepreneurial Afghan brothers working for Elder’s company, Taj and Faiz Mohammad, set up their own camel cartage business and are highly successful, importing many camels and skilled cameleers. Their business is much in demand in the goldfields (Jones, 2007).
1896

Taj Mohammad is murdered in a mosque by one of the Afghan cameleers, though the precise motives are never proven. Local newspapers use this incident to stir up anti-Afghan and anti-Islamic sentiment (Cigler, 1986).

1897

Cheap labour provided by Afghans and Chinese contributes to tensions with white Australians. Cheap transportation provided by Afghan cameleers force many teamsters out of business. At its height, 3,000 Afghans were involved in camel-driving work. Several of the Australian colonies introduce the *Imported Labour Registry Act*, which prohibits Asians, Africans and Aborigines from sponsoring people to migrate to Australia (Fazal, 2004).

1901

The newly formed Australian Government institutes the *Immigration Act* and the *Federal Immigration Registration Act*, beginning the long period of the ‘White Australia Policy.’ From that point on, non-European people entering Australia would have to undergo a medical examination and a dictation test from a 50-word passage in any European language (Cigler, 1986).

1929

Final stage completed in the construction of ‘The Ghan’ railway, between Adelaide and Alice Springs. Two theories compete for the naming of this train: (1) the name arose because construction of the railway supplanted the Afghan camel drivers (2) the construction train was often so crowded with Afghan camelmen that other workers dubbed it ‘The Afghan Special.’ (Jones, 2007)

1970s

Students associated with the Colombo Plan arrive from Afghanistan for higher education or to learn English. In 1977 the first community organisation – the Afghan Australian Association – is established, with Abdul Khaliq Fazal, a student at Melbourne University, as its president (Fazal, 2004).

1980s

Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan a small number of Afghan refugees are accepted by the Australian government. (Fazal, 2004).

1990s to the present

Successive waves of refugee intake follow the humanitarian crises in Afghanistan, later supplemented by family reunion migration. A significant number of Hazara arrivals during this period are asylum seekers, many kept in detention centres while their claims for refugee status are assessed (Barnes, 2002). The temporary protection visa (TPV) category disproportionately affects this group (Sparrow, 2005), until the visa category is finally ended by the Rudd government in 2008.
6. SNAPSHOT OF AFGHANISTAN

Facts and Figures

**Population:** 31 million (approx.)
**Life expectancy:** 46 years (male), 45 years (female)
**Infant mortality rate:** 152 deaths per 1,000 live births
**Fertility rate:** 6 children per woman
**Adult literacy:** 36%

**Languages:** Dari (Afghan-Persian) 50%, Pashtu 35%, Turkic languages (e.g. Uzbek and Turkmen) 11%, 30 minor languages (e.g. Balochi and Pashai) 4%

**Climate:** arid to semi-arid; cold winters and hot summers

**Terrain:** mostly rugged mountains; plains in north and southwest

**Political system:** parliamentary democracy, with a popularly elected president

**Capital:** Kabul

**Refugee population outside Afghanistan:** 2 million

Myths about Afghanistan

*Isn’t Afghanistan a middle-eastern country?*
No, it is a South Central Asian nation, located north of the Indian subcontinent.

*Aren’t Afghans also Arabs?*
No, the people of Afghanistan are Afghans. They consist of different ethnicities, but they are united as Afghans.

*Aren’t all Afghans also Muslim?*
Most but not all. Islam is the dominant religion in Afghanistan (Sunni 84%, Shi’a 15%), but there are also a number of Sikh, Hindu, Jewish and Christian people living in Afghanistan.
7. DEMOGRAPHICS

Afghan population in Australia – national, state and regional

Population *

* Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census 2006

Afghanistan born residents in Victoria

Males 2,855  Females 2,387 **Total: 5,242**

Afghanistan born residents in south-eastern region

City of Greater Dandenong  Males 1,022  Females 660  **Total: 1,682**

City of Casey  Males: 865  Females 845  **Total: 1,710**

Shire of Cardinia  Males: 6  Females 3  **Total: 9**

Regional sub-total  Males: 1,893  Females 1,508  **Total: 3,491**

Regional % of the Victorian total Afghan population: 67%

Afghans in Victoria **

** Dept of Immigration and Citizenship settlement database, 2008

Age range

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<tr>
<td>10-19</td>
<td>1,832</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,848</strong></td>
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</table>

Gender

Male 55%
Female 45%

Local Government Areas

Greater Dandenong  2,485
Casey  1,517
Shepparton  293
Monash  166
Swan Hill  128
Mildura  120
Brimbank  116
Knox  110
Frankston  95
### Afghan Community Profile – south eastern Melbourne

Wyndham 74  
Others 744  
**TOTAL** 5,848

**Afghans in Australia**

**Dept of Immigration and Citizenship settlement database, 2008**

#### State/ Territory

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Population</th>
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<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>1,782</td>
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<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>892</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
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<tr>
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#### Local Government Areas

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<tr>
<th>Local Government Areas</th>
<th>Population</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Greater Dandenong (VIC)</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Salisbury (SA)</td>
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<td>Charles Sturt (SA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>6,822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,865</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Note on data:** variation from different sources can be explained by (a) reluctance of some migrants and refugees to complete Australian Government census forms and (b) time limitations in the Department of Immigration settlement database, which only dates from 1st July 1996.
8. PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE SETTLEMENT EXPERIENCE

Excerpts of interviews with 41 individual Afghan residents of Melbourne’s south east, and community leaders, conducted either in English or through accredited interpreters.

Access to services

Service access remains problematic for many people born in Afghanistan and settling in Australia. Evidence indicates that access to services is especially difficult for Afghan people settling in new housing estates or other culturally isolating environments.

“The various Afghan communities [or associations] provide different services for different communities. They provide things like recreational services, settlement, social functions, cultural activity functions and events.”

Khaliq Fazal, chairperson, Afghan Australian Association of Victoria

“In my community it’s a gap between the young generation and mothers. Most of the time there is like a smothering because the kids go to university and school. No time to help mother and the mother wants to pay the bill and solve the problems and go to school and everything – but the problem is lack of English. Every Wednesday when I’m coming here I feel guilty because all the women have got something for me like ‘Please translate for me,’ ‘Could you make appointment for me?’ ‘Read for me,’ ‘Could you please change an appointment for me?’ I’m one person, not lots of workers.”

Gulgotai, community worker, Tajik, 12 years in Australia

“The education and health services are totally different. There are so many things that we did not have, and there are a lot of opportunities around. In Afghanistan you have a very limited service in terms of health and education. However, housing is difficult generally at this stage. Housing is an issue (and it’s an issue with anyone). New arrivals have challenges. They don’t have rental histories, they don’t have a stable income, they don’t know how to go for houses, they don’t know how to get houses. This is the challenge. In Afghanistan with the housing it’s really quite different, in some parts it’s heaps easier than here, and in some parts it’s the same – just as difficult. In general it’s easier. The way to go about it is you just go to talk with the landlord directly. But things are documented now recently.”

Hazarman, 37, married, 8 years in Australia
A further barrier is the lack of willingness to trust strangers from mainstream services, resulting in reluctance to use available resources. There is a tendency to try and assist only from within each particular community.

“There are issues, common with a lot of new arrivals. Definitely there is a lack of confidence, a lack of awareness and sometimes an unwillingness to access

Kanshka, late 20s, married, half Pushtan half Tajik

“For services we need, we hear it all through our friends and family, and our communities, the ones who have been here. Some access we got from Centrelink but we didn’t know about things like the Migrant Resource Centre or Foundation House.”

Married woman, grandmother, 10 years in Australia

“We want to get a facility somewhere for ladies only for swimming. There’s nothing around this area that has facilities just for women. A lot of women have back pain and the doctors ask them to go swimming but it’s hard for an Afghan women to go swimming because we need somewhere without men. For elderly women, they’re at home. They want to go on excursions, something like that: an Afghani group where they know each other, especially for those people they don’t speak English.”

Mother of 3, Dari-speaking, 17 years in Australia

“At the moment we are happy with the Australian services who provide help or benefit or English classes for us, but we would like an Afghan Aged Care Centre. We don’t know where are the social groups or community groups for aged people. We would be happy with a swimming pool. We want more English classes and Afghan community Aged Care... We need to have an Aged Care Centre for Afghans so at least the women have their own company and the men have their own company... English classes, at the moment, it’s only one day a week. We need at least 3 days a week. We need more classes. We need to improve our English.”

Tajik and Sayyed, Afghan mothers group, in Australia 6 to 10 years
“Our people need lots of help but unfortunately there isn’t adequate help. There are people having trouble driving on the roads and understanding services, for example Centrelink. In the Afghan community most women are sitting or working at home, or maybe going to AMES studying English. The men are working outside home, like in factories or on construction sites. If the women know better English and know how to drive, they can help their husbands, mothers or fathers. When they are going outside and working they can take care of their families better.”

Afghan Community Profile – south eastern Melbourne

Arif, Association of Hazaras in Victoria

“I was in detention for 7 months at Woomera. I come into Australia in July 2000. It was very hard because we don’t know about language. I just know English words ‘yes’, ‘no’, and that’s it. We didn’t get much help because that was in John Howard’s time and the big problem was we can’t go to school like AMES, like the TAFE. They not allow us, not allow me. I went to the TAFE, they said for one term $2100 – or maybe that’s one year, I can’t remember, I’m not sure. It was very hard for us. And I went to the AMES many times and they reject. I went for everywhere to learn English. One day in South Dandenong I went to the primary school for help. I was very unhappy. All the teachers come I said ‘I just want to learn English, and I show my visa, and they were very unhappy because I’m not allowed. They said ‘This place is for children only!’ I walked around about 3 months to find somewhere to learn English. Then I changed my mind. I go to work. That’s another big problem, because I don’t know English and where to find a job. In Australia it’s different from my country. You can use Job Seeker or something like that – but in my country you go through to the company and ask.”

Business owner, 46, father, 9 years in Australia

“When I got my visa from Port Headland detention centre I went to Perth, and I was there for more than a month, and I received some help from some people that I know. They were Australian. I got help from my friends that were in the camp who got their visa, a month, two months before us… We used to live together in a house that was provided by some people that were working for the new arrivals. I think they were from the church side, providing some furniture, accommodation, food… Apart from that I didn’t receive help from any other organisation. From Perth I went to Brisbane because one of my friends used to live there…I went there and I didn’t get a job, so I went to Sydney, because there was some other friends who used to live there… I was there for three years and then I moved to Melbourne in 2005. From that time on I live in Melbourne.”

Arif, Association of Hazaras in Australia
**Children**

“The children are very happy in the school but Saturday and Sundays they can be bored at home.”

*Ali, Hazara Australian Community association of Victoria*

“I told you before, it’s very complicated between the generations – not just my culture, not just my community – but every community has got this problem. Otherwise, I am very happy for my young generation. They are very good and they work hard. Most of them have very good marks and most of them go to university – and it’s good for other generations who follow them and do the same.”

*Gulgotai, community worker, Tajik, 12 years in Australia*

“A few parents might beat the children, especially if they don’t do well at school… Discipline is a grey area because you know that’s how they’ve been brought up. But you know, it’s normal for them.”

*Kanshka, late 20s, married, half Pushtan half Tajik*

“In the Afghan culture, children respect their elders. That’s what I love. We listen to our elders, even if they’re five years older.”

*Shokria, community leader, Tajik, 11 years in Australia*

**Commemorative dates**

28th April

*Victory of the Muslim nation*
4th May

*Remembrance Day for Martyrs and Disabled*

21st March

*New Year*

19th August 1919

*Independence Day (celebrating independence from Britain)*

9th Month of the Islamic Calendar – *Ramadan*

Ramadān is a Muslim religious observance occurring during the 9th month of the Islamic calendar; the month in which the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. It is the month of fasting, when Muslims do not eat or drink from true dawn until sunset. Fasting is intended to teach patience, sacrifice and humility. During the month of Ramadān, Muslims ask forgiveness for past sins, pray for guidance and for deliverance from evil, and purify themselves through self-restraint and good works.

10th Month of the Islamic Calendar – *Eid*

Eid ul-Fitr (or Id-ul-Fitr), often abbreviated to Eid: this is a Muslim holiday that marks the end of Ramadan. Eid is an Arabic word for ‘festivity’. Fitr is an Arabic word for ‘to break the fast,’ so this is the breaking of the fasting period, celebrated on the first day of the Islamic month of Shawwal. The Islamic calendar (also called ‘Muslim calendar’ and ‘Hijri calendar’) is a lunar calendar employed to date events in predominantly Muslim countries, and used by Muslims everywhere to determine the proper day on which to celebrate Islamic holy days and festivals. The calendar has 12 lunar months in a year of 354 days. A lunar year is shorter than a solar year, so Islamic holy days shift by about 11 days.
**Counselling**

A developed world or ‘western’ concept usually associated with psychology, therapy and medical practice, this is a loaded term that does not easily translate across cultures. Its widespread use in our society can be fraught with problems when dealing with humanitarian refugees.

“Traditionally people consult in the family or someone in the community who has a respected status.”

*Father of 6, Hazara, in Australia for 8 years*

“Foundation House provides counselling for people who have been traumatised during war. It’s really great. It’s a matter of explaining what sort of counselling and that, everything is confidential. Some people might think it’s a waste of time, however they need it… Once they’ve settled a little bit – that’s when they’re going to need more counselling, comparing what they have experienced and what’s normal here… A normal life back there [Afghanistan] was like, you know, they were born in war and chaos every day… That’s when they start thinking a year or two down the track, when it hits them hard… and they realise what they missed out on – what happened to them, and those things weren’t normal.”

*Kanshka, late 20s, married, half Pushtan half Tajik*

“Our people don’t have a concept of counselling. Sometimes I disagree with a lot of service providers about their counselling. They feel pity for people sometimes, and I think it makes things worse. I went and saw a counsellor and they told me ‘you’ve got depression.’ I know a few people that they’ve put onto medicine… and it’s made them worse. They think about their depression and they’re sad. If someone keeps telling them they have it that makes them worse. Hazaras are very resilient. Counsellors are telling them they’re not, so it goes against the culture. In Afghanistan everyone has a very hard life, especially Hazaras, who have been through so much hardship. But they cope well. They learn to cope. They build a life for themselves and everyone tries to be strong and not try to go through what their fathers or their grandfathers went through. But if you keep feeling sorry… it’s not good. That’s why I always tell the service providers you can counsel Afghans but if they come and tell all their problems and you tell them ‘you’ve got depression’ it makes it worse. It’s better not to feel sorry for them. It’s not helping. It’s better to empower them. Say ‘you can do a lot better now’ or ‘You’re very brave’ instead of talking about problems all the time.”

*Zabi Mazoori, Association of Hazaras in Victoria, in Australia for 7 years but now returned to live and work in Kabul*
“Counselling is not very common in my country. People don’t know about it and they don’t know how to use the counselling for this reason. When women get depression or some other problem and the doctor says go to counselling, they don’t know what it means... For this reason many people doesn’t use counselling.”

Gulgotai, community worker, Tajik, 12 years in Australia

Customs and traditions

“For women and for men it [greeting] is different. For kissing it’s just the women with women, and men with men – on the cheek. We are celebrating here. Like in Afghanistan, we are putting New Year, because the New Year in Afghanistan and Australia is different. Also we have celebrations like Ramadan, Eid, the same as in Afghanistan. We are also inviting the Australian people. We put on Afghani music. The young guys they are dancing. If they are family they dance together, if not family then they dance separately. The women and men do not dance together.”

Ali, Hazara Australian Community association of Victoria

“Too much pressure for women [in Afghanistan]. They can’t go anywhere without permission from their husbands or brothers. If the brother or father didn’t let them go for studying they can’t go. They have to stay at home. When women get married, their father asks for a lot of money from the groom’s family, lots of money and a big party – about 500 people – lots of jewellery and lots of clothes. Love marriages not at all in my country, only arranged marriages. Once they are married, women have to get the permission of their husband or they can’t go out. Love marriage is a big shame for a family.”

Mother of two, Tajik, in Australia for 13 years

“Men are not going to shake women’s hands and women are not going to shake a man’s hand.”

Hazara male, mid 20s, in Australia 6 years
“Eid celebrations are coming up after Ramadan. Traditional clothing is worn. Hospitality is big for Afghans. You offer food or drink. A lot of men won’t shake a women’s hand, out of custom and respect. Instead they put their hand flat on their chest as an alternative.”

*Toba community leader, female*

“One thing about the Afghan people: they don’t like breaking promises. They are very straightforward people.”

*Rahimi, restaurant owner, father, Pashtun, in Australia 17 years*

“On special occasions up to three families are cooking and celebrating together. Children kiss adults’ hand. Young kids kiss the hand of the adult. This shows respect. Visitors take their shoes off!”

*Tajik mother of two*

“It’s not good to shake car or house keys. It means you are fighting in the family. There is a belief that something bad is happening if there is shaking of keys.”

*Hazara female, 15, in Australia 1 year*

“Different customs come from different provinces. People do things differently. From different families. Even the languages. There are so many different languages.”

*Arif, Association of Hazaras in Victoria*

“Some people believe that Afghan people don’t touch their hair of children. It’s not true... We do not cut our nails inside, we cut our nails outside. If you cut your nails inside something bad will happen... In Afghanistan, people believe that if you go between two trees that is actually like one tree, and if you go through it’s bad... Some women think if you walk between two women, they say you may get a daughter... Or if you walk with someone and you suddenly touch their foot, you have to touch their hand or else the next time you two will be fighting... Hiccups mean you ate something you stole from someone...”

*Secondary school students, Hazara, in Australia 12-18 months*
**Education**

In the Afghan community we now have lawyers, doctors, architects, lecturers and tutors at universities and colleges. We have people working in managerial positions and in the government. The community, like other communities, are trying to assimilate. They want to be part of the Australian way of life and culture. They consider themselves to be Afghan-Australians. My three children have been born here, and graduated from university.

*Khaliq Fazal, chairperson, Afghan Australian Association of Victoria*

“The homework program I like because at this school the teachers help a lot but... there’s some people who are really good because they were born in Australia or they have lived in Australia for a long time – and their English is really good, and they know everything. But there’s some people who’s come from overseas – two years ago, one year ago – and their English is not that good...Most Afghan people are not good at computer technology because in Afghanistan there wasn’t much computers or technology.”

*Hazara girl, 16, student, 3 years in Australia*

“I feel lucky, you know, I finished high school and one year of my university in Afghanistan, but the material – the education material – is very poor. There’s no library and no computer. Here it’s a lot easier. Like when you are studying at Monash, you have computers, books and libraries. If you have something to research, you just go and grab the books; you can Google on the internet and find lots of information. But in Afghanistan, it’s very hard because you have no books. Teachers say something and you have to write out what the teacher says.”

*Hazara man, mid-20s, 7 years in Australia*

“When we came we were referred to Centrelink. My mum and dad were referred to a few English classes at AMES. I think we got assistance from another organisation – I can’t remember the name – but they helped with a fridge and all that: mattress, washing machine, TV. It helped a lot. We applied for housing but it didn’t get approved. It still hasn’t been approved. As a student it wasn’t that hard to adjust, it was a matter of weeks, adjusting and getting used to it. The other students were supportive and there were some good friends. What I like most about Australia is that it’s peaceful, quiet, having a normal life, and education system is important. Also anybody can study, young one, old one, I like study.”

*University student, 21, Dari speaker, male, 8 years in Australia*
“Only some people go to school, maybe around 20%.... Dari is the national language. Everyone knows Dari. Pashtu only 50% know this language. At school we mainly learn those two languages.”

*Mother of two, Tajik, in Australia 13 years*

“When I finish school, I want to be a lawyer... I want to help people from countries like Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, justice never happens. Most of the time, when a person has the power they will win but the people who don’t have power have to suffer.... I really want to help those kinds of people. My parents always say that when you study you are doing for yourself, you are not doing for us.... It’s good for you if you study – for your future... If you don’t study it’s really hard, you will end up working in a factory or something. My dad works 9 o’clock in the morning to 11 o’clock at night. Me and my sisters and brothers really want to see him and talk to him but really we don’t have that time to talk to him. I don’t want to end up like that. I think he’s just working hard like that because of us, so that we can study and have a better future.”

*Student, 16, female, Hazara*

**Elders**

“In Afghanistan all the children are taught by a teacher. They are polite to parents and to elders... Here it is different.”

*Nazifa, Pashtun, widow, in Australia 7 years*

“Elders are kept within the family, and there is no need for a nursing home. Most of the Afghan community they keep their parents no matter how well they are. They keep them and look after them.”

*Rahimi, restaurant owner, father, Pashtun, in Australia 17 years*
“In Afghanistan the elderly rely on their own children to look after them. But in Afghanistan – I can speak the language and I have a social life and the community gives us some support. Socially I can make my own company. But here the difficulty I have at the moment is that no Afghan is close to me. I have my own relatives here – my cousins, my aunts, my uncles, my brothers... The only problem I have is that I’m a lonely woman, living by myself. My boy is here. My boy is my carer but he is busy with his own life. He has his wife and children. It’s not easy for him to deal with me for 24 hours and I need someone to stay with me, at least for my bill problems. My English is very limited. I’ll give you an example. I collect letters and keep walking here to there, door by door for someone to read for me, to tell me what is that... One day I was cooking something and the smoke alarm it was making so much noise I ran away from my house outside and I kept running to each person close to me but they didn’t understand what I say. Finally I got a man, an old man, and I pulled him inside my house and he just made a little bit of fan to the smoke alarm and it stopped... Very small issues are a big deal for me... People can have the children and grandchildren around but everyone is busy with their own lives. It’s very difficult for a 78-year old lady with no word of language – remaining by myself in a house. I’m very happy to change my house at the moment if it’s possible.”

Sayyed woman, 78, in Australia 7 years, 10 grandchildren

“The main problem at the moment is that I feel so lonely because I’m living by myself. I sponsor my sister many times. I don’t know why but the application was not successful. I’m a single woman. I tried many times to lodge an application to have her come here, I don’t know why the application was not a success. I feel very depressed, mentally I feel not stable. I stay at home by myself. I keep crying and crying. I try to keep myself out of that situation but I can’t. It’s out of my control. I keep crying and they’re saying it’s anxiety and depression... Everywhere we have advantages and disadvantages. If I was back in Afghanistan it was sort of our culture that we have a very close family life. But since arriving in Australia I appreciate that I have my own accommodation, I have my own benefits – whatever I want to do, whatever I want to eat, however I want to sleep or wake up or go out. I’m completely independent. I’m lonely but I’m independent. If I were in Afghanistan probably I would have my family life – but I would not be independent... My mum was a healthy woman but one of my brothers went missing. Then my mum completely lost her mind. She was not present at all. She was completely somewhere else. I was taking care of my disabled mum for 7 years. I bathed her, took her to the toilet, dressed her, fed her and during the night I slept close to her bed. As soon as she moved I would wake and be ready to help her.”

Tajik woman, 70, in Australia 6 years
“The elderly are revered. You should never have your back to them. This is really rude. You should never have your back to anyone, especially the elderly. You stand up to greet anyone. Kissing the hands of the elderly is still done. It is a sign of respect.”

Toba, community leader, female

Employment

“At the beginning I wasn’t happy because I accepted Centrelink money. We couldn’t receive any other services. I started work after three years as a child care assistant. It wasn’t good because they knew we were refugees and they used us very badly. I had to clean up the whole child care. I did all the child care clean-up every day and I got a bad backache. I didn’t know it’s not my job to be a cleaner and not my job to work in the kitchen. She used me very much and didn’t pay me for six months because she said ‘It’s ok I’ll give you the money.’ It wasn’t only me. My sister-in-law and another Afghan lady too. She used the three of us. ‘I give you the money next week.’ Then another week. At this time I was engaged and I said ‘ok’ because I’m living with my family and I didn’t need money. I’m thinking I collect money from my wedding party, and then my fiancé will come from Pakistan I will use this money. But after six months when I went to the child care at 10 o’clock lots of people come and say ‘Oh, sorry the manager is bankrupt and it’s under new management.’ And they said ‘Ok, I’ll fix it for you, I’ll fix it for you’ but eventually I couldn’t receive any money. I worked there from six o’clock in the morning to six o’clock at night. I had very bad experiences because of being a migrant who doesn’t know about the language or the law.”

Gulgotai, community worker, Tajik, 12 years in Australia

“It’s totally different in Australia from Afghanistan. Here it’s very hard to find a job, especially when you finish university because in Afghanistan the university helps you find a job. Even here if you have a lot of certificates you can’t find a job. In our country if you been to a university they will, through the government, be put in a position. It could be far away in the country or close to where you are. But here you have to apply yourself the job.”

Mother of one, 2 ½ half years in Australia
“Afghans are high achievers, a good community which has grown in a very short time, with established business centres in Dandenong. The most prominent business centre is Thomas Street. It used to be dead about five years ago, now it is the most lively street in Dandenong, with restaurants and supermarkets run by Afghans, so that by itself you can tell how hard-working Afghan people are.”

Khaliq Fazal, chairperson, Afghan Australian Association of Victoria

Expectations

“Here we fight – human rights activities – we fight for freedom, whoever you are, wherever you are, for example an activist who advocates for marriage for anyone – between and man and a woman, for a man and a man, a woman and a woman – but can do we do this as a human rights activist in Afghanistan? Can we say ‘Hey it doesn’t matter what sort of sexual orientation you come from?’ This is when universal rights or standards doesn’t really work. We have to be mindful of these cultural differences.”

Hazara male, late 20s, youth worker

“It was very difficult when we arrived. We didn’t have any family so there was no family support and not a lot of service providers... We stayed at the hostel in Springvale. From there we were on our own. We had to find our own way. There was support from the community leaders but not much compared to what people have now.”

Kanshka, late 20s, married, half-Pushtan half-Tajik

“Australia is a good country, I didn’t think [it was] multicultural but [I was] surprised, a good surprise. I was thinking everyone has blonde hair in Australia. The day after I arrived I went to social security in Dandenong and got a shock at all the different people. Very different, very friendly.”

Mother of two, Tajik, in Australia 13 years

“We left our country. We left our home. We had nothing. We came to a new country – a new culture, everything is new. The worst is we are not sure of what we are doing, and what is our future, so what is going to be our tomorrow and what is going to happen to us? We didn’t have any options. We didn’t have any opportunity for freedom.”

Zamera, student, 20, Hazara, female 1½ half years in Australia
“I had a very limited understanding of Australia, so I didn’t really anticipate much when I first came. It was rough in a way, exciting and frustrating. I was excited about being in a safe country where nobody was going to harm you and no discrimination… We didn’t get much help or settlement support. TPV (Temporary Protection Visa) holders were not entitled to language classes. We had to pay for it. So it was a really difficult start.”

Hazara male, 37, in Australia 8 years

“When I came to Australia I really found it was very good... I went to TAFE and did my VCE there. It was February or March and they were celebrating Harmony Day. In TAFE there’s like 50 or more ethnic groups from different countries.”

Zamera, student, female, Association of Hazaras in Victoria

Family

“Even if we go back to Afghanistan, we couldn’t see the family relationship as before. Family relationship is changing.”

Tajik woman, 62, in Australia 5 years

“The people I have come across as clients tend to keep issues like domestic violence private. They would rather solve it themselves and keep it within the family, not to take it outside and get help. Also mental health is taboo, as it brings shame to the family, so therefore a lot of the time a person would not disclose it or get assistance from outside because they might get labelled crazy.”

Kanshka, late 20s, married, half-Pushtan half-Tajik

“In Afghanistan, my mother-in-law was so bossy. Most of the time we were fighting with each other.”

Tajik woman, 70, in Australia 6 years

“My children’s attitudes have not changed at all since I was Australia... I have my son and my daughter here. They are so useful at taking care of me. Even my children they call me from overseas, my boys and my daughter-in-law. They keep in contact with me. They are so taking care of me – I’m happy for my children.”

Tajik mother of 5, in Australia 6 years
Finance

“Since I came to Australia rent assistance has not changed but prices have changed for everything. It’s all going up. It used to be when we went to Coles, we had a big trolley, everything for $80, but now it is $300 and we can’t full a trolley. Who can afford it?”

Gulgottai, community worker, Tajik, 12 years in Australia

“Men mainly, have a lot of family and friends left behind. They don’t have anything. So normally it all starts with money, and women are not very happy to be sending money to in-laws… They don’t have that much. So out of two hundred [dollars], men want to send one hundred to family and the women can’t manage with one hundred. Then they might fight… That’s the main problem. There is pressure for them to support their families overseas…”

Shokria, community leader, Tajik, in Australia 11 years

“There was a family in our community. She said ‘my mother needs some money so I will send it to her.’ The husband said ‘No, you don’t send the money because we need to buy furniture.’ They are both upset. When we heard about this, we came together – not one family but two, three and four families coming together, sitting and talking about what’s important for them. Why did she want to send the money? Was the mother sick? What is the problem? If it’s an emergency you can send it. The husband said no. It was not an emergency. ‘If we send the money maybe she will spend it on something else, not her health. We talked and she agreed to send not two thousand just two hundred. The husband agreed.”

Ali, Hazara Australian Community association of Victoria

Food

I love Afghan culture. It’s beautiful and I try to practice it here as much as possible. We have lots and lots of food. Food is the core of everything! We have lots of parties: New Year’s party, Eid party, any excuse to cook food.

Shokria, community leader, Tajik, in Australia 11 years
“In Afghanistan the cuisine has similar dishes from east to west, north to south, but in the north they have a similarity to the eastern part of Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and even a bit similar to Turkish food because we have lots of Turkmen people in that side of the country, and they represent the cuisine where we have the dumpling. This dumpling, mantus, from the Tajikistan side was brought from the north to Maza-e-Sharif, in Kabul city… The curry is the same, all over Afghanistan: lamb curry, chicken curry, meatball curry, vegetable curry… and the okra is the most popular vegetable, lady’s fingers, and is grown in the Eastern part of Afghanistan where the weather is hot… All the food is halal because 99 percent of the Afghan people are Muslim… Afghan curries have fresh ingredients such as tomato, onion, small cloves of garlic, and a little bit of cumin; unlike Indian curries based on cream, curry powder, ginger powder and coriander powder. Afghan cuisine doesn’t use the dried herbs.”

Rahimi, restaurant owner, father, Pashtun, in Australia 17 years

Health

“Here we are not worried about the food or dress. We are worried about taking care of the spirit.”

Mother of 3, in Australia 10 years

“Families often aren’t aware of health issues, whether it’s about a child or other family member. For example, a lady who comes home with a child might not be aware of post-natal depression. The hospitals tell you about that stuff, but for someone who’s not educated then you’re not aware and you don’t have the means to become aware of these issues.”

Toba community leader, female
“There are health issues predominantly with women because they have been deprived of health services. During the Taliban regime they were not allowed to see a male doctor. At the same time, women doctors were not allowed to work. So there are a lot of issues, such as lack of awareness of pap smears – some people have never heard of it. Some young women don't even know how babies are conceived. When they’re married they have some idea but not fully. I know this because of some clients I’ve dealt with. It was embarrassing for them to talk about it. A lot of the time the women are ashamed so they don’t want to talk about it... Sometimes pregnancy isn’t announced in our culture, so they keep it to themselves for a while – a few months, maybe three or four – and they will announce it to the husband but not always the rest of the family because they get embarrassed.”

Kanshka, late 20s, married, half-Pushtan half-Tajik

“In Afghanistan everything was manual; washing our clothes manually, bringing the water manually from the spring or well somewhere, cleaning our houses manually. There was no vacuum cleaner, no washing machine. There was no water from the tap... Everything is easy here for us. At the moment we arrived in Australia we lacked physical activities. We stay inside our homes. We’re stuck between the four walls – isolated from our family and friends and community. We love our social lives. We love activity. It has affected our health. At the moment we are stressed. We have lots of worries and anxiety. We have been diagnosed with depression. We were so healthy in Afghanistan: we were always moving.”

Hazara woman, 6 children, in Australia 7 years

Hospitality

“Every individual Afghan, no matter if they have lived here for the last thirty years, when you have ten people and it’s six o’clock or seven o’clock at their place they will provide you with dinner. You won’t be able to go without dinner.”

Rahimi, restaurant owner, father, Pashtun, in Australia 17 years
Housing

“I think the big issues for new arrivals are language and finance because things are very expensive. What they receive from Centrelink is just peanuts. Also the rent is gone so high. Sometimes owners don't agree to give them houses, so these are the problems. Once they [landlords] have some Afghans in the house they accept them because they keep the house very clean, and tidy.”

Shokria, community leader, Tajik, in Australia 11 years

“New arrivals don’t have rental histories. They don’t have a stable income and they don’t know how to go for houses.”

Hazara male, father of 6, in Australia 8 years

Identity

“There are some people in the Afghan community, especially in the Hazara community who do not like to be called ‘Afghan’ because in Dari the word Afghan means ‘Pashtu,’ and they have been in power for 200 years. In Afghanistan if you say you are Afghan that means you’re Pashtu. It is something that it is hard for service providers to understand. We are called Afghan now, but some people, with their identity, divide themselves into Hazara, so maybe say ‘Afghani’.”

Zabi Mazoori, in Australia for 7 years but now returned to live in Kabul
“Afghans in this area are quite diverse. There are those who have been here for twenty years, or thirty years, and there are those who have been here for ten years, and there are the new arrivals. Even those here that are well-established still have mental health issues because of this kind of cultural baggage they bring with them. All migrants, or those with a refugee background, have like a cultural crush, kind of like an identity crush… But Afghanistan is not one homogeneous group of people with the same ethnic group, language and culture. No, we don’t have that.

There are four major ethnic groups and there are many many other ones: different language groups. Even the name Afghanistan is a reference to Pashtun culture, an alternative name for Pashtun, so Afghanistan means ‘land of the Pashtuns.’ Those issues still impact us here in Dandenong and that’s why we have different community groups, segregated kind of different groups.

The Hazara group are most sensitive to this issue because of what happened at home. Hazaras were a minority. We’ve been kind of persecuted earlier but the latest was under the Taliban. This was the time when Hazara were massacred – and there was no human rights watch. There was no international organisation operating. No media captured this. The only piece of media was of the Buddha being blown up but they have no video of the thousands of people who were massacred… In 1996 to 1998 and up to 2001, they would grab every man – even children and women, but mainly men – who were in the age group of 12 years old and up, and kill them. For that reason, every young man from 18 to 30 ran away. But because of their distinctive features they could not hide in Pakistan in the refugee camps where there was a “queue.” They could not hide there with the other Afghani refugees and others that look generally the same as the Pakistanis…These people often paid a people smuggler by selling their house in Afghanistan. Part of the ‘ethnic cleansing’ was to pressure them to sell their property and go away. So they sold their property and sent one man – they couldn’t afford to pay for any other family members. A whole family would cost four thousand dollars. You went with the people smugglers and they sent you wherever you wanted. The cheapest was Australia…

Here we have an opportunity. We have a country, somewhere to settle, and everyone is equal here. We don’t want talk about that whole issue… I say “forgive those Afghans, Pashtuns or Taliban who did this to me or kill my family. I forgive them because revenge doesn’t give anything to anybody.”

_Hazara male, late 20s, youth worker_
Intergenerational conflict

“Sometimes girls have problems with their mother, because the girl wants to go swimming, but the mother rejects it because this is not common with the Afghan community. There is not much freedom for girls but there is freedom for boys. All the time families have discussion and disagreement about why the boys have freedom and the girls do not.”

Gulgotai, community worker, Tajik, 12 years in Australia

“It’s kind of mixed up. When I go to school I’m not totally Afghan, I’m like changed. When I’m home, I’m not like western or fully Aussie people, I’m like fully Afghan. I haven’t talked to my parents about this stuff, I just do it.”

Hazara male, 15, in Australia 3 years

“Younger children are caught between two cultures. They are encouraged at school to do one thing and there’s pressure from the family to pretty much keep their values and culture. Some families say ‘you have to stay 100% true Afghan’ so that can create a lot of conflict between parents and children.”

Kanshka, late 20s, married, half-Pushtan half-Tajik

“I went to a wedding once and I was wearing a dress, long. The younger ones were wearing boob tube dresses. It’s not a nice look for a ‘nice’ Afghan girl but they have been born and brought up here and they only see one side, the Australian/Western side, so yes there’s a clash… I’ve had the support network of my family. I’m lucky but other Afghans don’t have that. They can get stuck between what they want to do and what their parents want and they can go off the rails.”

Sarah Keshtiar, Dari speaker, student

“This is a new country and we are in a new home with a very different culture. Parents have to accept this. As my Dad says, ‘If a bird is living in the mountains, it is surrounded by stone and the colour is different. This is an Afghan saying but the translation means that humans have to change. They change with the environment and they have to adapt if they want to survive.”

Zamera, student, 20, Hazara, female 1½ half years in Australia
“When they’re coming here, the young people are between two cultures. They are always in conflict because the young kids come to study in Australian schools and they are learning about Australian values and the Australian way of life, and when they come back home, inside the family environment, their parents want them to follow for example the rules and their faith, to be Muslim, to follow the ways of their parents and their parents’ tradition. So the young kids find themselves in a conflict between two cultures. That’s very hard for them. Mostly they are getting confused, which way they should go, which way they should choose.”

Arif, Association of Hazaras in Australia

Interpreting needs

“There is a fear in the community that interpreters won’t keep it to themselves. My husband worked as an interpreter for the Courts and Police – he never came home and discussed anything... Afghans need to be told that they do not need to worry that their private matters won’t be aired.”

Homira, 32, community leader

“Hazaragi is a dialect not even recognised in Australia. People feel they have interpreters for Afghans and are providing for language with Dari and Pashtun, but that’s not true. Hazarigi is the dialect we speak as Hazarans. If you say the Hazarigi language back in Afghanistan they laugh at you. Why? Because it’s as if you say ‘Black English.’ African-American English is different from mainstream English. In Afghanistan we can’t even say that... So it’s an interpreter issue. It’s sad that this group has been deprived of what they are entitled based on Australian law and no-one says ‘oh we’re not trying to favour one group.’ No, please don’t favour them, but do acknowledge them.”

Hazara male, late 20s, youth worker

“Despite the fact that there is a free service provided from DIAC there are people who might have trouble getting that service. They provide Dari and Farsi, which is totally different from Hazargi. People who are not educated find it difficult. I remember one interview I conducted at Centrelink there was a person there who spoke Hazargi and they had a Dari interpreter. They cannot understand that interpreter. They don’t really understand what’s going on.”

Hazara male, father of 6, in Australia 8 years
Language

“When families first come to Australia the big problem is English. In my time – I came here in 1995 – it was really good opportunity, to learn as much as we can but now it’s 510 hours. It’s not enough… They send them to Chisholm TAFE for English level 2 and level 3 but it’s not good because most of the women not educated at all… If someone is not educated in their first language how can they speak a second language in 510 hours?”

Gulgotai, community worker, Tajik, 12 years in Australia

“I have adjusted myself to know the culture of how the Australian people live, what they do and what they do with the law. But for some other people – those who are not educated, for example – don’t know English. They have real problems, especially the women. Women have lots of difficulty in terms of knowing English. Most of them are illiterate. They didn’t have basic education, with writing and reading. So they need a lot of help to get their driving licence and to pass the citizenship test.”

Arif, Association of Hazaras in Australia

Law

“Afghans are very polite and family-orientated people. They try to lead peaceful and productive lives… A new community, as any new community, will go through their own issues and problems, but one thing I’m very proud of is that our community doesn’t have bad criminal records. Members of my community do not have problems with law and order like some other communities might have.”

Khaliq Fazal, chairperson, Afghan Australian Assoc. of Victoria

“From the beginning we are not going to the police. We come together and talk. That way is better. We have tea, some food and talk and laugh. We sort any problem. If it’s really big we go the legal way, but mostly we talk.”

Ali, Hazara Australian Community association of Victoria
“I was in a court case about an intervention order against a brother who was abusive. According to this definition of abuse he had to stop what he was doing to his sister... He was trying to explain to me, as the interpreter in my language and in my culture, and I could see his concern, but on the other side the system says what he was doing was illegal. He said he came here by boat as a young man and from that time worked 18 hours a day in 2 jobs. He worked and saved so he could sponsor two of his siblings – a sister and a brother. He sent them to school and provided them with everything. He didn’t even go to English classes, hence why he needed an interpreter. Now his sister was 18. She was going out and coming home at midnight or 1 o’clock, often drunk. He told her ‘Don’t do these things.’ She said she would try but then she forgot. So he slapped her and ordered her not to do this again, but she just cried out ‘from here on I’ll ask for an intervention order.’ I told him that she’s 18 and she’s legally allowed to drink. He cries and says he has sacrificed his whole life for her to go to university, and she speaks fluent English, not like him. She says she needs to have fun. She says ‘I don’t want to live the way you live...’ He was quite reasonable and he said ‘I don’t say who you want to choose for yourself or what you want to do, but don’t drink. I don’t want you to turn out a drug addict. But how do you bridge this gap?’

Hazara male, late 20s, youth worker

Maintaining culture

“Most of the Afghan community are trying to live in peace and harmony. They have good social relationships even when they have different political views... The community, like other communities, are trying to assimilate. They want to be part of the Australian way of life and culture. They consider themselves to be Afghan Australians.”

Khaliq Fazal, chairperson, Afghan Australian Association of Victoria
“As a family we are worried about keeping our culture and traditions for the children, about losing the language.”

*Dari-speaking grandmother, 10 years in Australia*

“A wedding, let’s say, would have at least 3 parties. We have a party a week before the party, when everyone is invited – especially women are invited – by the girl’s mum. We have a hundred people or so, then the wedding party, then the parents of the girl invite everyone, and the parents of the boy invite everyone. For one wedding we can have 7 parties.

If someone dies in the family, we go and see the family personally. There’s no card or message. If they are overseas of course we telephone them. If they are close we go at least three days: the burial, ceremony, in the mosque, at home and all that. And then every Thursday until the 40th day, every Thursday the people cook. Every Thursday after a death, the close family and friends go to see the family and eat with them, for up to 40 days, and then on the 40th day, again a big ceremony. Everyone goes to see the family. The family members of the deceased don’t go to wedding parties or any happy occasion for 1 year. They wear clothes that are darker.”

*Shokria, community leader, Tajik, in Australia 11 years*

**Marriage**

“Probably my parents will arrange my marriage. What do I think about that? Now I don’t know because when you’re young you just want everything because you don’t have the big brain like the way your parents think about it. Your parents think about your future. When you’re young you just think about yourself… I think it would be all right if my parents pick a girl for me. I might choose the girl, if they like her and they’re happy and she has a good family… My sister is getting married and it’s arranged.”

*Hazara male, 15, in Australia 3 years*
“There is inter-marriage. Shia marry Sunni, Tajik marry Pahstu…”

_Dari speaking woman, in Australia 6 years_

“We usually give them a chance to choose their own husbands and wives but the decision is up to the parents… Our culture is very important and our religion is very important, also it’s important to be educated and a good boy or girl… We arrange marriage for our daughters are 18 or 19… Some of us married at 12 or 13. We look for values that the other family has, for example values about religion, education and ethnicity.”

_Tajik woman, 5 children, in Australia 5 years_

“A cause of conflict in the home is because the husbands in Afghanistan have been predominantly in charge of the family finances but now women have their own money, and the husband wants to send money to his family. There may be not enough money for the wife’s family so there can be conflict within families because of that… It creates conflict between the husband and wife – e.g. ‘You can send money to your sister overseas, why don’t you buy me shoes?’ ”

_Kanshka, late 20s, married, half-Pushtan half-Tajik_

“A few months ago I went to Pakistan. I married my daughter and engaged my son. It was an arranged marriage for both of them. I asked my son if he wanted to choose but he said ‘Mum, I can only see the face of the girl and choose the face but I don’t know about the future. You and my Dad probably choose wisely. You probably think broadly about our future… My son is 21 years old.”

_Hazara woman, 6 children, living in Australia 7 years_

“I arrange married one of my daughters. She was very young. She was 16. But now I regret it. I don’t want to arrange marriage the rest of the children. My daughter was so young, and I feel sorry for her. I was very young when I married. When I married, my husband was 9 years older than me, and after one year I had my children… My mind has changed in Australia because I have another daughter. She is 16 years old. If someone is saying to me that ‘your girl is so beautiful’ or ‘we want to come asking for your girl’s hand in marriage’ I have changed so much that I want to actually eat that person! I don’t want to hear that.”

_Tajik woman, 5 children, 42, living in Australia 6 years_
“At the moment the situation is very bad and getting worse in Afghanistan. They are kidnapping girls. Lots of people lost their girls. They are missing. The reason they married their children at 11 or 12 years young is because it’s not safe, so to protect them.”

Tajik woman, 3 children, 10 grandchildren, in Australia 6 years

Men

“In Australia I’m boss. If I’m over there [Afghanistan] my husband is boss. Sometimes it is very difficult for men to accept these things.”

Mother of 2, Tajik, in Australia 13 years

“Suddenly from 1998 to 1999 until 2001, you get six-thousand boat people arriving. 90% of them are young Hazara men. Suddenly these people come and settle in Dandenong, two thousand, three thousand young men settle in Dandenong. From 2001 to 2005 mainly they are TPV holders, and then they get their permanent visas, and now they have their families over, and that’s why you have a huge number of Hazaras here.”

Hazara male, mid 20s, youth worker

“In my culture, men think – oh I’m very strong. For this reason they never show themselves as weak because if men say ‘I’m depressed’ they might feel ashamed.”

Gulgotai, community worker, Tajik, 12 years in Australia

“From time to time the men have a couple of drinks to socialise but it is not a public thing… It’s not a case of having cans in the fridge at home.”

Hazara male, father of 6, in Australia 8 years
Pre-embarkation experiences

“They took all the school books and they brought out all the old Arabic books. I wasn’t interested to learn Arabic but they said we had to learn. It was really hard. In the next few days a lot of the students went missing. People were saying the Taliban took them... The Taliban have long hair, but our people are not allowed...They did a lot of that in front of me. They cut your hair and they put you in a car, show blood and they show to everyone. They say ‘If your hair’s not cut when you bow down, it’s not clean – not respectful to God.’ For three or four weeks every day you are shaking, scared to go to school.... Each class was about thirty-two people. After a few months it was twenty-two. They had gone back to their houses or were getting out of the country. They’re all scared. In Afghanistan before the Taliban, we have a subject, Geography, which is about the world... We learned about economies of the world, about the populations and history. So I learned a little bit about this country, before I came here. I learned about Australia. They have a lot of fruit and rivers in this country.”

Hazara male, in Australia 1 ½ years

“Before, in my country, I was working and all the women were working. During the fighting time I lost my husband and my two younger brothers. Before the Taliban, I was working. After the Taliban I stayed at home. In 1992 we came to Pakistan... I did not have a job. 8 years I’m living there! I wrote a letter to the UNHCR because I had a hard life and young kids. Pakistan was not a good country for refugee people. My brother was living here [in Australia] and he sponsored me. I came as a refugee and the Australian embassy helped me with my family ticket. After we came, the Australian government and people were very kind to the refugees. And my children are very happy! Also because I am working for the Afghan ladies, I’m not staying at home. The people come here and I help them.

Nazifa, widow, community leader, mother of 3, Pahstun, in Australia 7 years

“When we were living in Pakistan there were some opposition parties supported by the Pakistani government. We belonged to a democratic party in Afghanistan so it was hard for us. The Pakistani government was supporting the fundamentalists. My uncle had been shot five times by the fundamentalists... We applied through the UNHCR and we came to Australia.”

Ajmal, male, Pashtun, community leader, in Australia 12 years
“I came to Australia in 1999. At that time too many people came to Australia, in a period of two or three years. We had real difficulty in terms of security. You’ve heard about the Taliban. We are a different ethnic group, so we have been always under pressure. We were deprived of basic rights: no education, and no rights to join government service. There’s lots of prejudice among people there, so it makes it hard for ethnic minority people.”

Ali, Hazara Australian Community association of Victoria

“Afghanistan was a nice country until 26 years of war. I was a teacher in our country. Besides that I made bedspreads and pillow cases. We had a good business and a great life. Then many people came from Russia… Soon there were people fighting, killing each other, stealing from homes. One night at 2am some 12 or 15 persons with guns pressured us to give our money and jewellery. We applied to the government about our money and jewellery but they didn’t listen and couldn’t help us. Then we were threatened by phone: ‘Give us more money. We know where your children are at school.’ After that we took our children and went to Pakistan. We stayed there 8 years. My brother and sister were in America and they helped. Every month they sent us $100 dollars. We were suffering and ashamed. In Pakistan I had some problems. My heart was nervous all the time, my heart and my body shaking… My sister was in Australia. Three times, four times they tried to sponsor us but not accepted. After five times we were accepted.”

Dari-speaking female, 7 children, in Australia for 8 years

“When I arrived in Australia it wasn’t very difficult because I had about 120 family members already here, and I was sponsored by my cousin who let me stay at her house and take care of everything… We were supported by Centrelink and the Migrant Resource Centre… When I was a young girl, in the old days before all the wars, it was perfect. I’m sorry to say that the media show what they think is interesting for other people – but it’s not like that. Afghanistan was a perfect place. People were broad-minded, well-educated. We had female and male doctors and nurses. People were happy together and you could get a lot of support from your neighbours. Here you don’t even know your neighbours… but in Afghanistan they look after your children if you are away. Neighbours are as close as family members. You can trust them and they can trust you. We didn’t even lock our doors… If my parents went to work during the week or they went out in summer, I was alone with my dog. Nothing happened. I wasn’t scared. I knew that if anything happened one of the neighbours would come.”

Shokria, community leader, Tajik, 11 years in Australia
“When I left Afghanistan the reason was because of the Taliban regime. I was living in Northern Afghanistan. The Taliban came in 1998 and captured Northern Afghanistan. They were systematically discriminating against the Hazara people. In one city, Maza-e Sharif, they massacred a lot of people especially Hazara men: some say 8,000 and some say up to 15,000. There is no accurate figure…. We escaped and came to Kabul which was controlled by Taliban as well. I lived there for 1-2 years, and couldn’t live there anymore because they were harassing Hazara people, so I escaped. My family couldn’t afford for all of us to get out. I was the oldest child in the family. I was 19 years old when I left and I was at high risk of being taken away by Taliban… My family arranged how much we could afford. We had about $4000 US so we arranged with people smugglers to come to Australia.”

Zabi Mazoori, Association of Hazaras in Victoria, in Australia for 7 years but now returned to live and work in Kabul

Religious observance

Ramaḍān is a Muslim religious observance occurring during the 9th month of the Islamic calendar; the month in which the Qur’an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. It is the month of fasting, when Muslims do not eat or drink from true dawn until sunset. Fasting is intended to teach patience, sacrifice and humility. During the month of Ramaḍān, Muslims ask forgiveness for past sins, pray for guidance and for deliverance from evil, and purify themselves through self-restraint and good works.

Eid ul-Fitr (Id-ul-Fitr), often abbreviated to Eid: this is a Muslim holiday that marks the end of Ramadan. Eid is an Arabic word for ‘festivity’. Fitr is an Arabic word for ‘to break the fast,’ so this is the breaking of the fasting period, celebrated on the first day of the Islamic month of Shawwal.

The Islamic calendar (also called ‘Muslim calendar’ and ‘Hijri calendar’) is a lunar calendar employed to date events in predominantly Muslim countries, and
used by Muslims everywhere to determine the proper day on which to celebrate Islamic holy days and festivals. The calendar has 12 lunar months in a year of 354 days. As the lunar year is shorter than the solar year, Islamic holy days can shift by as much as 11 days.

“All of the Afghans that are here in Australia, as far as I know, are 99 percent Muslim. There are some Christians but very few. It is something about the Afghan culture but most Afghans are not educated about religion. We believe in God and the holy Koran, but in terms of knowing what is in the Koran and what the Koran says and what Muslims should do, we are not really understanding those issues.”

Arif, Association of Hazaras in Australia

Seeking asylum

“I had no contact with my father – that was too long – for two years we didn’t have any idea where he had gone, because he had not planned to come to Australia. He was just in the process of finding any peaceful place to go. There were times we were shocked and the whole family was crying because we heard the news on television and we heard from people that a ship going to Australia had like 400 hundred people and they drowned, so we were not really sure if my dad was on the ship...”

Zamera, student, 20, Hazara, female 1 ½ half years in Australia
“We went to Christmas Island. The navy took us off the navy boat and put us on a basketball ground. We stayed there for two nights. The boat we were travelling on had 230 people, a small boat, 8 metres wide and 20 metres long. The journey was really dangerous and the boat was really old, a wooden one. We had a high chance of getting downed but we didn’t know that. Most of us we don’t even see the ocean in Afghanistan so we don’t have any experience of sea and boats. I know how to swim so I went swimming on the river but most Afghans don’t know how to swim. They put us in a detention centre. I was in there three months. Then they issued me a temporary visa for three years. After three years they said we could apply for permanent residency. At that time they were rejecting lots of people, and saying you had to go back to Afghanistan. This was in 2004. The government tried to send people back. They offered us $2000. There was a deadline as well. If you accepted before this date they would give you $2000 but if you didn’t accept, the chances of you being accepted were less. They said the Taliban regime was not in power... Yes the Taliban was no longer in power but it didn’t mean they were not going to persecute people. They are still there... They’ve changed uniform and they don’t call themselves the Taliban but they still have that mentality. Lots from the Taliban are now in the government... Later I was given a visa. They said you are going to Melbourne but they were sending people to all different cities: Perth, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide. They put us in a bus and they said we going to Darwin. We were going to pick up some people from Darwin detention centre, and then go to Melbourne. So we went all the way from Port Headland to Darwin and from Darwin to Melbourne. It took us three days and three nights sitting on the bus. They were not willing to spend money on airfares.”

Zabi Mazoori, Association of Hazaras in Victoria, in Australia for 7 years but now returned to live and work in Kabul

**Traumatic experiences**

“If you put any kind of human being in three decades of war – nothing but total violence, I expect myself to walk on four legs like a complete animal. When the Russians invaded Afghanistan, from that day until the day I left in 2001, every day is war, every day is massacre, every day killing. As a child, a 6-year old child, I collected bodies of seventy people...”

Hazara male, late 20s, youth worker
“In Afghanistan we are afraid of war, the rockets (the big weapon they shoot from a long distance). We were there, day and night – with a big noise. It destroyed houses and broke windows. I wished to have a quiet night, a nice sleep, but because of all the bombing I couldn’t sleep. I wished to have a peaceful sleep.”

*Mother of one, 2 ½ half years in Australia*

“When we got to the detention centre I was young, with a young group. One day the Red Cross came and said ‘we try to find your family.’ They said ‘we send a letter.’ In Afghanistan a letter can’t reach your family. We didn’t tell them about our families because the Taliban would get the letter and kill our families. We didn’t know about humanitarian groups. After a while we got a lawyer, someone to support us. It’s hard to believe someone is going to help you. I was crying, thinking about things happening back home... Over there, life in Afghanistan is not normal but we thought it was: a lot of people are crying for food and for their families. I hope things getting better in my country.

*Hazara male, student, in Australia 1 ½ years*

**Women**

“I did my university field study on human rights and when I went back to Afghanistan, and I did international studies on human rights issues, my passion is why someone shouldn’t be free. When you’re from Afghanistan the first thing you think is ‘Why do we treat women like this?’ ”

*Hazara male, mid-20s, youth worker*

“Afghans in Australia are more protective of their girls than boys… They might turn a blind eye if their son goes out and has a drink but if it was their daughter… ‘How come my brothers can go out and you’re not allowing me to go?’

*Kanshka, late 20s, married, half-Pushtan half-Tajik*
“In Australia some women wear the short thing: short sleeve, short skirt and bras but I never judge them for that because this is the culture they’ve been born with and mine is the culture I’ve been born with. We can live in harmony. People shouldn’t make judgements, just because another Muslim on the other side of the world in America did something bad.”

*Student, female, 15, Hazara, in Australia 1 year*

“For the Hazaran people, all the women are uneducated. Children are quick when they are going to school – very quick to get the language – but for woman it is very hard, because mostly she’s working from home to look after kids and babies and also she’s caring for the husband. A little bit of time is left over is for going to AMES education but for most of the women it is very hard to get citizenship because they don’t know English very well. And now the rules for citizenship are changing. To pass the test for our women it is very hard because they know not much English or the geography of Australia... Most of the people, especially women, struggle with their new life in Australia. They find it very hard. They say ‘we go back’ ‘life is boring here, to sit all the time at home, and if you go outside, people looking at you because you were the Hijab – or a different dresses.’ This situation occurs for people who are new... When time passes they gradually adjust themselves and make themselves at home but for first arrivals it is very hard.”

*Ali, Hazara Australian Community association of Victoria*

“We want to get a facility somewhere for ladies-only for swimming. There’s nothing around this area that has facilities just for women. A lot of women have back pain and the doctors ask them to go swimming but it’s hard for an Afghan women to go swimming because we need somewhere without men.”

*Mother of 3, Dari-speaking, 17 years in Australia*

“Usually men are head of the house but if we are making a decision we try to discuss with each other and finally get a decision. In terms of decisions about children, the mothers decide about education and marriages.”

*Hazara woman, 6 children, in Australia 7 years*
“Women are deprived of everything in Afghanistan: sports, education, liberty, working outside, and socialising. People need to be helped with their [Australian] citizenship issues. We see many people take the test and fail.”

Arif, Association of Hazaras in Australia

Youth

“The community lacks support for young people. There is a massive gap in youth services. They need a counsellor or coach for young people because of the peer pressure issues: drugs, sex and alcohol... There is no open discussion, and younger and older generations haven’t experience the same things. Older generations haven’t experienced what it’s like to be young in Australia today. The only way they [parents] find out is when it’s too late or they’re put into a situation where their son/daughter has run away because they can’t handle it.”

Sarah Keshtiar, Dari speaker, student

“I was five years old when I left my country because the war happened and I can’t remember that time. I really don’t want to remember. It wasn’t a good time... I went to Pakistan with my family. I lived there for about six years. I was happy in Pakistan but my dad was in Australia and I didn’t want to go back to my country... I came to Australia. I missed my Dad a lot. It was like five or six years that I didn’t see him. I talked to him on the phone but it wasn’t enough for me. I wanted to see him because I missed him so much.”

Student, female, 15, Hazara, in Australia for 3 years
“School encourages you to speak your mind and stand up for your rights. Then you come home and hear ‘Listen to your elders, don’t argue with them. It’s inappropriate. Even if they’re wrong, just ignore it.’ ‘Don’t embarrass them. Don’t talk to adults like that.’”

Kanshka, late 20s, married, half-Pushtan half-Tajik

“I am very happy for my young generation, they are very good and they work very hard. Most of them have very good marks and most of them go to university. It’s very good for other generations to follow them and do the same.”

Gulgotai, community worker, Tajik, in Australia 12 years

“You know for the younger ones, some of them don’t know the language of their parents, so it’s a good idea to learn this. One day a week is not enough. Language school – there is one on Saturday, I think.”

Student, 21, Dari-speaking female

“One day I was walking from the station and I saw three kids. They were playing and I smiled at them. I had my scarf on that day. The kids all walked away except one child. She was about 4 or 5 years old and she was staring at me. She said ‘You are a stranger. You are a terrorist. You kill people. Go back to your own country.’ This really hurt. I couldn’t believe this coming from a 4 or 5 year old child. I cried and I went home and told my parents and my Dad said this is because you are wearing the scarf. I can never expect a 4 or 5 year old child to know. Maybe I can’t blame their parents but I can blame the media.”

Zamera, student, 20, Hazara, female 1½ half years in Australia

“When I came to Australia I was excited but it was kind of boring too because we were excited to see new stuff… everyone was busy doing their own stuff… My parents work. My dad works and he doesn’t have any time to spend with us… Australia, compared to Afghanistan and my life before, is busy and like way fast. Everything has to be on time.”

Student, male, 15, Hazara, in Australia for 3 years
9. APPENDIX

Languages of Afghanistan

from *Ethnologue* (2008)

**Aimaq**
*Alternate names:* Barbari, Berberi, Chahar-Aimaq, Char Aimaq
*Dialects:* Taimuri (Teimuri, Timuri, Taimouri), Taimani, Zohri (Zuri), Jamshidi (Jamschedi, Djamchidi, Yemchidi, Dzemshid), Firozkohi, Maliki, Mizmast, Chinghizi, Zainal.

**Arabic**
*Dialects:* Balkh Arabic

**Ashkun**
*Alternate names:* Ashkund, Ashkuni, Wamayi, Wamais
*Dialects:* Ashuruveri (Kolata, Titin Bajaygul), Gramsukraviri, Suruviri (Wamai)

**Azerbaijani** *(southern)*
*Alternate names:* Azeri.
*Dialects:* Afshari (Afshar, Afsar)

**Balochi**
*Alternate names:* Baluchi, Baluci, Baloci
*Dialects:* Rakhshani (Raxshani)

**Brahui**
*Alternate names:* Brahuiki, Birahui, Kur Galli

**Domari**
*Dialects:* Churi-Wali

**Farsi**
*Alternate names:* Persian, Dari, Parsi
*Dialects:* Dari (Afghan Farsi, Herati, Tajiki, Kaboli, Kabuli, Khorasani), Parsiwan

**Gawar-Bati**
*Alternate names:* Gowari, Narsati, Narisati, Arandui, Satre
*Dialects:* Lexical similarity 47% with Shumashti, 44% with Dameli, 42% with Savi

**Grangali**
*Alternate names:* Gelangali, Jumiaki
*Dialects:* Nangalami (Ningalami), Grangali, Zemiaki (Zamyaki)

**Gujari**
*Alternate names:* Gujuri Rajasthani, Gojri, Gojari
Hazaragi
*Alternate names:* Azargi, Hazara, Hezareh
*Dialects:* Speak a variety related to Dari

Jakati
*Alternate names:* Jati, Jatu, Jat, Jataki, Kayani, Musali

Kamviri
*Alternate names:* Kamdeshi, Lamertiviri, Shekhani, Kamik
*Dialects:* Kamviri, Shekhani

Karakalpak
*Alternate names:* Qaraqulpaqs
*Dialects:* Northeast Karakalpak, Southwest Karakalpak

Kati
*Alternate names:* Bashgali, Kativiri, Nuristani
*Dialects:* Eastern Kativiri (Shekhani), Western Kativiri, Mumviri

Kazakh
*Alternate names:* Kazakhi, Qazaqi, Qazaq
*Dialects:* Northeastern Kazakh, Southern Kazakh, Western Kazakh

Kirghiz
*Alternate names:* Kirghizi, Kirgiz
*Classification:* Altaic, Turkic

Mogholi
*Alternate names:* Moghol, Mogul, Mogol, Mongul
*Dialects:* Kundur, Karez-I-Mulla

Munji
*Dialects:* Northern Munji, Central Munji, Southern Munji, Mamalgha Munji

Ormuri
*Alternate names:* Bargista, Baraks, Ormui, Oormuri
*Dialects:* Kanigurami, Logar

Pahlavani
*Dialects:* Similar to Dari Persian

Parachi
*Dialects:* Shutul, Ghujulan, Nijrau

Parya
*Alternate names:* Afghana-Yi Nasfurush, Afghana-Yi Siyarui, Laghmani

Pashayi (northeast)
*Dialects:* Aret, Chalas (Chilas), Kandak, Kurangal, Kurdar
Pashayi (northwest)
Dialects: Gulbahar, Kohnaede, Laurowan, Sanjan, Shult, Bolaghain, Pachagan, Alasai, Shamakot, Uzbin, Pandau, Najil, Parazghan, Pashagar, Wadau, Nangarach

Pashayi (southeast)
Alternate names: Pashai
Dialects: Darrai Nur, Wegal, Laghman, Alingar, Kunar

Pashayi (southwest)
Dialects: Tagau, Ishpi, Isken

Pashto (northern)
Alternate names: Paktu, Pakhtu, Pakhtoo, Afghan
Dialects: Northwestern Pakhto, Ghilzai, Durani

Pashto (southern)
Dialects: Southwestern Pashto, Kandahar Pashto (Qandahar Pashto)

Prasuni
Alternate names: Prasun, Veruni, Parun, Wasi-Veri, Veron, Verou
Dialects: Upper Wasi-Weri, Central Prasun, Lower Prasun (Ushut)

Savi
Alternate names: Sawi, Sauji, Sau

Shughni
Dialects: Roshani (Rushani, Rushan, Oroshani), Shughni (Shugni, Shighni Shughnani, Shugan, Khugni, Kushani, Saighani, Ghorani), Bartangi (Bartang), Oroshor (Oroshori)

Shumashti
Alternate name: Shumasht

Tangshewi
Alternate name: Tangshuri

Tregami
Alternate names: Trigami
Dialects: Lexical similarity 76% to 80% with Waigali

Turkmen
Alternate names: Turkoman, Trukmen, Turkman
Dialects: Salor, Teke (Tekke, Chagatai, Jagatai), Ersari, Sariq, Yomut

Uyghur
Alternate names: Uighur, Uyghuri, Wighor, Uighor, Uiguir
Dialects: Kashgar-Yarkand (Yarkandi), Taranchi

Uzbek (southern)
Alternate names: Uzbeki, Usbeki, Uzbak
Waigali
Alternate names: Waigeli, Waigalii, Waigala, Zhonjigali, Suki, Wai-Ala, Wai, Kalasha-Ala
Dialects: Varjan, Chima-Nishey

Wakhi
Alternate names: Wakhani, Wakhigi, Vakhan, Khik, Guhjali

Afghan Associations

**Afghan Australia Philanthropic Association Inc**
Mail to: PO Box 321 ENDEAVOUR HILLS VIC 3802
Contact Ph: 9706 2787 mob.0409 553 304 (Dor Aschna), Fax: 9706 277
Email: aschna1@hotmail.com

- Provide support to members of the Afghan community, especially assistance with settlement needs for newly arrived migrants, and various social & cultural celebrations throughout the year;
- Sporting groups for young men – see Afghan Australia Community Social Sports Club Inc;
- Ladies’ group – organises a range of information sessions and social activities
- Pashtu Language school for Afghan children through Victoria School of Languages at Cleeland campus, Dandenong H.S;
- Music classes – Tabla & Harmonium on Monday evenings at Endeavour Hills Uniting Neighbourhood Centre;
- Radio program: Dost Ayaz Wednesday evenings 8.30-9.30pm on Community Radio 3CR 855AM, also broadcast at [www.aapa.org.au](http://www.aapa.org.au);
- Afghan Cultural Centre – Recently established group aiming to establish a centre in Greater Dandenong or Casey celebrating Afghan culture

**Afghan Australia Community Social Sports Club Inc.**
Soccer & Volleyball clubs - Juniors & Seniors
- Training for soccer: Mondays 6 - 8pm; Wednesdays 6-8.30pm
- Training for volleyball: Saturdays 5 -7.30pm
Address for correspondence: 10 Delta Court, Rowville Vic 3178
Contact Ph: 9706 2787 mob.0409 553 304 (Dor Aschna)

**Afghan Australian Arts, Literature & Publishing Association of Victoria Inc**
Mail to: PO Box 2421 FOUNTAIN GATE VIC 3805
Contact Ph: 0405 776 125 (Bashir Keshtiar)
Email: b1keshtiar@optusnet.com.au

**Afghan Australian Association of Victoria Inc**
Meet: Level 1, 73-77 Walker St, Dandenong VIC 3175
Mail to: 105 Haverson Ave, WHEELERS HILL VIC 3150
Contact Ph: 9794 9133 or 9562 1289 AH (Chairman, Khaliq Fazal)
Email: a-k-fazal@yahoo.com.au

- Provide settlement support, cultural activities, referrals, translations & interpreting, youth and women's cultural understanding and education

**Afghan Australian Development Organisation (AADO) Inc**
PO Box 8, Fitzroy Vic 3065
Ph. 9342 7265 (Nouria Salehi)
Email: nouria.salehi@mh.org.au
www.aado.org.au

- AADO aims to provide aid to help drive the redevelopment of Afghanistan. Focus on facilitating vocational development for Afghan individuals and communities through donation of aid, vocational training and related infrastructure from Australia, with the assistance of local Afghan NGOs

**Afghan Australian Social Services Association of Victoria Inc**
PO Box 2421 FOUNTAIN GATE VIC 3805
Ph: 0405 776 125 (Bashir Keshtiar)
Email: b1keshtiar@optusnet.com.au

**Afghan Australian Welfare Association (AAWA) Inc**
PO Box 446, Doveton, VIC 3177
Mobile: 0402 473 948 (Ajmal Mirrinay) Phone: 8790 2867, Fax: 9703 0631
Email: ibrahimkhan1@hotmail.com

- Provides welfare support including housing to the Afghan community, and organises large social events three times a year

**Afghan-Australian Women & Youth Association (AAWYA)**
Mail C/- SERMRC, 60 Webb St Narre Warren VIC 3805
Contact Ph. 9704 1583 (Nazifa Nader)
Email: aawya@live.com

- Aims to help Afghan women and young people understand and integrate with Australian society while keeping alive Afghan culture. Want Afghan people to join together to contribute their rich culture & talent in order to develop the multicultural society of Australia and make Australia's democracy & land even safer. Regular women's groups meet weekly at Narre Warren and Hampton Park

**Afghan-Australian Women & Youth Association (AAWYA)**
7 Canterbury Close Narre Warren VIC 3805
Ph. 0434 843 990 (Ozair Basset) or 9704 1583 (Nazifa Nadir)
Email: sherper@hotmail.com

- Aims to help Afghan women & young people understand & integrate with Australian society while keeping alive Afghan culture. AAWYA wants Afghans to join together to contribute their rich culture and talent to develop the multicultural society of Australia and make Australia's democracy & land even safer.

**Afghan Khodaye Khedmat Garran Inc**
Mail to: 5 Chivell Close, Endeavour Hills VIC 3802
Office Ph & Fax: 9700 2902 (Tuba Keshtiar)
Email: t.hamedi@hotmail.com

- Provides assistance and referrals to Afghan community members – regardless of age, gender or location in Melbourne
Afghan Support Group
29 Carramar St Chadstone VIC 3148
Contact Ph: 9888 1842 (Dr Nouria Salehi)
Email: nouria.salehi@mh.org.au
- Looking after new arrivals, material aid, support and accommodation; in conjunction with Craig Family Centre runs English classes (men’s and women’s), occasional seminars, swimming classes for women

Afghan Youth Foundation for Unity (AYFUN) Inc
Mail to: 16/3 Young Rd, Hallam VIC 3803
Contact Ph. 0422 599 002 BH (Maseeh Nasheet)
Email: mnasheet@gmail.com
- Youth organization, which has monthly newsletter “Lemar” published in Dari, Pashto and English, and organises events for young Afghan people.

(The) Association of Hazaras in Victoria Inc
Community Centre: 22 Grace Park Ave Springvale
Mail to: PO Box 7268, DANDENONG VIC 3175
Phone: 0438 895 728, Fax: 9796 4648
Email: hav@bamyan.org.au
Web: www.bamyan.org.au
- Non-profit organization that helps Afghan refugees with settlement needs in Australia. Celebrates cultural and religious events - such as Nawruz (New Year) and Afghan Independence Day.
Services include:
- Assistance with interpreting & translating;
- Newsletter published quarterly in English & Dari
- “Arman” magazine published monthly in Dari;
- Dari Language classes
- Driver education program and Learn to Drive booklet in Dari
- Youth activities and programs: Out door and indoor Soccer, Chess competition, Table tennis, Women’s indoor Soccer - contact Arif on 0422 742 673
- Arts including music, theatre, choir & traditional dance – contact: Jawad Alizadeh mob. 0407 556 285

Hazara Australian Community Association of Victoria
Community Centre: 23-25 Doveton Ave, Eumemmerring
Mail to: PO Box 549 Dandenong Plaza, Dandenong VIC 3175
Contact Ph. 0402 361 705 (Chairperson, Ali Behsudi)
Email: hacav2002h@yahoo.com
- Association of Hazara people from Afghanistan, assist the Hazara community with connecting to social and community services, completing forms; social functions; weekend classes for children/young people in Hazaragi/Dari – coming soon.
- Two Soccer teams coached by Karim Darwish
Radio – Afghan language programs

3ZZZ Ethnic Radio - 92.3 FM
PO Box 1106 Collingwood VIC 3066
Ph: 9415 1923 (studio), Ph: 9415 1928 (office), Fax: 9415 1818
Website: http://www.3zzz.com.au
Email: admin@3zzz.com.au

Melbourne Ethnic Community Radio 92.3 FM
‘Afghan Voice’ Sunday between 7pm-8pm, also on www.3zzz.com.au worldwide
- The Afghan broadcasting group has been on air since 1989, and since then, has
  aimed to deliver radio programs that meet the needs of the Afghan community in
  Victoria. Known as ‘Da Afghan Ghag’ and ‘Sadai Afghan’ - Pushtu and Dari
  words respectively meaning Afghan voice; the radio program incorporates a wide
  range of topics from news, current affairs, settlement, social and cultural issues.

Contact details:
Studios: (03) 9415 1923
Office: (03) 9415 1928
Fax: (03) 9415 1818
Email: manager@3zzz.com.au
Postal Address: P.O Box 1106 Collingwood VIC 3066

SBS radio 93.1 FM
Fridays between 4pm-5pm in Dari, also on www.sbs.com.au worldwide and on digital TV,
Channel 38 for SBS Radio 1 and Channel 39 for SBS Radio 2, SBS radio can also be
found on Foxtel channels 867 and 868 and on Austar channels 40 and 41
- A full round-up of national, international and homeland news, current affairs and
  sport leads every program
- ‘Correspondent’s Report’ from Kabul-based reporter, Osman Faisal, who
  specialises in events in Afghanistan and reconstruction issues
- After coverage of major news and current affairs, the rest of the program is
  devoted to interviews and special segments on Culture, Women, Families, Health,
  Immigration, Youth and Literature
- Bashir Keshtiar joins the program to report on youth issues, Fazila Tasmim-Hajeb
  on Women’s Issues and Jala Noorani on Culture
- Entertainment, including a full range of music and poetry is an integral part of the
  program. Local community news and announcements are also made regularly on
  the Dari program.

Contact details: SBS Radio Melbourne, PO Box 294, South Melbourne VIC 3205
Email: dari.program@sbs.com.au
Phone: (03) 9949 2121
Fax: (03) 9949 2385

3CR Community Radio – 855 AM
21 Smith Street Fitzroy 3065
PO Box 1277 Collingwood 3065
Ph: 9419 8377, Fax: 9417 4472
Website: http://www.3cr.org.au
Email: admin@3cr.org.au

3CR Community Radio 855 AM Afghan Radio program: Dost Ayaz
every Wednesday 8.30 pm- 9.30 pm also broadcast at: www.aapa.org.au

- News and current affairs from Australia, Afghanistan and around the world.

Contact details:
Email: aschna1@hotmail.com
Ph: 9706 2787 mob.0409 553 304 (Dor Aschna)
Fax: 9706 277
Mail to: PO Box 321 ENDEAVOUR HILLS VIC 3802

Casey FM – 97.7 FM
PO Box 977 Cranbourne 3977
Ph: 5996 6977 (studio), Ph: 5996 6933 (office), Fax: 5996 6900
Website: http://www.3ser.org.au
Email: dlentin@3ser.org.au

Ethnic Television

SBS Radio and Television
Website: http://www.sbs.com.au
Email: comments@sbs.com.au
Toll Free Phone 1800 500 727 - for comments or questions about programming
Mail to: Head of Radio, Head of Television or Head of New Media:

Special Broadcasting Service
Locked Bag 028, Crows Nest NSW 2065
Ph: 02 9430 2828, Fax: 02 9430 3700

SBS Radio Melbourne Station Manager
PO Box 294 South Melbourne Vic 3205
Ph: 03 9949 2121, Fax: 03 9949 2132 (Radio)
03 9949 2473 (TV)

Channel 31
Level 1, 501 Swanston St Melbourne VIC 3000
Ph: 9660 3131, Fax: 9660 3100
Website: http://www.channel31.org.au
Email: info@C31.org.au
Print

Arman Magazine

Monthly publication of the Association of Hazaras in Victoria, Arman is published on the first Monday of each month and has a readership base of several thousand. Being the only regularly published and widely distributed Dari Magazine in Australia, Arman is a valuable source of news, information, feature articles as well as a guide to find products and services for Afghan community. The first edition of Arman was published in October 2002 in just 8 pages and it has developed greatly in terms of both quality and quantity since. It is now a colour magazine in 40 pages and has found its place in Australian Afghan community.

The Association of Hazaras in Victoria Inc also publishes a quarterly newsletter that can be mailed out or downloaded from their webpage www.bamyan.org.au

Contact details:
Email: arman@bamyan.org.au or hav@bamyan.org.au
Phone: 0438 895 728
Fax: 9796 4648
Mail: P.O. Box 7268, Dandenong, Vic 3175
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