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United Nations Development Program Turkmenistan

Visitors' Guide



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GENERAL NOTE

The purpose of this document is to provide information that may be of help for mission members traveling from abroad to Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The given information will be updated on a regular basis upon receipt of updated data. UNDP office does not hold any responsibility for the accuracy of the given information and encourages to contact UNDP office for the most updated information when needed.

CONTACT DETAILS for UNDP CO:

Address: UN Building, 40 Galkynysh St., 744004

Phones: + 993 12 425250

Fax: + 993 12 325317

E-mail: registry.tm@undp.org

ENTRY VISA INFORMATION

Before you leave for Turkmenistan, you will need a valid passport and visa and/or letter of invitation (official visa support letter (VSL)) approved by the State Migration Service (SMS) of Turkmenistan to enter the country. Before visiting Turkmenistan, please check and make sure your passport is valid for at least 6 months at the time of applying for a letter of invitation.

You can obtain your entry visa at the nearest Embassy of Turkmenistan by placing an application at least 3 weeks before the travel or send the scanned (colour) version of a passport by e-mail to a contact person in UNDP Country Office to proceed with the visa application for you. Once submitted VSL should be issued by the SMS within 10-15 days. UNDP office will then send the scanned copy of the VSL to you by e-mail.

Based on the VSL Turkmenistan diplomatic visa valid for 1 month (for UNLP holders) and service visa valid for 1 month (for national passport holders) will be stamped into the passport upon arrival in the Airport of Ashgabat by the SMS.

Please kindly note that visa stamping at the Airport will cost USD 17 (subject to change) and will need to be paid by cash by traveller in USD. It is advised to bring this amount in advance since the smaller bills might not be available to return the change. Please note that only USD is accepted (euro and other currency is not accepted) and exchange may not be available at the Airport

Important: Please kindly note that the copy of this VSL needs to be carried by traveller to be able to show it to the Airport Migration officers at departure and destination points as a prove for visa.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Please kindly note that all travellers staying more than 3 working days (for national passport holders) and more 5 working days (for UNLP holders) need to be registered at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan through UNDP Office. For the registration, please bring 3 passport size colour photos.

The registration procedure takes 1-2 days and requires traveller to stay in Ashgabat during that period. Thus, trips outside Ashgabat within the mission should be planned accordingly.

If you plan to travel to border zone areas, you will need to inform UNDP Office at least ten working days in advance to obtain a special permission to the border zones. If travelers have a valid visa to a neighboring country that requires travel through the border zone, permission is not required to the border zone. However, in that case travelers are not authorized to stay longer than transit itinerary requires on the Turkmen side of the border area.

SECURITY INFORMATION

Currently the entire country is in Security Level One (SLS 1). All UN staff and visitors to Turkmenistan need to register their arrival in TRIP. External/Internal Security Clearances are processed online through TRIP at the UNDSS Website (<http://dss.un.org>). Security Clearance can be done on behalf of a visitor by an internal staff member coordinating the mission.

Basic Security in the Field II training (BSIFT II) is mandatory to all UN staff and visitors and can be accessed at the same website.

Turkmenistan is a relatively safe country, and violent crime is rare. Foreigners do not appear to be singled out by criminals. As in many countries, outward display of wealth may increase a staff member's chance of being targeted by petty thieves.

Turkmenistan is located in an active seismic zone and so is subject to occasional earthquakes. Natural disaster (earthquakes), car/road accidents (RTAs), and inadequate capabilities to response to medical emergencies may be assumed as potential threats.

TKM authorities have instituted its measures on Ebola (EVD) screening at Ashgabat International Airport. The airport security has established electronic screening measures and procedures for all passengers. Health officials are screening passengers traveling from all African countries. Travelers from all African countries are subject of 3-weeks health surveillance by the State Hygiene and Sanitation Institute.

Important to know for your personal safety!

- Smoking is officially banned in all public places, including streets. For violation of this rule, you may have to pay a fine.
- Photographing Government facilities/buildings, without permission, is not encouraged.
- Passing the streets on unauthorized places is forbidden and may result in getting a fine. Pass the street on a crossroads or pedestrian crossings.
- Foreign visitors are required to carry their passports at all times for safety reasons.
- Bringing tobacco and alcohol products is limited to 2 packs of cigarettes and 1 bottle of liquid (1-2 liters) by customs regulations of Turkmenistan.
- Bringing medications is not allowed by customs regulations of Turkmenistan unless an adequate medical prescription is available to be shown in the Airport upon arrival.

If you are involved in an incident, report immediately to United Nations for Safety and Security (UNDSS) Office. Please check the contacts details of UNDSS Office in Turkmenistan with UNDP CO prior to the visit to the country.

Emergency Numbers: Fire: 01; Police: 02; Ambulance: 03.

AIRPORT PICK UP AND DRIVING

Transport from the Airport to the Hotel

UNDP CO can arrange airport pick up on request at the Ashgabat International Airport. A driver will meet you holding a sign with UNDP logo. Transportation fee from Airport to a Hotel is 20 USD one-way per person or 30 USD one-way per vehicle (if more than one passenger).

There are also “yellow” taxi services available from the airport to the city. Their service is safe and relatively inexpensive.

Please note that payment receipts in both cases will not be provided.

Driving services within a city

UNDP Office can hire a driver with a private vehicle to drive visitors within a city for 60 USD per day (09:00-18:00). Payment will need to be made directly to the driver. “Yellow” taxi service is also available charging from 7 to 15 tmt (2-5 USD) one way within a city area.

Renting a car

Rent-a-car facilities do not exist per se.

If you plan to drive in Turkmenistan

- You must have a valid international driving permit.
- Traffic in Turkmenistan moves on the right hand side;
- Seats belts are compulsory;
- The official speed limit in Turkmenistan for highways - 90 kph, and within city areas – 60 kph;
- Use of mobile phones or any other electronic devise, smoking, eating or drinking while driving is forbidden by law;

ACCOMMODATION INFORMATION

General Information

Many modern hotel facilities are available in Ashgabat and main towns in Turkmenistan. Hotel reservation could be arranged by UNDP Operations prior to your arrival if requested. The following details are requested for reservation: flight details, arrival/departure details and type of accommodation. DSA rate for Ashgabat is 245 USD (changes may occur monthly).

The List of Hotels

The following Hotels are most frequently used by UN visitors:

UNDP Turkmenistan

Oguzkent Hotel****

Address: Avenue Bitarap 231, 744000, Ashgabat,
Turkmenistan

Tel: +99312 449516/449502

Fax: +99312

WiFi is available

Costs:

Single room – 250 USD

Double room – 270 USD

10 minutes driving from UN Building



Yyldyz Hotel****

Address: 17 Bagtyyarlyk 2002 / 5, Ashgabat,
Turkmenistan

Tel: +993 12 39-07-03; 39-09-00

Fax: +993 12 92-14-07

E-mail: yyldyzhotel@gmail.com

Web-site: <http://www.yyldyzhotel.com>

WiFi is available

Costs:

Single room – 130 USD (with UN discount)

Double room – 160 USD

20 minutes driving form UN Building



Nusay Hotel****

Address: 18 B Galkynyş St., 744000, Ashgabat,
Turkmenistan

Tel: +993 12 22-10-25

Fax: + 993 12 221034

WiFi is available

Costs:

Single room – 180 USD

Double room – 200 USD

10 minutes walking from UN Building



Ashgabat Hotel***

Address: 11 Bagtiyarlyk St., Ashgabat,
Turkmenistan

Tel: + 993 12 951370

Fax: + 993 12 951374

Costs:

Single room – 85 USD

Double room – 130 USD

20 Minutes driving from UN Building



Ak Altyn ***

Address: 141/1Magtymguly Avenue, Ashgabat,
Turkmenistan

Tel: +993 12 36-37-00

Fax: +993 12 363494

E-mail: info@akaltyn.com

WiFi is available (slow)

Costs:

Single room – 75 USD

Double room – 110 USD

20 minutes driving from UN Building



Grand Turkmen Hotel***

Address: 7 Gorogly St., Azadi St, 744000, Ashgabat,
Turkmenistan

Tel: +993 12 92-05-55

Fax: + 993 12 921251

E-mail: grandhtl50@gmail.com

WiFi is available (slow)

Costs:

Single room – 80 USD (with UN discount)

Double room – 120 USD (with UN discount)

15 Minutes driving from UN Building



Renting an apartment:

Upon request, UNDP can arrange renting of private apartments through real estate agents. The prices are usually negotiable around 60-90 USD per day. UNDP is not responsible for security and quality of facilities and leave it totally between a visitor and a property owner.

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Travelling by air

Depending on your country of origin, you can rely on the services of the following Airlines flying to Ashgabat, Turkmenistan:



Turkmen Airlines
www.turkmenistanairlines.com



Turkish Airlines
www.turkishairlines.com



Lufthansa Airlines
www.lufthansa.com



S7 Airlines
www.s7.ru



Fly Dubai Airlines
www.flydubai.com

International carriers flying to Ashgabat, including **S7**, **Lufthansa**, **Belavia**, **Flydubai** and **Turkish Airlines**, usually arrive in Ashgabat late at night. S7 has daily/7 days a week flights to and from Ashgabat and connecting transfers over the Moscow to 850 cities of the World. Lufthansa stops over in Baku (Azerbaijan) and continue flight to Ashgabat. **Turkmenistan Airlines** fly to Abu-Dhabi, Amritsar, Bangkok, Birmingham, Delhi, London, Beijing, Istanbul, Dubai, Paris and Frankfurt. Further, there are also flights to CIS countries, including Almaty, Kiev, Moscow, Minks and St. Petersburg.

Local flights are reasonable and have a good safety record on their frequently scheduled flights between Ashgabat and Turkmenistan's regional centers.

Public transport

Public transport in Ashgabat is mostly represented by buses, minibuses and taxis. There is no underground (metro) line in Ashgabat. Buses and minibuses operate from 06:00 till 22:00. Taxi are available 24 hours. General bus fee is 50 tenge (coins). Passengers can also buy passes.

Bus pass can be bought at the bus terminal (Teke Bazaar) and at several bus stops in the city center. Passes can be used only in buses.

To hail a taxi, raise your hand and one of the cars will stop. There are two kinds of taxi services: government owned taxi service (yellow cabs with taxi signs) and private taxis (not all cars have taxi signs).

Railway transportation

There are daily departures to Turkmenabat, Mary, Turkmenbashy and Dashoguz cities. Tickets are relatively cheap and in most of the cases not easy to get. There are no international trains between Turkmenistan and other countries.

EXCHANGE AND PAYMENT PROCEDURES

Currency & Exchange

You can exchange your currency into the Turkmen Manats (TMT) either at the exchange office of the airport or any exchange offices in the city. The most used currency is the US Dollar (old looking bills are not accepted). The official exchange rate as of January 2015 is TMT 3.50/USD 1.00.

Credit cards

Local banks follow government rules and regulations concerning any foreign transactions. There are only a few banks, where you can cash the credit card. In the Bank of Foreign Economic Affairs of Turkmenistan you can cash Visa card, and in the Senagat bank a Master card can be cashed. Turkmen-Turkish Commercial Bank can cash Master Card, Visa Card and American Express. Credit cards are not accepted in the local stores or restaurants. There are a few hotels and some Airlines offices that do accept credit cards. It is recommended to have cash available for payments, preferably in local currency or USD. Some of the hotels accept only USD from foreign visitors.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE

General Information

The quality of Turkmenistan's medical infrastructure might be perceived below US and Western Europe standards. Turkmenistan's health care facilities usually expect immediate cash payment for health services and generally will not accept credit cards and foreign insurance coverage will not be recognized. All hospitals require passport to proceed with medical services. Prices for foreigners are twice higher in comparison to local clients.

Not all medications are available in Turkmenistan. Thus, it is recommended to bring an adequate supply of prescription and non-prescription medications usually taken by a traveler. At the same time, please note that bringing some medications is not allowed by customs regulations of Turkmenistan without an adequate medical prescription to be shown in the Airport upon arrival, others are prohibited at all.

In summer period, it is recommended to take precautionary measures to avoid sunburns.

Contact information for the UN Physicians:



Please contact the UNDP CO for the contact details of UN Physicians in Turkmenistan.

Vaccination:


The World Health Organization recommends to have routine vaccinations, which includes diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, hepatitis B, *haemophilus influenzae* type b, human papillomavirus, influenza, measles, mumps, polio, rubella, varicella, rotavirus, tuberculosis and pneumococcal before travelling to any country. Selective vaccines are not required since Turkmenistan is not in a list of *risk areas*.

For additional information, please visit WHO website <http://www.who.int/ith/en/>

LIST OF HOSPITALS IN ASHGABAT

Central Hospital (Turkish Hospital)	Parahat 2/1, 1951 St., h. 1, Ashgabat city Ph: +993 123 450303	
International Cardiological Center of Ashgabat	Medical Buildings Block Berzengi, Ashgabat Ph: +993 12 489006	

<p>Ashgabat Medical center under the name of Saparmurat Turkmenbashy</p>	<p>Medical Buildings Block Berzengi, Ashgabat Ph: +99312 489006; 489008</p>	
<p>“Ene Myahri” Center (Maternity Hospital)</p>	<p>Medical Buildings Block Berzengi, Ashgabat Ph: +993 12 489301</p>	
<p>International Diagnostic Center</p>	<p>Medical Buildings Block Berzengi, Ashgabat Ph: +993 12 489203</p>	
<p>Treatment Center of Diseases of the Head and Neck</p>	<p>Medical Buildings Block Berzengi, Ashgabat Ph: +993 12 489604</p>	
<p>International Oncological Center</p>	<p>Medical Buildings Block Berzengi, Ashgabat Ph: +993 12 488901</p>	
<p>International Ophthalmological Centre</p>	<p>Medical Buildings Block Berzengi, Ashgabat Ph: + 993 12 489421</p>	
<p>National Dental Center</p>	<p>Medical Buildings Block Berzengi, Ashgabat Ph.: + 993 12 487103, 487104</p>	

Infectious Diseases Centers Directorate	Choganly, Ashgabat Ph: +993 12 739045, 739516	
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UNDP Turkmenistan

Climate and weather

The climate of Turkmenistan is strictly continental and very dry, since the country is not surrounded from an ocean. The summer is very hot and mostly dry, but sometimes local cloudbursts and thunderstorms can occur.

The winter is moderate, and has frequent rains, though it rarely snows. The average temperature in January is between -6°C and +4°C. The spring is short and sometimes rainy, but with only little precipitation. The autumn is mostly dry. The daytime temperatures in the period between May and September can be extreme; they can often reach 45°C. For more information you may want to use the following link to results of Google search on weather forecast in Ashgabat:

<http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&q=weather+forecast+for+Ashgabat>

Required clothing

For the summer months, the best choice is lightweight clothes; medium- to heavyweight clothing is necessary during the winter. Wherever you go, take a sweater for cool evenings, the difference between maxima and minima can vary significantly.

Mobile phone operators

Ashgabat, the main towns and transit routes usually have good cell phone signal coverage, with workable 3G and some 4G coverage in the capital. There are only two mobile phone operators: TM CELL (Local) and MTS (Russian). One can purchase a sim card at any of Altyn Asyr (TM Cell) and MTS offices within a country. The international access should be indicated in the application form.

Internet

Internet connection is better with TM CELL. However, some websites like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter may not be accessible.

Internet is usually broadband speed. WiFi is available in the UN Building, as well as in some hotels. There is no WiFi in most of the public places.







The electricity supply and plug style in Turkmenistan




The electricity supply and plug style in Turkmenistan is: 220 volts (voltage), 50 HZ (frequency), plug type – European (round-tipped, two-pinned).




Country and city code:

Country - Ashgabat city code (land line): +993-12 XXX XXX.

PLACES TO VISIT IN ASHGABAT

<p>Turkmen Carpet Museum</p>	<p>The Carpet Museum has a rich collection of Turkmen carpets from the medieval through to the 20th century, including over 1000 carpets from the 18th and 19th centuries. Aside from its extensive collection of antique carpets, it has many carpet articles, chuvals, khurjuns, torba etc.</p>	
<p>Biggest Mosque in Central Asia & Mausoleum of the 1st President of Turkmenistan</p>	<p>Its minarets are the tallest in the Central Asia. The walls of the mosque has writings from Ruhnama, a spiritual book of the first President. There is a hand-made, star-like carpet in the middle of the mosque. The remains of the first President of the country (and his family) are located in the doom close to the mosque (on the main street). The mosque is located about 12 km from the capital.</p> <p>Note: visitors should have their heads covered. Flowers are acceptable. Making pictures is not allowed inside the building.</p>	
<p>National Museum of History</p>	<p>It contains major treasures discovered in every part of the country. The most interesting exhibitions are represented by the archeology and ethnography departments (History Hall). Museum boasts a full collection of Turkmenistan's most significant architectural finds from the 20th century; a large number of ancient Turkmen carpets and rugs; examples of national dress and fabrics; traditional household equipment; musical instruments; weapons; jewelry; horn-shaped vessels made of ivory, statuettes of Parthian goddesses and Rodoguna, a colorful Buddhist vase representing life and death. Other exhibits include the Presidential hall and the Natural Museum. Please note that each of the exhibit should be paid separately (US\$ 10 each per foreign visit), photography charges also apply</p>	
<p>Arch of Neutrality</p>	<p>The general height of the Monument of the Neutrality is 95 meters, including 12-meter gold-covered sculpture of Saparmurat Niyazov - the first president of Turkmenistan, established on its top. Thanks to the rotary mechanism, it used to rotate after the sun. From the top of the construction visitors of the capital can appreciate beauty and grandeur of modern white marble Ashkhabad.</p>	

<p>Parthian settlement of Nisa (Old Nisa)</p>	<p>Discover the remains of Old Nisa, the capital of the Parthian kings who ruled from the third century BC to the third century AD over an empire which included Iraq and stretched as far as the Syrian Arab Republic.</p> <p>Nissa was one of the most important cities of the Parthian Empire; the city is located in the southwest of Ashgabat. The ruins of the fortress at Nissa are a UNESCO World Heritage Site.</p>	
<p>Monument of Independence</p>	<p>The main tourist sight of the capital of Turkmenistan is National Park of Independence with the symbol of modern Ashgabat established on it - the Monument of Independence, the highest construction in the country (local people call it "Eight-leg"). Five main entrances, protected by horrendous statues with gilt spears and sabers, allow getting inside the Monument with the museum of National Values. Round a monument there are majestic statues of outstanding persons in the history of Turkmenistan.</p>	
<p>Altyn Asyr Centre and park</p>	<p>The pyramidal shopping centre at the northern end of Independence Park, is reputedly the biggest fountain in the world. Inside it's rather less than impressive – an all but empty two floor shopping centre, although there's a restaurant on the 5th floor that is quite popular. The monument has acquired the nickname 'five legs'. The place is recommended for its Restaurant rather than for shopping.</p>	
<p>Cable-way</p>	<p>From Ashgabat there is a cable car into the mountains that make up the southern border with Iran. Once can ride the cable car dangling over precarious rock gorges and pits of gazelle bones. At the summit there are several points that overlook the white city of Ashgabat. On an area of 6500 square meters is a small park. In addition there are two restaurants, several shops and offices for staff. The charge is 7 tmt per ride. Note: <i>The place is not always open.</i></p>	
<p>Serdar health path</p>	<p>This is a concrete stepped path, which snakes across the northernmost line of hills of the Kopet Dag, immediately to the south of Ashgabat. The Saparmurat Turkmenbashy Eternally Great Park was opened here at the base of the health path in May 2005, and quickly became a favoured place for</p>	

	summer evening strolling for Ashgabat residents opting against the steep slopes of the health path.	
Ashgabat Hippodrome	Spend a day at the races: in spring and autumn, horse races are held at the Hippodrome in Ashgabat, and 10km (6 miles) south of Ashgabat is the Turkmenbashi Stud Farm where the Akhal-Teke horses are bred. You can arrange riding the Akhal-Teke horse for about 25\$ per hour (usually during Sundays).	
World Largest Indoor Ferris Wheel	The Ferris wheel measured 47.60 metres (156 ft 2 in) high and with a diameter of 57 metres. A large glass and white-steel casing houses the Ferris wheel, which has 24 six-seat cabins for the ferris wheel. The structure also houses the Alem entertainment center, which includes a bowling alley, cinema screens, a snack bar, and a planetarium.	
City Center Parks	Several parks located in the city center are worth to visit. It includes one of the oldest Pushkin Square and newly built Ashgabat Monument Park, entertaining Ashgabat Amusement Park and Soviet-built Lenin monument square. Some pieces of the Soviet architecture, as well as new-age buildings could be observed around parks, which are filled with fountains and nice vegetation. All parks are free to enter.	

RESTAURANTS AND CAFES IN ASHGABAT

Paytagt Restaurant:

Andalyb St.Trade Center “PAYTAGT”, 12th Floor

Ph: (+993 12) 47 74 22

Turkmen food and exclusive view to Ashgabat

Working hours: 10:00 – 22:00

Sim Sim Restaurant:

50/1 Andalip St.

Ph: (+993 12) 451333

European and national food

Working hours: 09:00 – 22:00

Restorantino:

73 Magtymguly St.

Ph: (+993 12) 940595

European and Japanese cuisine

Working hours: 10:00 – 22:00

Euphoria Restaurant:

33 Kuliyeva St.

Ph: (+993 12) 225505

European cuisine

Working hours: 10:00 – 22:00

Pizza House:

Magtymguly St. (across “Univermag” building)

Ph: (+993 12) 94 56 00

Different sorts of Pizza

Working hours: 09:00 – 22:00

Erzurum Kebab Restaurant:

55 Shevchenko St.

Ph: (+993 12) 27 5371

Traditional Turkish cuisine

Working hours: 09:00 – 22:00

Asuda Nusay Restaurant:

36 Gorogly St.

Ph: (+993 12)

European and Turkmen cuisine

Working hours: 10:00 – 23:00

Kumush Eye (Florida) Restaurant:

8 Gorogly St. (across Grand Turkmen Hotel, near Russian Bazaar)

Ph: (+993 12) 943351

European, Chinese and Indian cuisine

Working hours: 10:00 – 22:00

Merdem Restaurant:

1/7 Oguzkhan St.

Ph: (+993 12) 498002

Working hours: 10:00 – 22:00

Kopetdag Restaurant

10 Magtymguly St.

Ph: (+993 12) 272115

European and national food

Working hours: 10:00-22:00

Shokoladniza Cafe:

74 Magtymguly Avenue (Paytagt Hotel)

Ph: (+993 12) 941055

Mostly serves breakfast and lunch. Variety of confectionery.

Working hours: 09:00 – 22:00

Altyn Jam

101 Magtymguly St.

Ph: (+993 12) 946850

European and national food. Separate room serving pastry.

Working hours: 10:00-22:00

Pizza No.1

Ph: (+993 12) 62079640; (+993 12) 62079641

To order delivery

Working hours: 10:00-22:00

UNDP Turkmenistan

SHOPPING IN ASHGABAT

“Berkarar” Trade and Entertainment Center (one of the biggest in Central Asia):

Location: Ataturk St.

Working hours: 09:00-22:00

Cinema, Restaurants, Cafes, skating rink, carousels, turkmen carpets, souvenirs, silver and gold jewelry, Stores: Valentino, Ravazollo, Mango, Tom Tailor, Levis, Adidas, Nike, Loreal, Svarovski, Apple, Vertu, Rolex, Benetton, Haus of brands, Levi’s etc.



“Ashgabat” Shopping Center:

Location: Russian Bazaar (Russki Bazar)

Working hours: 09:00 – 22:00

Clothes, electronics, cafes, exchanges offices.



“Altyn Asyr” Textile Shopping Center:

Location: Gorogly St. (Russian Bazaar, across Grand Turkmen Hotel)

Working hours: 09:00 – 20:00

Cotton clothes, jeans, Turkmen carpets, national clothes, silver and golden jewelers, Turkmen souvenirs



“Yimpash” Shopping Center:

Location: 54 Turkmenbashy Avenue

Working hours: 09:00 – 23:00

Clothes, electronics, food (mostly Turkish cuisine), cafes, restaurants, exchange office, cinema, souvenirs



Russian Bazaar

Location: Azadi St. (opposite to Grand Turkmen Hotel)

Working hours: 08:00-21:00

Fresh fruits and vegetables, carpets, clothes, household stuff



Rules on purchasing Turkmen carpets and jewelry



You need an export permission for carpets purchased in a bazaar or a private shop. The *Expert Commission* has to certify that the carpet is not more than 50 years old and may be exported. This costs 20 USD per square meter and can take a few days. In addition, carpets exceeding 1.5 square metres are subject to an *export duty* of 20 USD per square metre payable at customs on departure. There are some private shops that do provide the export permission

certificate for an extra charge.

If you buy a carpet in a state shop, these fees normally are included in the price, although customs will charge a commission fee of 0.2 percent of the price of the carpet.

Since it is illegal to export ancient carpets and silver jewelry from the country, it is recommended to purchase Turkmen silver jewelry in state shops and to have permission certificate for the purchased carpets.

PLACES TO VISIT OUTSIDE ASHGABAT

"Door to Hell" Gas Deposit (Darvaza)

One of Turkmenistan's most unusual sights, the Darvaza Gas Craters are the result of Soviet-era gas exploration in the 1950s. The three craters are artificial. One has been set alight and blazes with an incredible strength that's visible from miles away, while the other two contain bubbling mud and water. Of the three, the fire crater is the most impressive, and it's best seen at night, when the blazing inferno can only be compared to the gates of hell.



Location: Ahal velayat, 280 km from Ashgabat, 4 hours driving, 4-wheel drive car needed

Ancient Merv

The city of Merv, which was once the second city of Islam and known as the 'Queen of Cities' until Ghengis Khan's son, Toloi, reduced it to rubble and reportedly killed a million of its inhabitants in 1221. The ruins of Merv and of the many that both preceded it and succeeded it are spread over a large area. Most of what remains are the brick-built mausolea of rulers and holy men - including the impressive Mausoleum of Sultan Sanjar, completed in 1140. Time, weather and invasions have taken their toll on the mud-built cities of the Turkmen. UNESCO World Heritage.



Location: Mary velayat, 370 km from Ashgabat, 5 hours driving or 1 hr flight, several daily flight available

Kunya-Urgench

Kunya Urgench is a municipality in north-eastern Turkmenistan. The ancient town of Urgench; that used to be the capital of Khwarezm was located here. The city was razed to ground by Genghis Khan in what is considered to be the bloodiest massacres in human history. The Mongols annihilated the city by flooding it with water from the Amu Darya River. The 60-meter tall Gutluk-Temir Minaret and the Soltan Tekes Mausoleum still stand. UNESCO World Heritage.



Location: Dashoguz velayat, 500 km from Ashgabat, 6 hours driving

Under-ground lake

Take a day trip to Bakharden, 90km (56 miles) west of Ashgabat. The underground mineral lake (known in Turkmen as Kov Ata which means 'father of lakes') is fed by hot springs and has a constant temperature of 37°C (97°F). Bathing is permitted although there is an admission fee. Accommodation is not available.

Location: Ahal velayat, 100 km from Ashgabat, 1,5 hours driving



Awaza Touristic Zone

Awaza is a touristic zone in Turkmenistan. It is located at the east side of the Caspian sea, 12 km west of Turkmenbashi city. During summer thousands of residents of Turkmenistan from all parts of the country have a rest here. Awaza hospitably welcomes its visitors and invites new, offering a wide choice of respectable hotels, cosy family cottages and villas, comfortable recreation centers for children and adults.

Location: Balkan velayat, 630 km from Ashgabat, 7 hours driving



The list of Turkmen travel agencies:

"DAG SYAHAT" 69 Azadi St., hotel "Dayhan" Ph.: +99312 93 16 43, 93 25 59 E-mail: dag_syahat@online.tm	"NURANA AY" 124 Turkmenbashi Av. Ph.: +99312 450820 E-mail: info@nuranaytravel.com
"AYAN TOURISM" 81 Turkmenbashi Av. Office 5; Floor 5; TUIE Business Centre Ph.: +993 12 220503; Fax: +993 12 221614 E-mail: info@turkmenistan-business.com	"OWADAN Tourism" 65, Azady Street 744000 Ashgabat Turkmenistan Ph.: +993 12 93 04 86 Fax: +993 12 93 07 48 E-mail: trowadan@online.tm
"ASHGABAT SIYAHAT"	"DN TOURS"

76 Independence Bl.

Ph.: + 993 12 21-05-56

Fax: + 993 12 21-05-61

E-mail: ashgabdsiyakhat@online.tm

50 Magtulguly Av.

Ph.: +993 12 270439, 270621

Fax: +993 12 27 04 20

E-mail: admin@dntours-business.com

UNDP Turkmenistan

TURKMENISTAN – GENERAL INFORMATION

Basic information



On October 27, 1991, Turkmenistan became independent state, and since then this date is marked as the Independence Day.

On December 12, 1995, Turkmenistan was recognized as a permanently neutral state by the resolution of the UN General Assembly with the unanimous support of all 185 member states (at that time).

Turkmenistan is a democratic, legal and secular state. The form of government is a presidential republic. The political structure of the Turkmen state is formed in accordance with the Constitution of Turkmenistan, adopted on

May 18, 1992 (the new version on September 26, 2008).

Religious organizations are apart from the state and can not interfere with the state affairs and execute state functions. The state education system is formed separately from the religious organizations and has a secular nature.

The territory of Turkmenistan is equal to 491,21 thousand square kilometers. Its territory extends for 1100 km from the west to the east and extends for 650 km from north to south. The population of Turkmenistan is more than 6.2 million people. Turkmenistan is a multinational state. There are more than 100 nations and ethnic groups living in the country. The majority of national are Turkmen (more than 80%), followed by Uzbek and Russian communities.

State symbols



Head of State

President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov (ruling the country from 2006) is the head of state and of the executive power, the highest official of Turkmenistan, and has the constitutional charter to act as a guarantor of national independence, territorial integrity, and adherence to the Constitution and international agreements.

State Language

Turkmen language is the state language. All citizens of Turkmenistan are granted the right to use the native language. The educational institutions of Turkmenistan ensure learning of three languages – Turkmen, English and Russian.

Currency

National currency is manat, introduced into circulation on November 1, 1993. At present time the ratio of the Turkmen national currency against the freely convertible currency amounts to: 3,50 manats = 1 US dollar.

Administrative territorial structure

Turkmenistan is divided into 5 provinces – Ahal, Balkan, Dashoguz, Lebap and Mary. Each province is divided into districts. There are 52 districts in Turkmenistan, 25 cities, including 15 cities with the right of district, 78 villages and 560 rural councils (rural municipal units) and 1927 rural settlements.



Capital



Ashgabat is the capital and the largest city of Turkmenistan, situated between the Karakum Desert and the Kopet-Dag mountain range. The 2009 census estimated a population of 1 million, primarily Turkmen people, with ethnic minorities of Russians, Armenians, and Azerbaijanis.

Ashgabat includes 7 districts (etrap): Bagtiyarlyk district, Berkararlik district, Kopetdag district, Chandybil district, Archabil district, Abadan district and Rukhaba district. The total area makes up 47 thousand 26 hectares.

The Karakum Canal runs through the city, carrying waters from the Amu Darya from east to west.

National Holidays

- **January 1** - New Year's Day
- **February 19** - State Flag of Turkmenistan
- **March 8** - International Woman's Day
- **March 21-22** - Nowruz Bayram national spring holiday

- **First Sunday in April** – “A Drop of Water – A Grain of Gold”
- **Festival Last Sunday in April** - Turkmen Racing Horse Festival
- **May 9** - Victory Day (World War II)
- **May 18-19** - Constitution day, Unity, and the Poetry of Magtymguly
- **Last Sunday in May** - Carpet Day
- **Third Sunday in July** - Galla Bayramy (celebration of the wheat harvest)
- **Second Sunday in August** – Turkmen Melon Day
- **Second Sunday in September** – Turkmen Bakhshi Day (celebrating the Turkmen folk singers)
- **October 6** – Day of Commemoration and National Mourning (commemorating the victims of the 1948 earthquake)
- **October 27-28** – Independence Day
- **December 12** - Day of Neutrality and Day of Student Youth
- **First day of the lunar month of Bayram** – Oraza Bayram
- **Moving holiday (3 days)** – Kurban Bayram

LIST OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN TURKMENISTAN

UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES IN TURKMENISTAN

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

Address: UN House, 40 Galkynysh (1995) Street (), 744004, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Ph.: 425250; **F.:** 425317; **E-mail:** registry.tm@undp.org

Ms. Jacinta Barrins

UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative

Mr. Vitalie Vremis

Deputy Resident Representative



UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund

Address: UN House, 40 Galkynysh (1995) Street, 744004, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Ph.: 425250; **Ph./F.:** 425337

Ms. Jacinta Barrins

UNFPA Representative



UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Address: UN House, 40 Galkynysh (1995) Street, 744004, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Ph.: 425684; 425687/88; **F.:** 425691

Mr. Batyr Sapbiyev

OIC, Associate Protection Officer



UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund

Address: UN House, 40 Galkynysh (1995) Street, 744004, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Ph.: 425681/82/85/86, 425780; **F.:** 420830

Ms. Oyunsaikhan Dendevnorov

UNICEF Representative



UNODC – United Nations Office for Drugs & Crime

Address: UN House, 40 Galkynysh (1995) Street, 744004, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Ph.: 425250; 428992; **F.:** 425987

Mr. Chary Atayev

UNODC OIC



UNRCCA – United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy For Central Asia

Address: 43, Archabil Avenue, 744036, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Ph.: 48 16 12/ 13/ 14; **F:** 48 16 07; **F:** 481609 (direct for Mr. Draganov)

Mr. Petko Draganov

Head of UNRCCA

Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General



WHO – World Health Organization

Address: UN House, 40 Galkynysh (1995) Street, 744004, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

Ph: 425250; **F.:** 262821

Ms. Bahtygul Karryeva

Head of Country Office



IOM – International Organization for Migration

Address: UN Building, 40 Galkynysh (1995) Street, 744004, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Ph./F.: 420816/17; **F:** 425690

Ms. Mahym Orazmuhamedova

Programme Coordinator/OIC



WB – World Bank Liaison Office

Address: 54 Turkmenbashy Avenue, 744000, Yimpas Business Center, 8th floor, office 803;

Ph.: +99312 451491; +99312 451475

Mr. Serdar Jepbarov

OIC/Operations Officer



BILATERAL, MULTILATERAL AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

ADB – Asian Development Bank

Address: Yimpash Business Center Building,
Turkmenbashy 54 Office 401/A, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
Ph.: 454984; **F.:** 454986;
E-mail: gsoltanova@adb.org



EBRD – European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Address: Yimpash Business Center Building,
Turkmenbashy, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.
Ph.: 455118; 455119; 453916; **F.:** 453922



EUROPIAN UNION LIAISON OFFICE

Address: 1 proyezd Myati Kosayeva 8, Ashgabat,
Turkmenistan.
Ph.: 349752; 344677
E-Mail: euinturkmenistan@gmail.com



GIZ – Gesellschaft fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit

Address: 1922 str. (former Stepan Razin), 3 "A," Ashgabat,
Turkmenistan.
Ph./F.: 287572; 286308



ICRC – International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

Address: 44/2 Azadi Street, 744000, Ashgabat,
Turkmenistan.
Ph.: 945796



ICRC

IMF – International Monetary Fund

Address: State Bank for Foreign Economic Affairs, 32
Garashsyzlyk Street, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.
E-mail: JGarlyyeva@imf.org



OSCE – Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Address: 15 Turkmenbashy Shayoly, 744005, Ashgabat,
Turkmenistan.
Ph.: 946092; 945116; **F.:** 946041
E-mail: jemal.meredova@osce.org



TIKA- Turkish International Cooperation Agency

Address: 4 Uchitelskaya St., 1st proezd, Ashgabat,
Turkmenistan.
Ph.: 945373; 946282; **F.:**945270



USAID-United States Agency for International Development

Address: 1 Unus Emre St., Imperial Business Center, 6th
floor, A block, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.
Ph.: 456130; **F.:** 454762



EMBASSIES ACCREDITED IN TURKMENISTAN

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN	4/4 Garashsyzlyk St. 744036 Ph: 480757, 480682, 480463; F.: 480726 E-mail: ashgabat@afghanistan-mfa.net
REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA	20 Kokanskaya St. Ph: 971418/971416; F.: 971419 E-mail: armemb@inbox.ru
REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN	44 Prosveshenya St. Ph: 364608;09; F.: 364610 E-mail: azsefir_ashg@online.tm

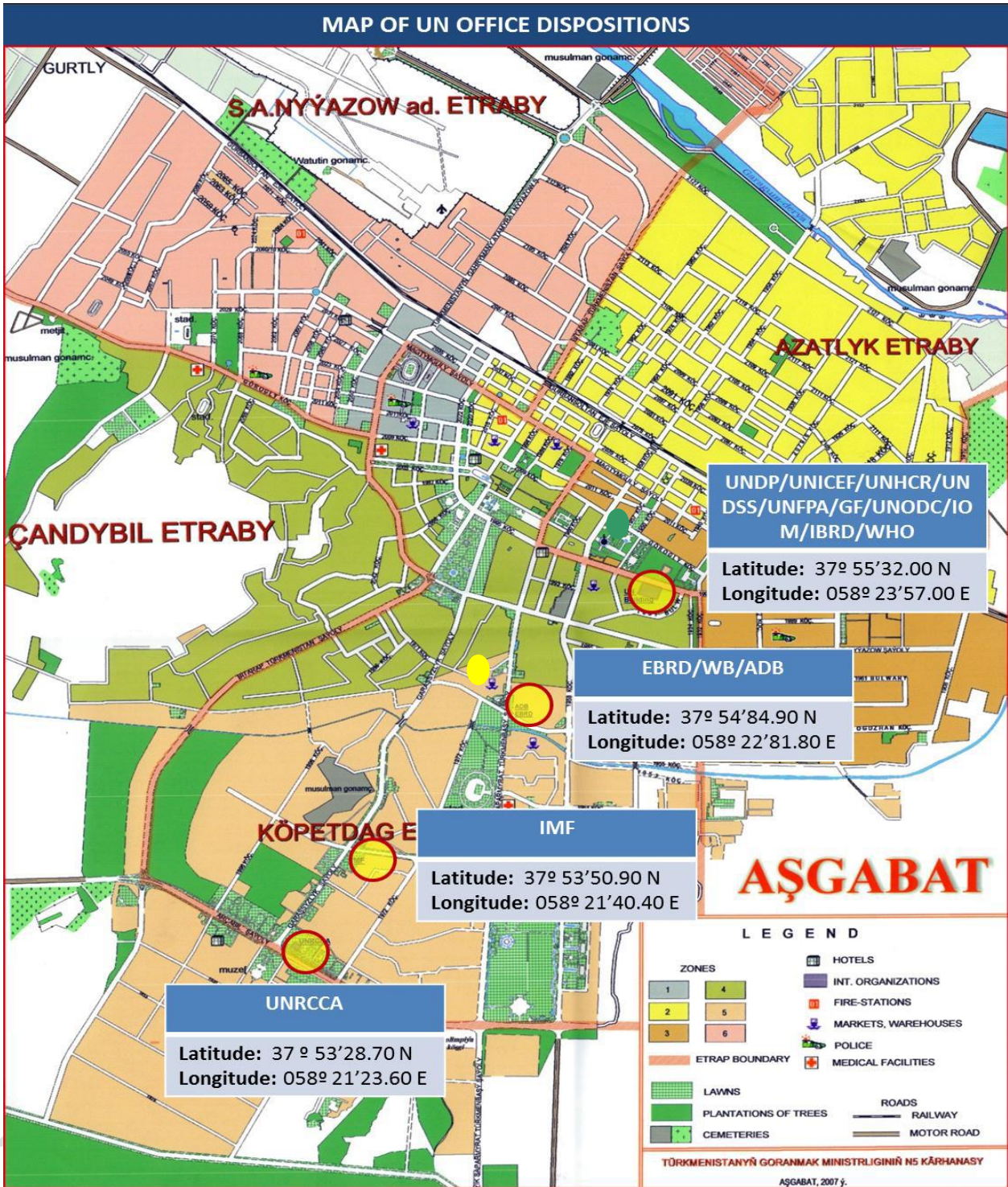
REPUBLIC OF BELARUS	51 M.Gorkiy St.2056 Ph: (99312) 481961; F: (99312) 481962 E-mail: turkmenistan@mfa.gov.by
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA	Hotel "Kuvat" Berzengi, 45 Archabil St. Ph/F: 488105; Ph: 480170; F: 488105 E-mail: chinaemb_tm@mfa.gov.cn
FRANCE	2029 (35 Esgerler St) Ph: 363550; 363468; 363557; F: 363546; 363640 E-mail: cad.ashgabat-amba@diplomatie.gouv.fr
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY	Hotel Ak Altyn, 1 st floor, Office Building Ph: 363515; 363517/21; F: 363522 E-mail: info@aschgabat.diplo.de
GEORGIA	58 Telya St. 744000; Ph: 936282; F: 936014 E-mail: ashgabat.emb@mfa.gov.ge
INDIA	Emperial International Business Centre, 2 nd floor, Unus Emre St. Ph: 456152/53; F: 456156 E-mail: indianamb@online.tm
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN	3 Tehran St. Ph: 349361; 349364; 347963; F: 342298; E-mail: isroiref@online.tm
ITALY	139/a Azadi, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. Ph: 970212; F: 970329 E-mail: ashgabat.info@esteri.it
ISRAEL	1945 (10 years of Abadanchylyk) st. Block "C" 6 th floor, Paydagt Trading Centre Ph: 474491; 474492; F: 474490 E-mail: Consul-Assist1@Ashgabat.mfa.gov.il
JAPAN	Street 1945, Building 60, "Paytagt" Trade Centre 10F & 9F 744017, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan Ph: 477081/82; F: 477083 E-mail: jp-embassy@ah.mofa.go.jp
REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN	Garashsyzlyk Avenue, International settlement No.11, 13, 15. Ashgabat, Turkmenistan Ph: 480468/69/72; F: 480475 E-mail: ashgabat@mfa.kz

REPUBLIC OF KOREA	17A Azadi Ph: 947286/947287/88; Fax: 947289 E-mail: korembtm@mofat.go.kr
REPUBLIC OF KYRGYZSTAN	17 Garashsyzyk St. Ph: 482295; 482296; F: 482294 E-mail: kyrgtm@mail.ru
LIBYAN BUREAU OF ECONOMICAL COOPERATION	9 Garashsyzyk St. Ph: 482451, 482455; F: 482450 E-mail: News.Libyan@yahoo.com
MALAYSIA	International Bus Center Block B2 2 nd fl, Mir 2/1 1951 St. Ph: 455903; 455361 E-mail: malashgabat@kln.gov.my
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN	4/1 Garashsyzyk St. Ph: 482128; 482129; F: 482130 E-mail: parepashgabat@gmail.com
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ROYAL NETHERLANDS CONSULATE	17 Tehran St. Ph: 346700; F: 344252 E-mail: Minbuza@online.tm
ROMANIA	122 Myaty Kosaewa St. Ph: 347655; 347633; F: 347620 E-mail: ashabat@mae.ro
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	11 Turkmenbashy Av. Ph: 940388; 941505; 94-19-57; F: 942866/942177 E-mail: rusemb-ashkhabad@rambler.ru
SAUDI ARABIA	Mir 2/1, U.Emre St., 1 International Imperial Business Centre Ph:454964; 454963/65/67; Fax: 454968 E-mail: ksaembss@online.tm
REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN	4/2 Garashsyzyk St. Ph: 481818; 480163; 481745; F:481877 E-mail: tadjemb_tm@mail.ru

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY	9 Shevchenko St. Ph: 941461; 940088; 379131; 940095 (24 hours); F:941915; E-mail: embassy.ashgabat@mfa.gov.tr
UKRAINE	49 Azadi St. 744001, Ashgabat Ph: +993(12) 94 29 58, 94 30 25; F: 924279 E-mail: ukremb@online.tm
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UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND	Ak Altyn Hotel, 3 rd floor Ph: 363462;63, 64;66;98;74; F: 363465 E-mail: beasb@online.tm
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	9 Pushkin St. Ph: 940045/66; F: 942614; 940049 (cons.) E-mail: orazniyazovamm@state.gov
REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN	50 A Gorogly St. Ph: 971055, 971062; F: 971057 E-mail: embashgabat@yahoo.com
THE APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE OF VATICAN	20/A Gorogly St. 744000, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan Ph: 927546; F: 923683 E-mail: aszomi@gmail.com
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA	9 Karliyeva St., 744000 Ph: 971677

MAP OF TURKMENISTAN





UNDP
 Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
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