

# **Política Internacional e Geopolítica**

## **a crise do mundo globalizado**

**INSTITUTO CULTURAL  
D. ANTÓNIO FERREIRA GOMES  
José Pedro Teixeira Fernandes**

**2020-2021  
SESSÃO Nº 23**



## PARTE I – TEMA PRINCIPAL

# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (1)

[FONTE: Encyclopædia Britannica]



## Afghanistan



flag of Afghanistan

### OFFICIAL NAME

Islamic Republic of  
Afghanistan (Jomhūrī-ye  
Eslāmī-ye Afghānestān  
[Dari]); Da Afghanistan  
Eslami Jamhuriyat (Pashto)<sup>1</sup>

### FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Islamic republic<sup>1</sup> with two  
legislative houses (House of  
Elders [102<sup>2</sup>]; House of the  
People [250<sup>3</sup>])

### HEAD OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

President: Ashraf Ghani

### CAPITAL

Kabul

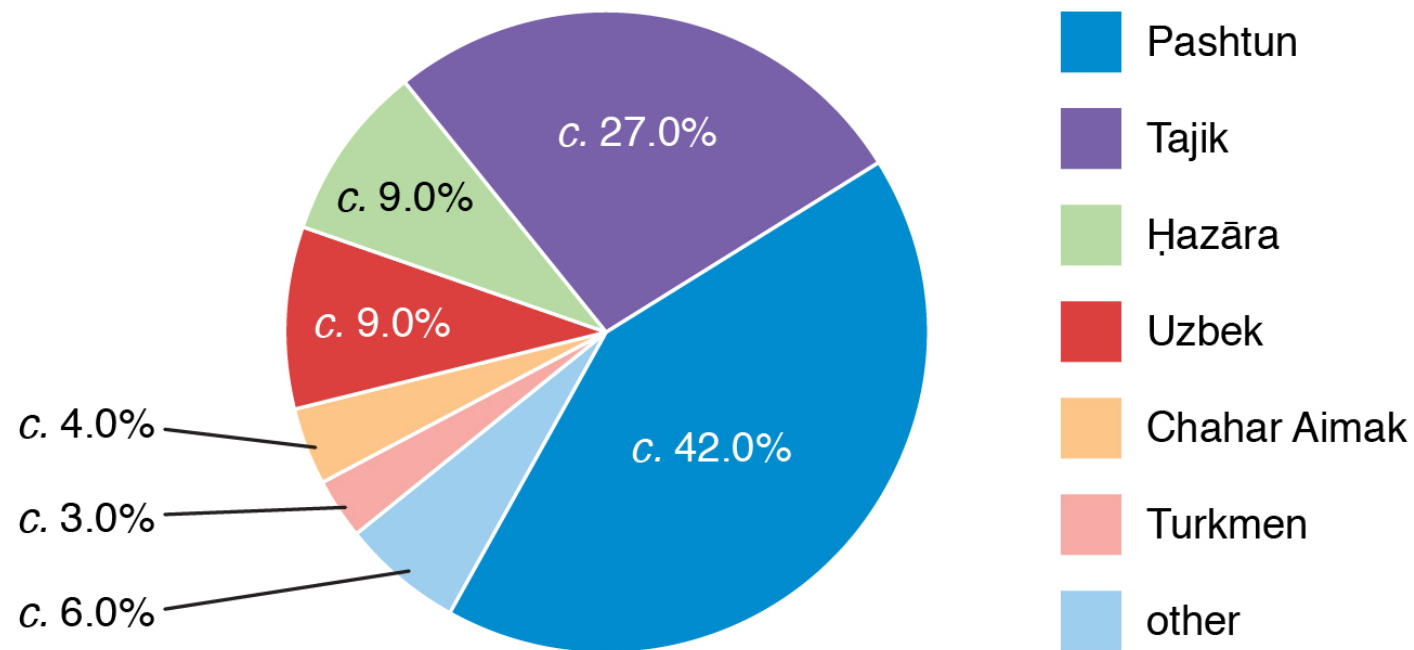
### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Dari; Pashto<sup>4</sup>

# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (2)

[FONTE: Encyclopædia Britannica]

## Ethnolinguistic composition (2004)

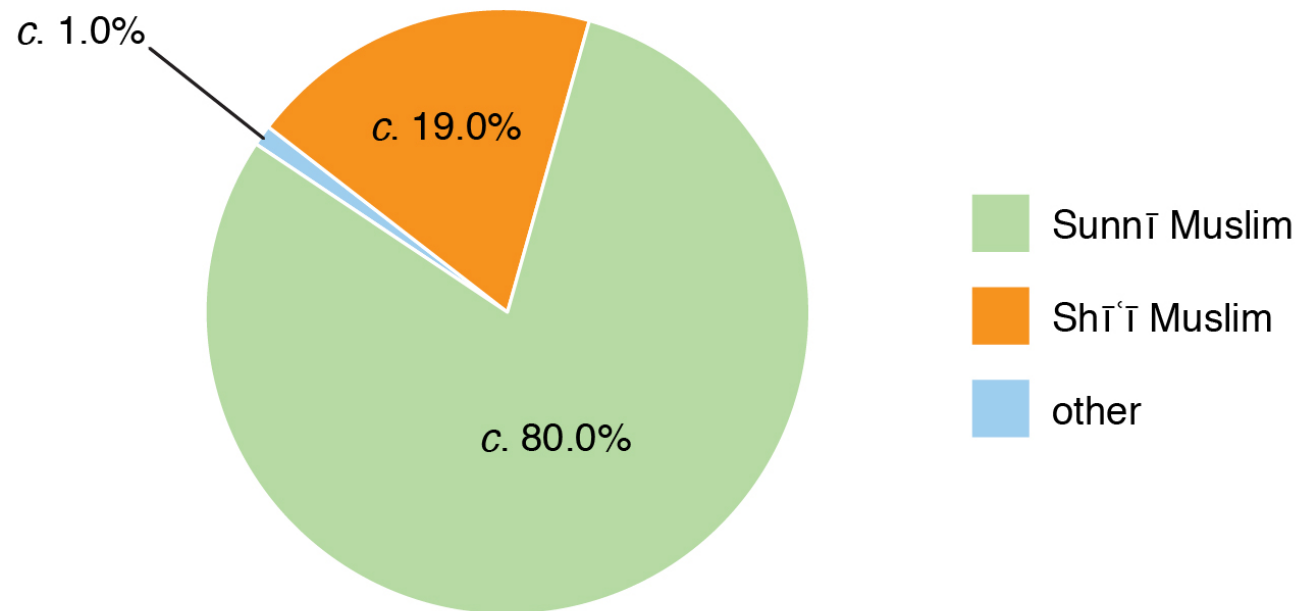




# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (3)

[FONTE: Encyclopædia Britannica]

## Religious affiliation (2009)

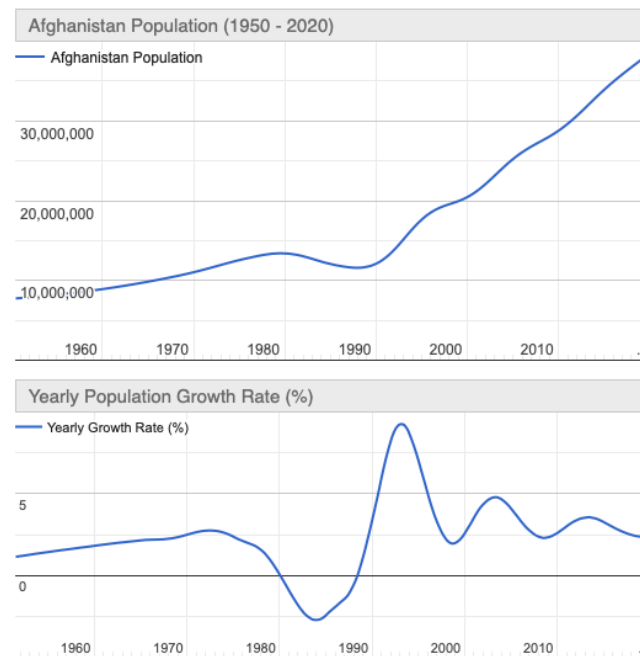


# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (4)

[FONTE: Worldometer]

Afghanistan Population (LIVE)

**39,650,607**



Country Continent World



- The current population of **Afghanistan** is **39,616,956** as of Saturday, April 17, 2021, based on Worldometer elaboration of the latest United Nations data.
- Afghanistan 2020 population is estimated at **38,928,346** people at mid year according to UN data.
- Afghanistan population is equivalent to **0.5%** of the [total world population](#).
- Afghanistan ranks number **37** in the list of [countries \(and dependencies\) by population](#).
- The population density in Afghanistan is 60 per Km<sup>2</sup> (154 people per mi<sup>2</sup>).
- The total **land** area is 652,860 Km<sup>2</sup> (252,071 sq. miles)
- **25.4 %** of the population is **urban** (9,904,337 people in 2020)
- The **median age** in Afghanistan is **18.4 years**.

# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (5)

[FONTE: Governo da República islâmica do Afeganistão]



## Overview

Mohammad Ashraf Ghani grew up in Afghanistan before pursuing his education abroad. Like so many Afghans, foreign invasion and civil war led to the persecution of his family and forced him to remain in exile. Whilst abroad, he became a leading scholar of Political Science and Anthropology and then worked at the World Bank where he learned the tools of international development. Following the fall of the Taliban in 2001, he returned to Afghanistan to devote his unique skills and knowledge to rebuilding the country. He advised interim President Karzai and served as the Finance Minister in the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan until December 2004.

# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (6)

[FONTE: NYT, 10/04/2021]

## **Afghan President in 'Desperate Situation' as His Power Is Undermined**

Ashraf Ghani has few remaining allies, the Taliban are gaining militarily and his international supporters are impatient with him and the stumbling peace process.

From most vantage points, Mr. Ghani — well qualified for his job and deeply credentialed, with Johns Hopkins, Berkeley, Columbia, the World Bank and the United Nations in his background — is thoroughly isolated. [A serious author](#) with a first-class intellect, he is dependent on the counsel of a handful, unwilling to even watch television news, those who know him say, and losing allies fast.

That spells trouble for a country [where a hard-line Islamist insurgency](#) has the upper hand militarily, where nearly half the population faces hunger at crisis levels, according to the United Nations, where the overwhelming balance of government money comes from abroad and where weak governance and widespread corruption are endemic.

Meanwhile, the Americans are preparing to pull out their last remaining troops, a prospect expected to lead to the medium-term collapse of the Afghan forces they now support.

"He is in a desperate situation," said Rahmatullah Nabil, a former head of the country's intelligence services. "We're getting weaker. Security is weak, everything is getting weaker, and the Taliban are taking advantage."

# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (7)

[FONTE: NYT, 10/04/2021]

The country's Parliament twice rejected his budget and distrusts him. His principal adversaries, the Taliban, refuse to entertain the idea of a deal with Mr. Ghani. His mandate, weak from the outset — voter turnout was around 18.7 percent in his sharply contested 2019 victory, according to Afghanistan's Independent Election Commission — appears to have shrunk.



Demonstrators holding posters of Mr. Ghani during a protest over the inclusion of ethnicity on Afghan identification cards in Kabul last month. Jawed Kargar/EPA, via Shutterstock

American officials have mostly lost patience with him. Many are fed up with what they see as his obstinacy in refusing to make concessions to adversaries, or his condescending style. "Dead man walking," is the term some civil society members use to describe his political standing.



# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (8)

[FONTE: CFR, 10/2021]

*Backgrounder*

## The Taliban in Afghanistan

Since its ouster in 2001, the Taliban has maintained its insurgency against the U.S.-led mission in Afghanistan and the Afghan government. A collapse in intra-Afghan peace negotiations could pave the way for the group's return to power.

WRITTEN BY  
Lindsay Maizland

UPDATED  
Last updated March 15, 2021  
12:00 pm (EST)



*Taliban fighters attend a gathering to celebrate the U.S.-Taliban deal in March 2020. Wali Sabawoon/NurPhoto/Getty Images*

# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (9)

[FONTE: CFR, 10/2021]

## Summary

- The Islamic fundamentalist group ruled Afghanistan from 1996 until the U.S.-led invasion in 2001. Since then, it has waged an insurgency against the U.S.-backed government in Kabul.
- Experts say the Taliban is stronger now than at any point since 2001. With up to eighty-five thousand full-time fighters, it controls one-fifth of the country and continues to launch attacks.
- The Taliban started its first direct peace negotiations with the Afghan government in 2020 after signing an agreement with the United States. Little progress has been made.

## Introduction

The Taliban is a predominantly Pashtun, Islamic fundamentalist group that ruled Afghanistan from 1996 until 2001, when a U.S.-led invasion toppled the regime for providing refuge to al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. The Taliban regrouped across the border in Pakistan and has led an insurgency against the U.S.-backed government in Kabul for more than nineteen years.

# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (10)

[FONTE: CFR, 10/2021]

## How was the Taliban formed?

The group was formed in the early 1990s by Afghan mujahideen, or Islamic guerilla fighters, who had resisted the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan (1979–89) with the covert backing of the CIA and its Pakistani counterpart, the **Inter-Services Intelligence directorate** (ISI). They were joined by younger Pashtun tribesmen who studied in Pakistani madrassas, or seminaries; *taliban* is Pashto for “students.” Pashtuns comprise a plurality in Afghanistan and are the predominant ethnic group in much of the country’s south and east. They are also a major ethnic group in Pakistan’s north and west.

The movement attracted popular support in the initial post-Soviet era by promising to impose stability and rule of law after four years of conflict (1992–1996) among rival mujahideen groups. The Taliban **entered Kandahar** in November 1994 to pacify the crime-ridden southern city, and by September 1996 seized the capital, Kabul, from President Burhanuddin Rabbani, an ethnic Tajik whom it viewed as anti-Pashtun and corrupt. That year, the Taliban declared Afghanistan an Islamic emirate, with Mullah Mohammed Omar, a cleric and veteran of the anti-Soviet resistance, leading as *amir al-mu’minin*, or “commander of the faithful.” The regime controlled some 90 percent of the country before its 2001 overthrow.

# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (11)

[FONTE: CFR, 10/2021]

## **Does the Taliban pose a threat?**

Many experts say the Taliban is a powerful fighting force that threatens Afghan democratic institutions, citizens' rights, and regional security. The group has withstood counterinsurgency operations from the world's most powerful security alliance, the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization** (NATO), and three U.S. administrations in a war that has killed more than **6,000 U.S. troops and contractors** [PDF] and over 1,100 NATO troops. Some 46,000 civilians have died, and an estimated 73,000 Afghan troops and police officers have been killed since 2007.

Despite the Taliban's own losses, estimated to be in the tens of thousands, the group is stronger now than at any point in the last nineteen years. It has between fifty-five thousand and eighty-five thousand full-time fighters. In early 2021, the Taliban controlled an estimated **19 percent of districts**, while the government controlled 33 percent, according to the Foundation for Defense of Democracies Long War Journal, a U.S.-based publication that has covered the U.S. fight against al-Qaeda and other militant groups since 2007. The rest of the country was contested by both groups.

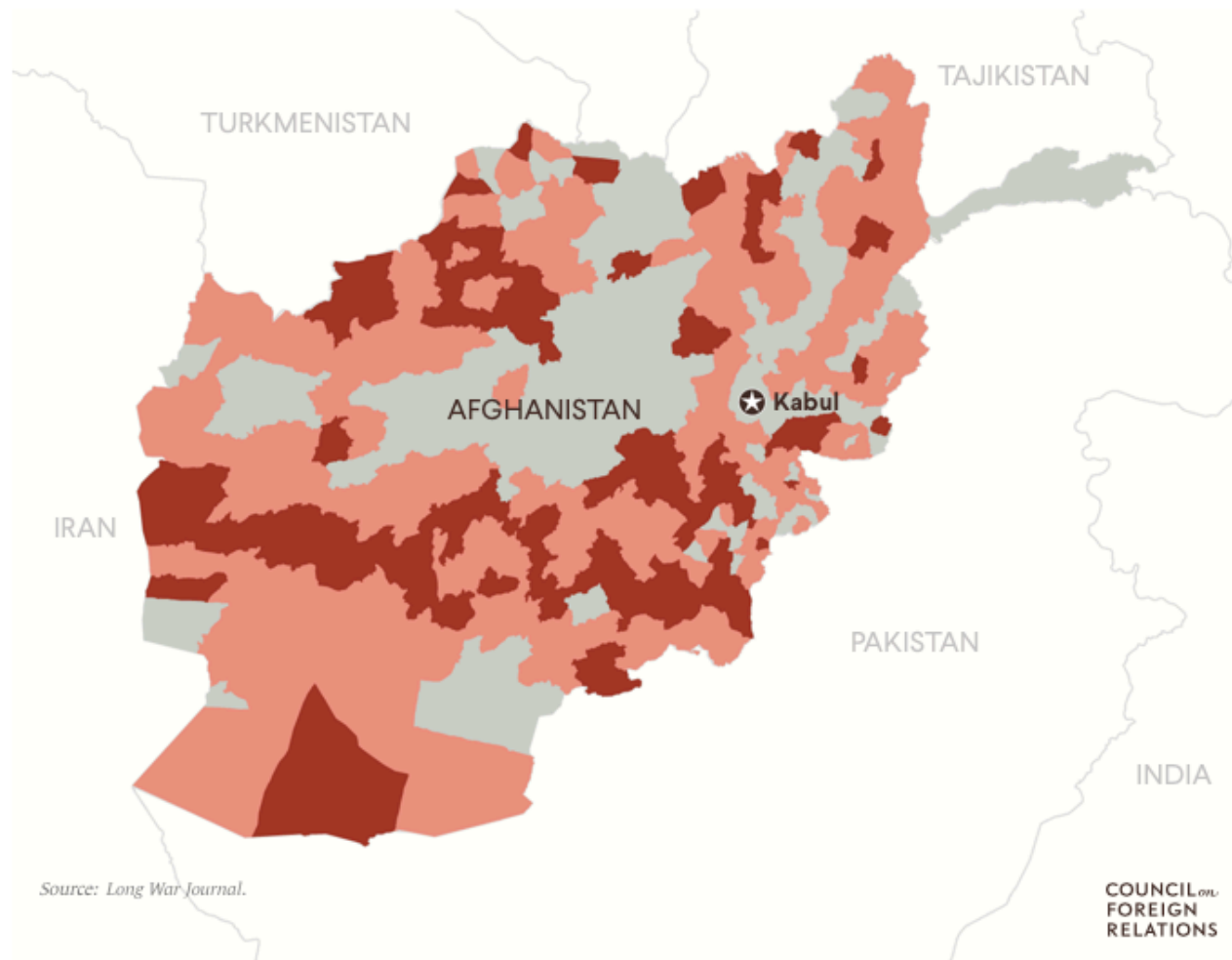
# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (12)

[FONTE: CFR, 10/2021]

## Taliban Control in Afghanistan

Control by district, as of March 2021

■ Taliban control or claim   ■ Contested   ■ Government control or undetermined





# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (13)

[FONTE: Natural resources in Afghanistan geographic and geologic perspectives on centuries of conflict, John F Shroder (Elsevier, 2014)]

**Figure 7.22** The supply routes of the Coalition forces by overland truck, railway, ship, and air (air routes are diagnostic only) into and out of Afghanistan. Map after National Geospatial Intelligence Agency and Gene Thorp; Washington Post July 2, 2011.



# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (14)

[FONTE: Natural resources in Afghanistan geographic and geologic perspectives on centuries of conflict, John F Shroder (Elsevier, 2014)]



**Figure 12.1**  
Newly discovered mineral wealth in Afghanistan that had just been recognized by Pentagon in 2010 engendered this perceptive political cartoon by Jimmy Margulies in The Record, Hackensack, NJ.

By Jimmy Margulies, The Record, Hackensack, N.J., North America Syndicate



# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (15)

[FONTE: The Economist, 17/04/2021]

**United States**

Apr 17th 2021 edition >

**Retreat from Kabul**

## Joe Biden offers unconvincing reasons for ending America's longest war

The Biden administration has missed an opportunity to show its mettle



# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (16)

[FONTE: The Economist, 17/04/2021]

The 80,000 servicemen and women who have served in Afghanistan represent 0.25% of a general population that has never been less connected to its armed forces. America's 2,448 victims of bombs and accidents in Afghanistan pale against the 58,000 it lost in Vietnam. The war's \$2trn cost has been deferred to future generations. Joe Biden's decision to pull out America's remaining troops is a withdrawal of choice, therefore, not of political necessity.

It is debatable how many Americans would even have noticed had he decided, as his immediate two predecessors ultimately did, to hang in there for a bit rather than risk the Taliban retaking Kabul. Explaining his alternative rationale, Mr Biden said America could not "continue the cycle of extending or expanding our military presence in Afghanistan hoping to create ideal conditions for the withdrawal". As the last word on America's Afghan misadventure, that seemed appropriately muddle-headed.

Mr Biden was certainly right to characterise America's record in Afghanistan as a triumph of wishfulness over prudence. The campaign's spiralling cost was long fuelled by an assumption that well-resourced American soldiers and diplomats could deliver a stable, democratic Afghanistan. This was a delusion based much less on Afghan reality than American politics, an overestimation of American military force and a desire to maintain the brief moment of post-9/11 national unity.

# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (17)

[FONTE: The Economist, 17/04/2021]

America's shifting objectives were a clue to those competing impulses. The Bush administration's counter-terrorism mission broadened into a state-building one in response to bad press over the Iraq war and pressure from allies. Barack Obama doubled down on counter-insurgency because, having talked up Afghanistan over Iraq, he felt he must. Donald Trump upped the tempo of strikes against the Taliban because Mr Obama had slowed it. He then launched talks with the insurgents that might have got somewhere had they been less obviously intended as an exit strategy.

Your columnist, a regular visitor to Afghanistan for a decade, saw most of these shifts unfold. It was striking how little America's latest plan seemed to be informed by the failure of its previous one, let alone by Afghan history or circumstances.

Just a few facts are enough to explain the inevitability of those costly failures. American forces were superb at war-fighting, but often inept at peacekeeping. The insurgency, being based in Pakistan, was undefeatable. The government, stocked with incompetents and criminals, was incapable of reassuring civilians caught between the two sides. Afghanistan had no history of effective government even before decades of war erased its monarchical state. Few of its 20th-century leaders left office peacefully; most were murdered or deposed.



# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (18)

[FONTE: David Ignatius / Washington Post, 14/04/2021]

## **Opinion: History will cast a shadow over Biden's decision to withdraw from Afghanistan**

[David Ignatius](#)



President Biden at the White House on March 11. (Jabin Botsford/The Washington Post)

Afghanistan [nagged](#) at Joe Biden 10 years ago. He thought the Pentagon was muscling a new president, Barack Obama, into adding more troops for an unwinnable war. He believed the United States' interests in Afghanistan should be focused on preventing another attack against the homeland.

# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (19)

[FONTE: David Ignatius / Washington Post, 14/04/2021]

Military advisers, now as a decade ago, have been warning Biden of the dangers. Intelligence analysts predict that civil war may quickly erupt, and the Kabul government may collapse. They predict that al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups could reestablish havens within two years. They fear that Islamist militants around the world, who have been on the defensive since the defeat of the Islamic State, will be emboldened by what the Taliban will claim as a victory.

Many military leaders have been urging that Biden announce a conditions-based withdrawal. Biden, in the end, rejected that course, deciding that linking withdrawal to conditions on the ground, in the [words](#) of a senior administration official who briefed reporters today, “is a recipe for staying in Afghanistan forever.”

Biden sometimes comes across as a genial gaffer, pliable in the way of a career politician. But Tuesday’s announcement shows that he is also a stubborn and resolute man. Friends say he was bruised by the Afghanistan battles of a decade ago and took away some grudges. When convinced he’s right, he’s prepared to take big risks — as he has this week.

The military, for all its worries about withdrawal, has hated the meat grinder of Afghanistan. Most of today’s Army and Marine commanders have fought there, and many of their sons and daughters have, too. They share Biden’s desire to get the hell out. But that’s checked by a feeling that the only thing that’s worse than remaining in what seems an unwinnable stalemate is pulling out troops — and then having to go back in.

# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (20)

[FONTE: The Diplomat, 22/09/2020]

## China's Stake in the Afghan Peace Process

Afghanistan is already of strategic importance to Beijing. As U.S. troops leave, China's influence will grow.

II



China's President Xi Jinping and Afghan Chief Executive Officer Abdullah shake hands during their meeting at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China, Tuesday, May 17, 2016.

# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (21)

[FONTE: The Diplomat, 22/09/2020]

Even in a time of intense geopolitical competition between the United States and China, stability in Afghanistan is one of the few shared interests remaining. It is a task that requires international support. The peace talks were delayed for over six months due to argument over prisoner releases; meanwhile, the Taliban increased the severity of their [attacks](#) on Afghan security forces and civilians.

Nevertheless, the Trump administration is staying course with its initial [plans](#) to withdraw all U.S. troops from Afghanistan by mid-2021. The move toward troop withdrawal will likely not change even if President Donald Trump loses his re-election bid this November. His opponent, former Vice President Joe Biden, also [believes](#) that American forces need to be dramatically reduced to under 2,000 and that the expensive war in Afghanistan needs to end.

An inevitable consequence of this U.S. retreat is that other great powers will fill the military and economic vacuum left in Afghanistan. China's interest in Central Asia is far reaching and it will look to use Afghanistan as a corridor for its "March West." The only uncertainty is how this will affect a future Afghan government and its development as a regional economic force.

# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (22)

[FONTE: The Diplomat, 22/09/2020]

## **China's Rising Economic Presence in Afghanistan**

Chinese President Xi Jinping's modern-day silk road project – the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) – serves as the country's foundation to project massive economic influence coupled with enhancing partnerships in security, trade, and energy. China's flagship BRI project, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), could be [expanded](#) to Afghanistan to further connect the Central Asian republics under a Chinese umbrella. The primary reason Chinese investment in Afghanistan has been sluggish is due to intense instability and American presence, but those key aspects may suddenly change in the coming future.

Afghanistan's natural resources are estimated to be worth around \$1 trillion, and Chinese companies have been taking notice. For instance, in 2008, the Chinese Metallurgical Group Corporation (MCC) and the Jiangxi Copper Company Limited (JLC) consortium [won](#) a 30-year lease to extract the second largest copper deposit in the world (valued at least \$50 billion) for \$3.4 billion. In 2011, the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) won a \$400 million bid to drill three oil fields for 25 years, containing roughly 87 million barrels of oil. However, the development of the mine and oil fields have not progressed at all, which has left the Afghan government frustrated.



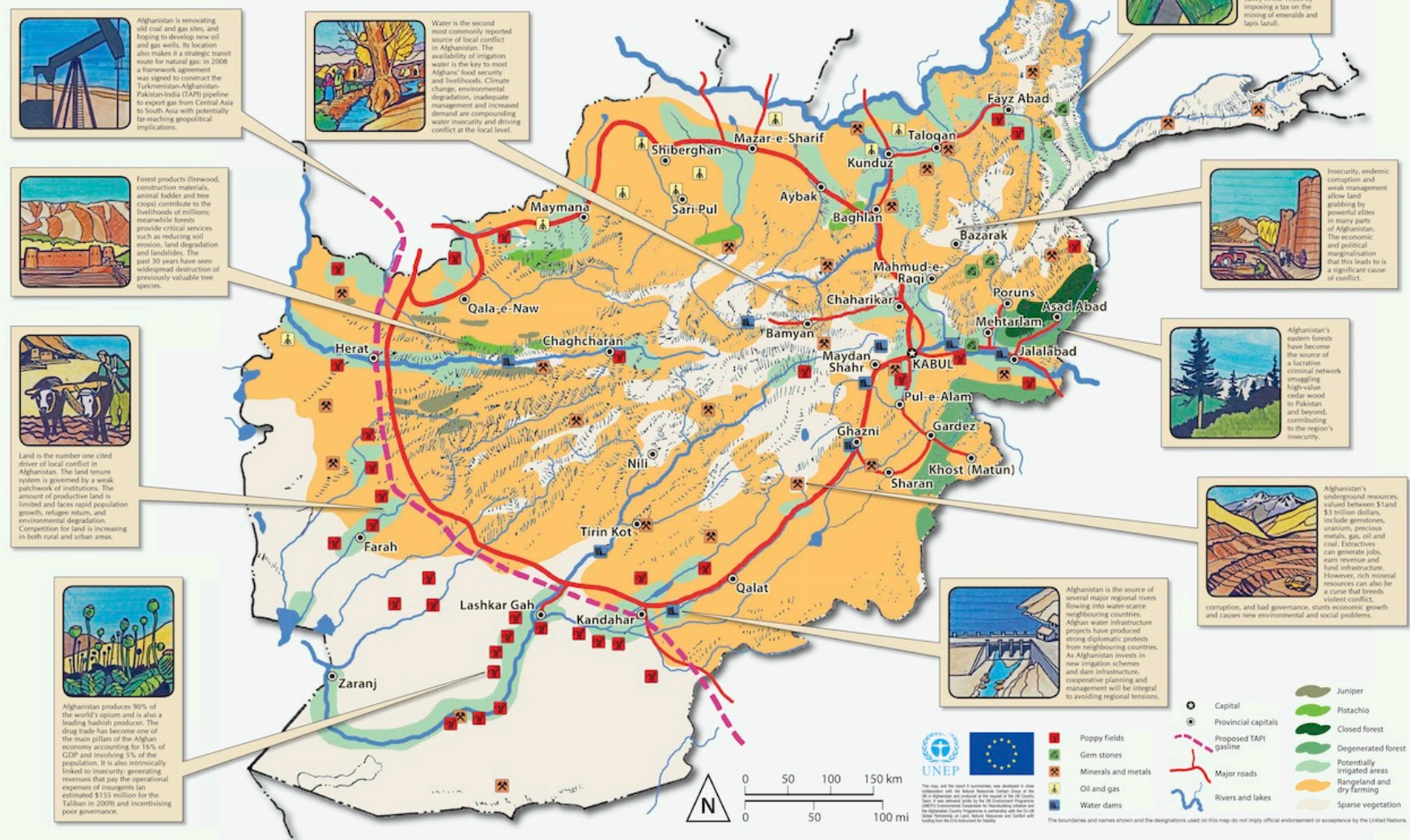
# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (23)

[FONTE: UNEP - Programa das Nações Unidas para o Meio Ambiente]

## Natural Resource Management and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan

Afghanistan's precious natural resources – its land, water, forests and mineral deposits – are critical to the country's prospects for a peaceful and prosperous future. However, the management of natural resources can also influence conflict in Afghanistan. Natural resources are scarce resources that communities fight over, instruments of coercion used to exert control, and a source of illicit revenues that sustains corruption and the war economy and provides incentives for peace spoilers.

In essence effective natural resource management (NRM) is a form of conflict prevention, bringing order and predictability to situations where otherwise competition is rife. This map is by no means comprehensive but illustrates some of the ways natural resource management impacts peacebuilding in Afghanistan.



# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (24)

[FONTE: SCMP, 16/04/2021. MAPA: Stratford]

## **China may send peacekeeping force to Afghanistan after US troops leave, observers say**

Beijing is concerned terrorist groups will prosper if there is a lack of stability in the region, experts say  
US President Joe Biden says all remaining US troops in Afghanistan will pull out by September 11

"The security forces of the Afghan government are not capable of ensuring Afghan security," said Sun Qi, an international relations specialist at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences.

"The situation in Afghanistan might go further into chaos in the future. Cross-border crime, drug trafficking and smuggling of firearms may proliferate," he said.





# Os EUA e o problema crónico do Afeganistão (25)

[FONTE: SCMP, 16/04/2021. MAPA: Stratford]



China may send peacekeeping troops to Afghanistan under the terms of the UN Charter, according to an international relations specialist at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. Photo: Simon Song

While Beijing would not station troops in Afghanistan, it might work with other countries in the region to promote political stability and reduce the security risk to China, Sun said.

"If the security situation poses a significant threat, China may send peacekeeping troops along with humanitarian assistance to the region under the terms of the Charter of the

[United Nations](#)

to ensure the safety and interests of Chinese people and companies there," he said.



## PARTE II – NOTAS BREVES



# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (1) [FONTE: Encyclopædia Britannica]

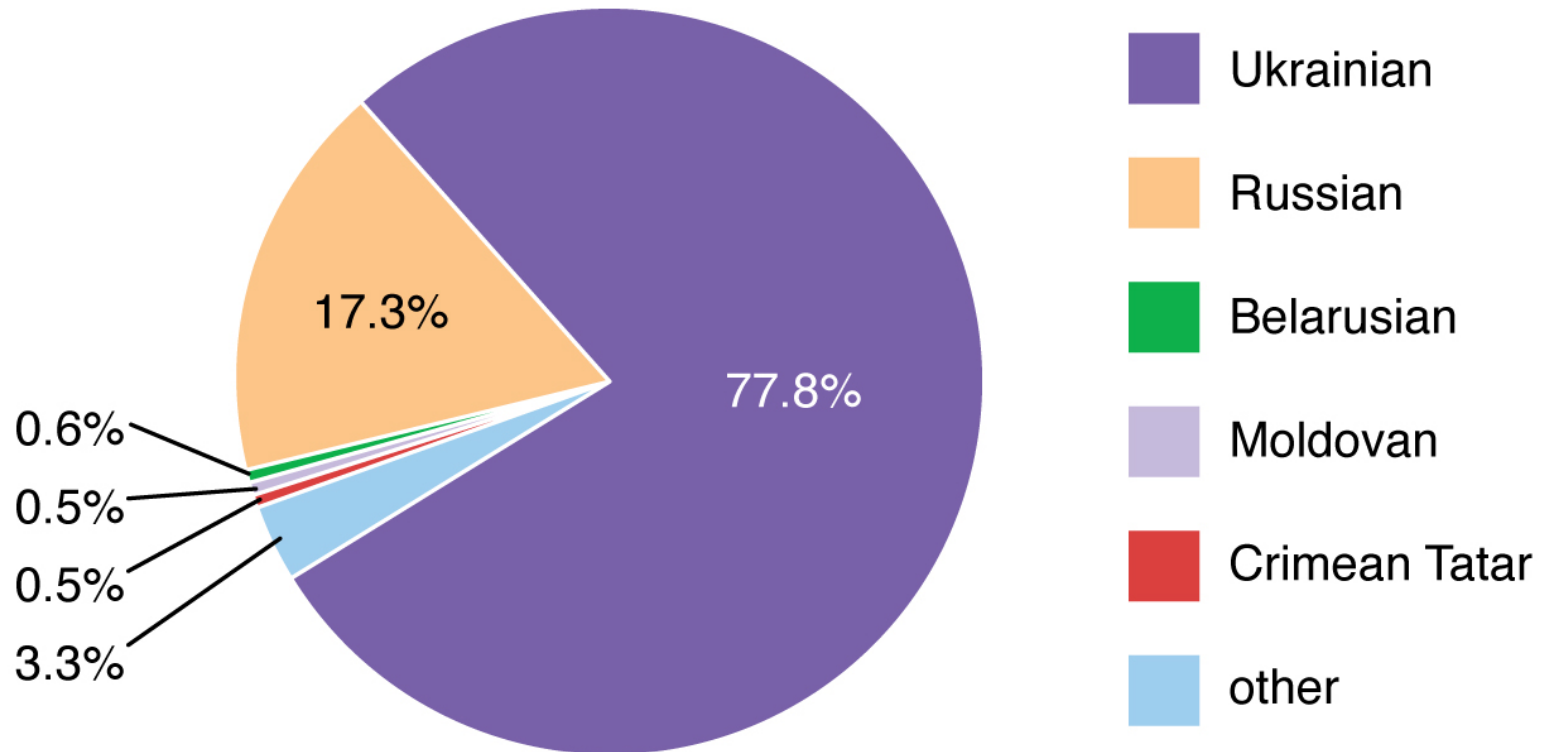


# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (2) [FONTE: Encyclopædia Britannica]



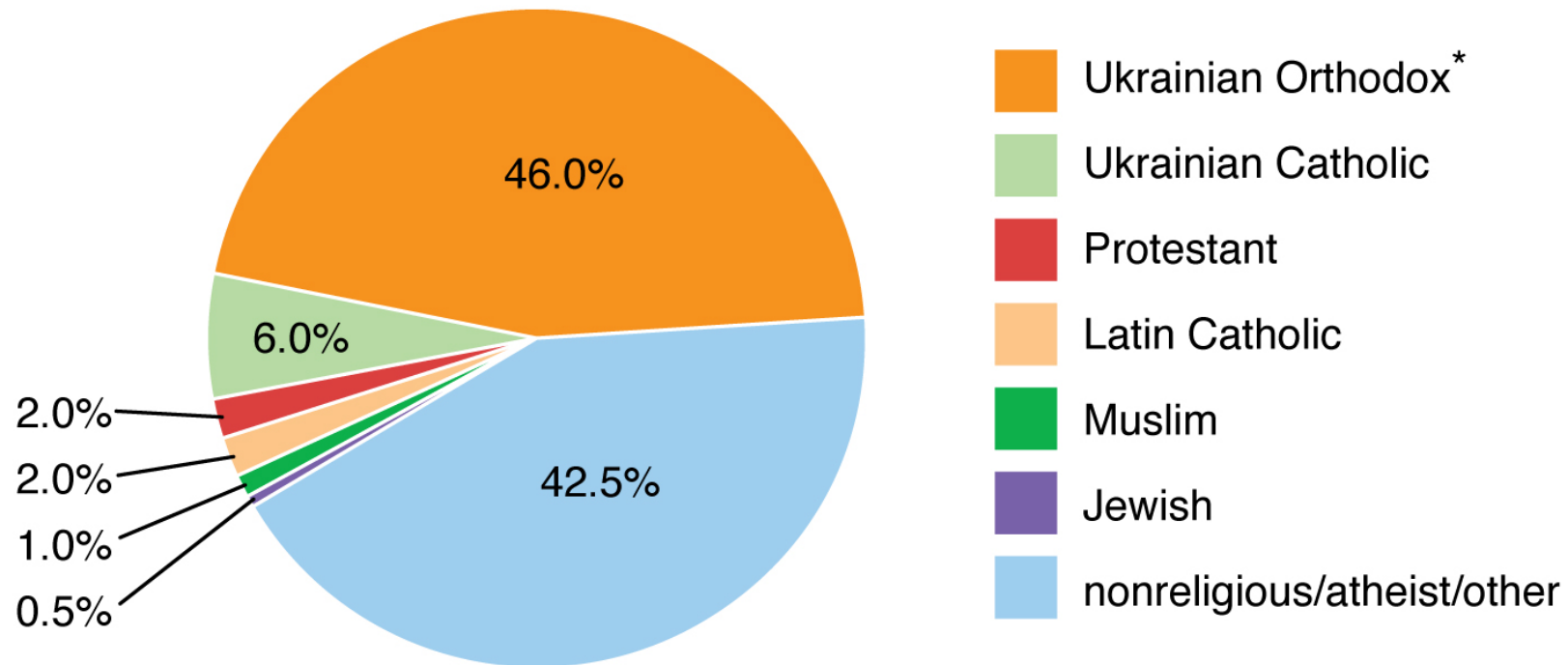
# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (3) [FONTE: Encyclopædia Britannica]

## Ethnic composition (2001)



# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (4) [FONTE: Encyclopædia Britannica]

## Religious affiliation (2004)



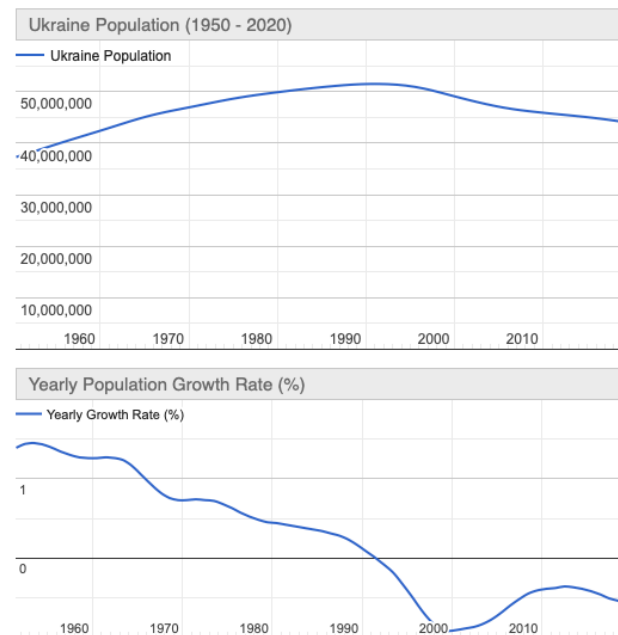
\* Includes "Kiev patriarchy," "Moscow patriarchy," "no particular patriarchy," and Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox.



# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (5) [FONTE: Encyclopædia Britannica]

Ukraine Population (LIVE)

**43,527,477**



Country Continent World



- The current population of **Ukraine** is **43,525,192** as of Saturday, April 17, 2021, based on Worldometer elaboration of the latest United Nations data.
- Ukraine 2020 population is estimated at **43,733,762** people at mid year according to UN data.
- Ukraine population is equivalent to **0.56%** of the [total world population](#).
- Ukraine ranks number **35** in the list of [countries \(and dependencies\) by population](#).
- The population density in Ukraine is 75 per Km<sup>2</sup> (196 people per mi<sup>2</sup>).
- The total **land** area is 579,320 Km<sup>2</sup> (223,677 sq. miles)
- **69.4 %** of the population is **urban** (30,334,632 people in 2020)
- The **median age** in Ukraine is **41.2 years**.

# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (6) [FONTE: Encyclopædia Britannica]



# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (7) [FONTE: Encyclopædia Britannica]



## Sevastopol, Ukraine

Unidentified soldiers accompanied by Russian military vehicles patrolling Sevastopol, Ukraine, on March 1, 2014, a few weeks before Russia annexed Crimea and the city.

*Andrew Lubimov/AP Images*



# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (8) [FONTE: CFR, 15/04/2021]



Conflict in Ukraine

**MORE THAN  
10,000**

*Estimated number of civilian  
casualties*

**Source**

**1.5 MILLION**

*Estimated number of internally  
displaced people*

**Source**

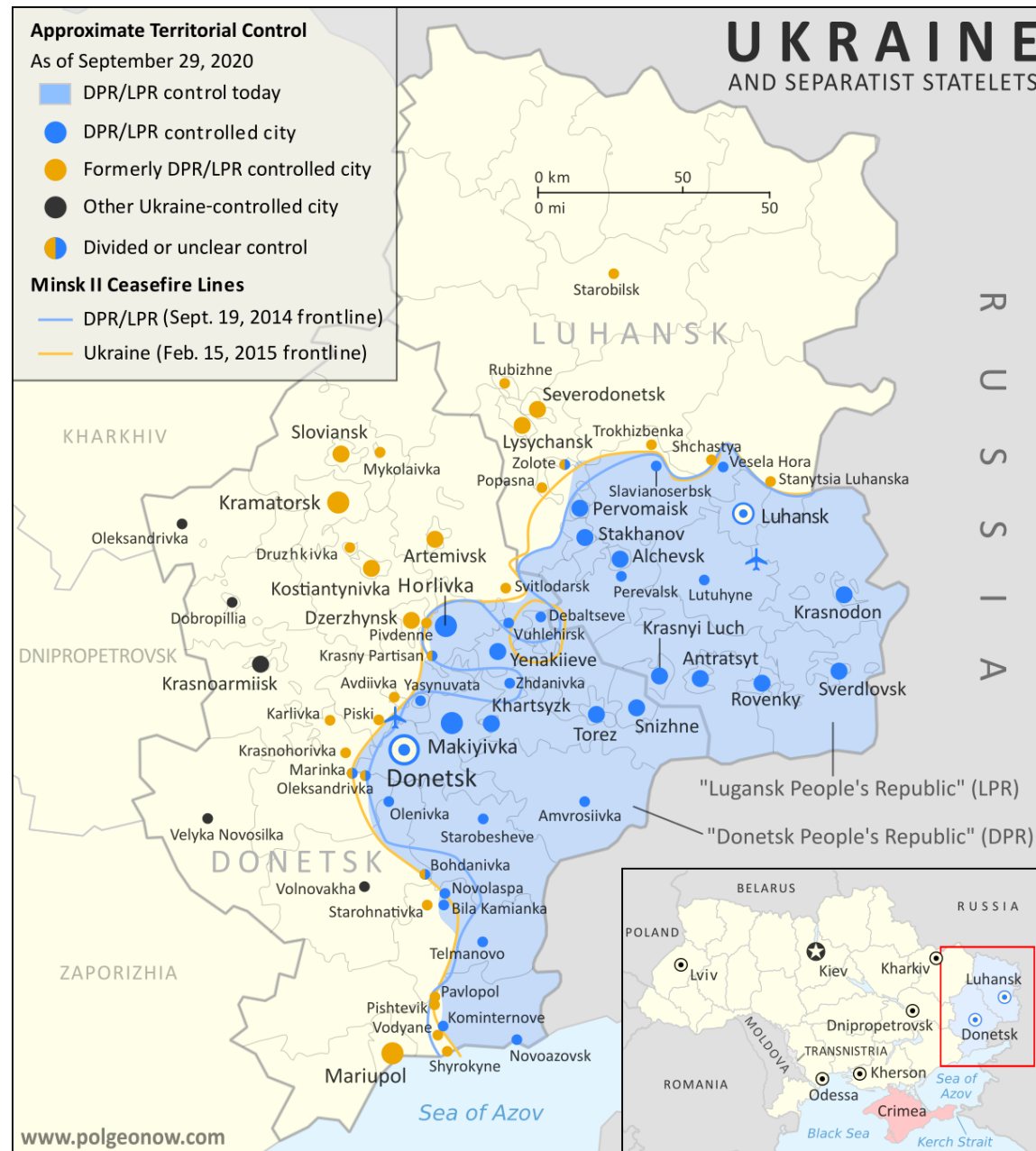
**280 MILES**

*Length of front line*

**Source**



# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (9) [FONTE: Political Geography Now]



# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (10) [FONTE: CFR, 15/04/2021]

## Background

The crisis in Ukraine began with protests in the capital city of Kiev in November 2013 against Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych's decision to reject a deal for greater economic integration with the European Union. After a violent crackdown by state security forces unintentionally drew an even greater number of protesters and escalated the conflict, President Yanukovych [fled](#) the country in February 2014.

In March 2014, Russian troops took control of Ukraine's Crimean region, before formally annexing the peninsula after Crimeans voted to join the Russian Federation in a disputed local [referendum](#). Russian President Vladimir Putin [cited](#) the need to protect the rights of Russian citizens and Russian speakers in Crimea and southeast Ukraine. The crisis heightened ethnic divisions, and two months later pro-Russian separatists in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of eastern Ukraine held a referendum to declare independence from Ukraine.

Violence in eastern Ukraine between Russian-backed separatist forces and the Ukrainian military has by conservative estimates killed more than [10,300](#) people and injured nearly [24,000](#) since April 2014. Although Moscow has denied its involvement, Ukraine and NATO have [reported](#) the buildup of Russian troops and military equipment near Donetsk and Russian cross-border [shelling](#).

# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (11) [FONTE: CFR, 15/04/2021]

Since February 2015, France, Germany, Russia, and Ukraine have attempted to broker a cessation in violence through the [Minsk Accords](#). The agreement includes provisions for a cease-fire, withdrawal of heavy weaponry, and full Ukrainian government control throughout the conflict zone. However, efforts to reach a diplomatic settlement and satisfactory resolution have been unsuccessful.

In April 2016, NATO [announced](#) that the alliance would deploy four battalions to Eastern Europe, rotating troops through Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland to deter possible future Russian aggression elsewhere in Europe, particularly in the Baltics. These battalions were joined by two U.S. Army tank brigades, [deployed](#) to Poland in September 2017 to further bolster the alliance's deterrence presence.

Ukraine has been the target of a [number](#) of [cyberattacks](#) since the conflict started in 2014. In December 2015, more than 225,000 people lost power across Ukraine in an [attack](#), and in December 2016 parts of Kiev experienced another power [blackout](#) following a similar attack targeting a Ukrainian utility company. In June 2017, government and business computer systems in Ukraine were hit by the [NotPetya cyberattack](#); the crippling attack, [attributed](#) to Russia, spread to computer systems worldwide and caused billions of dollars in damages.

# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (12) [FONTE: The Presidential Office of Ukraine]

Address by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the decisions of the National Security and Defense Council, the situation in Donbas and the U.S. support for Ukraine

2 April 2021 - 19:30





# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (13) [FONTE: BBC, 13/04/2021]

## Is Russia preparing to invade Ukraine?

Multiple sources have reported large Russian military movements towards the eastern Ukraine border and into Crimea, which Russian forces annexed from Ukraine in March 2014. Many of these reports have appeared on Twitter, such as [tweets by Jane's intelligence information group about Iskander short-range missiles](#).

The Kremlin has not given details. President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov said moving troops across Russian territory was an "internal affair". Some of the troops, including units in Crimea, have been on exercises. But Mr Peskov also accused Ukraine of staging "provocations".

Ukrainian intelligence sources told the BBC that the extra forces amount to 16 battalion tactical groups, which would be up to 14,000 soldiers. In total, according to the Ukrainian presidency, Russia now has about 40,000 on the eastern border and about 40,000 in Crimea.

On 13 April Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu accused Nato of "threatening" actions and said Russia had responded by sending two armies and three formations of airborne troops to its western borders, to conduct exercises. He gave no detailed figures or locations.

So is this an invasion force? It could be, but analysts say a big invasion is unlikely. Infiltration would be more Russia's tried-and-trusted method. Russian special forces without insignia - nicknamed "little green men" - took over Crimea in 2014.

# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (14) [FONTE: BBC, 13/04/2021]

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Ukrainian intelligence sources told the BBC that the extra forces amount to 16 battalion tactical groups, which would be up to 14,000 soldiers. In total, according to the Ukrainian presidency, Russia now has about 40,000 on the eastern border and about 40,000 in Crimea.

On 13 April Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu accused Nato of "threatening" actions and said Russia had responded by sending two armies and three formations of airborne troops to its western borders, to conduct exercises. He gave no detailed figures or locations.

So is this an invasion force? It could be, but analysts say a big invasion is unlikely. Infiltration would be more Russia's tried-and-trusted method. Russian special forces without insignia - nicknamed "little green men" - took over Crimea in 2014.

# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (15) [FONTE: BBC, 13/04/2021]



Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg called the new Russian build-up "unjustified and deeply concerning" and said it was "the largest massing of Russian troops since the illegal annexation of Crimea".

Ukraine, Nato and Western governments have also long accused Russia of deploying regular units and heavy weapons in separatist-held eastern Ukraine. The Kremlin denies that and calls any Russian troops there "volunteers".

# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (16) [FONTE: BBC, 13/04/2021]

## **Why is Russia threatening Ukraine again now?**

Russia-Ukraine analysts including Pavel Felgengauer and James Sherr note several factors exacerbating tensions.

In February, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky imposed sanctions on Viktor Medvedchuk, a powerful Ukrainian oligarch and friend of President Putin. Ukraine also banned broadcasts by three pro-Russian TV stations.

The Minsk peace deal agreed in 2015 remains far from being fulfilled. For example, there are still no arrangements for independently monitored elections in the separatist regions.

In previous conflicts in what it calls its "near abroad", Russia has sent in troops as "peacekeepers", who have ended up staying. It happened in Moldova and South Ossetia, for example. James Sherr says [it could well happen again in Ukraine](#). It would freeze the position firmly in Russia's favour.

Some speculate that Mr Putin also wants to test US President Joe Biden, who has taken a tougher stance on Russia than his predecessor, Donald Trump, had.



# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (17) [FONTE: BBC, 13/04/2021]

## Is Ukraine protected by Nato?

Not by treaty, as Ukraine is not a member. But Nato has close ties with Ukraine, which has received Western arms including US Javelin anti-tank missiles. So Russia knows that it risks provoking more Western military help for Ukraine.

President Zelensky has urged Nato to speed up Ukrainian membership. But the conflict makes it difficult for Nato to accept Ukraine under the [30-nation alliance's current terms](#).

Nato's Jens Stoltenberg said "it's for the 30 members to decide when Ukraine is ready for Nato membership". But he stressed [Ukraine's special partnership with Nato](#) now, which a few other countries also have, including Sweden, Finland and Georgia.

"We reject the idea that Russia has a kind of veto on other countries deciding their sovereign path," he said. The Kremlin has long warned Ukraine against joining Nato, and remains bitter that the three Baltic republics joined.

Nato is helping Ukraine's military with modernisation, training and joint exercises, the Nato chief said.

# O conflito da Ucrânia e a Rússia (18) [FONTE: Dave Granlund / Daily Journal, 20/03/2021]





# Sugestões de leitura

