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Chart: The Most Influential Countries in Asia



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By **Jeff Desjardins**

Chart of the Week

THE MOST INFLUENTIAL COUNTRIES IN ASIA

And which countries punch above their weight class, in terms of power?

Every country wants to be influential, but this pursuit is often limited by material factors like wealth and technology.

The following graph scores countries on measures of Resources and Influence, to show which make the most out of their limited resources to wield power in the Asian arena.

Scores are generated using eight measures that broadly fall into two dimensions:

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 - DIPLOMATIC INI
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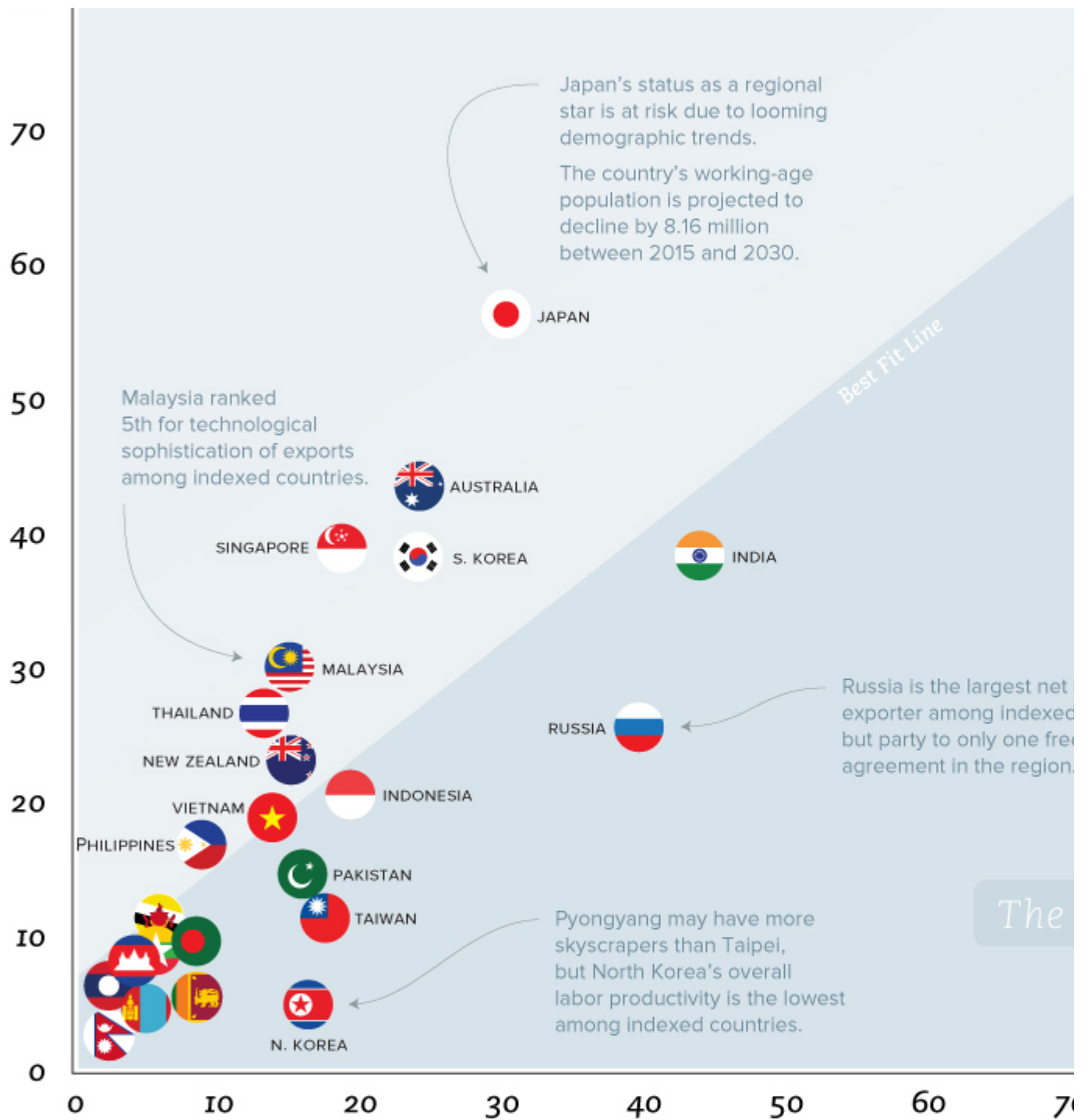
INFLUENCE SCORE

100

90

80

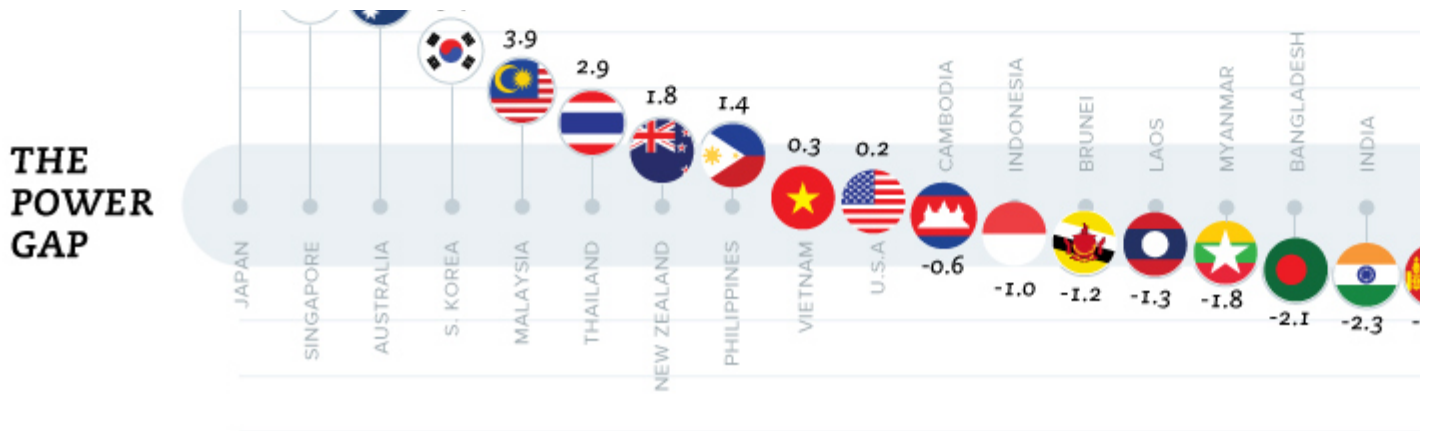
The Overachievers



The difference between a country's Influence and available Resources is called the **Power Gap**, and it shows which countries punch above (or below) their weight class.

11.0 Japan punches well above its weight class.





Meanwhile, **Russia** and **North Korea** that have less influence than expected given their available resources.

SOURCES: Lowy Institute

Chart: The Most Influential Countries in Asia

The Chart of the Week is a weekly Visual Capitalist feature on Fridays.

They say the pen is mightier than the sword.

However, what they often fail to mention is that the pen is *even mightier* when it comes to wielding massive amounts of leverage, influence, and power backing it up on every stroke.

How to Win Friends and Influence Countries

Every country is interested in gaining influence, and earlier this week we showed you an interactive infographic from the Lowy Institute that compared the strength of Asian power to the United States.

Today's chart uses the same data set, and it not only highlights the most influential countries in the Asian arena, but it also plots resources (i.e. the potential for power) of countries against their actual level of influence. The Lowy Institute calls this the "Power Gap" and it is intended to show whether a country is overperforming or underperforming in terms of fulfilling its expected level of influence on the region.

Here are descriptions of the two measures which are used for the Power Gap:

Resources: A score based on economic resources, military capability, resilience, and future trends, this measurement provides an assessment of a country's material capabilities and robustness, which are requisite factors in the exercise of power.

Influence: A score based on diplomatic influence, economic relationships, defense network, and cultural influence, this measurement is used to assess a country's level of influence on other countries in the Asian arena.

Next, we'll look at the actual numbers to see what we can learn.

Measuring Influence

Here's how countries perform – as a reminder, this is based on the Asia Power Index, which is made up of countries in the Asia-Pacific region and the United States.

Rank	Country	Overall Power	Expected Power	Power Gap
#1	United States	85.0	84.8	0.2
#2	China	75.5	78.6	-3.0
#3	Japan	42.1	31.1	11.0
#4	India	41.5	43.8	-2.3
#5	Russia	33.3	39.7	-6.4
#6	Australia	32.5	25.4	7.2
#7	South Korea	30.7	25.3	5.4
#8	Singapore	27.9	20.4	7.5
#9	Malaysia	20.6	16.7	3.9
#10	Indonesia	20.0	20.9	-1.0
#11	Thailand	19.2	16.3	2.9
#12	New Zealand	18.9	17.1	1.8
#13	Vietnam	16.5	16.2	0.3
#14	Pakistan	15.1	18.2	-3.1
#15	Taiwan	14.9	18.8	-3.9
#16	Philippines	12.4	11.0	1.4
#17	North Korea	11.4	18.3	-6.9

Rank	Country	Overall Power	Expected Power	Power Gap
#18	Bangladesh	8.7	10.9	-2.2
#19	Brunei	8.2	9.4	-1.2
#20	Myanmar	7.6	9.4	-1.8
#21	Sri Lanka	7.6	10.8	-3.2
#22	Cambodia	6.1	6.7	-0.6
#23	Mongolia	5.0	7.3	-2.3
#24	Laos	4.8	6.1	-1.3
#25	Nepal	3.1	5.6	-2.5

In terms of absolute power, the U.S. and China top the list. Interestingly, Russia is only 5th overall.

The “Power Gap” partially seems to explain this, as Russia appears to have the biggest gap between its expected power and its actual power. The country has the second worst power gap of -6.4.

Looking at the opposite end of the spectrum, it appears Japan, Singapore, and Australia are punching above their weight in terms of influence. Meanwhile, Malaysia has the 5th best power gap, which may be unexpected for many.

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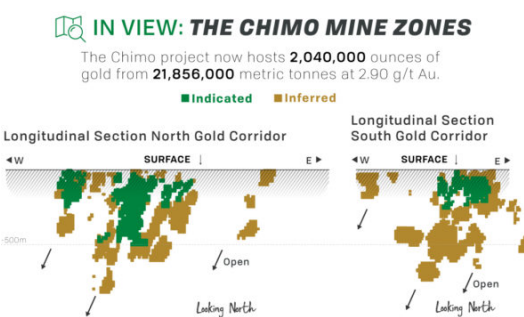
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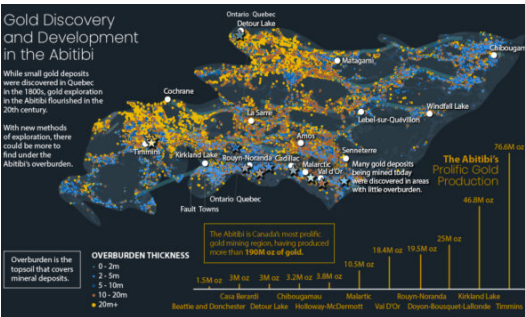
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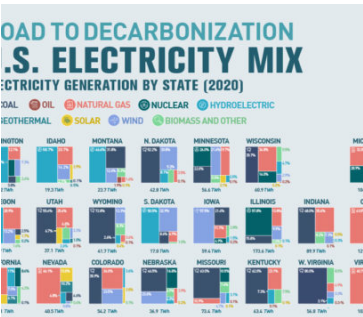
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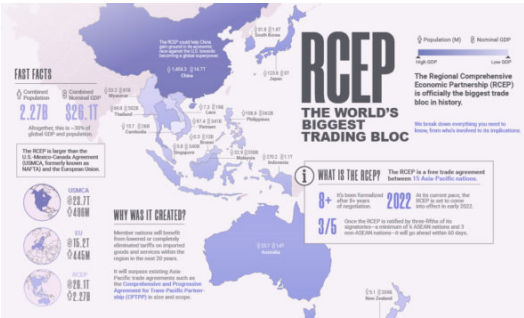
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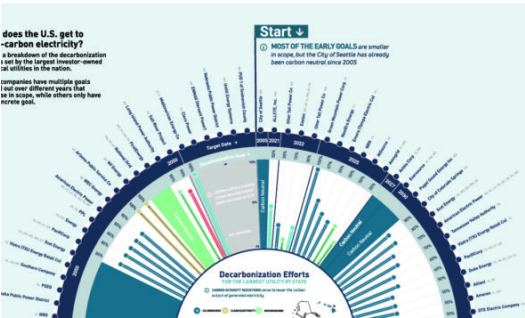
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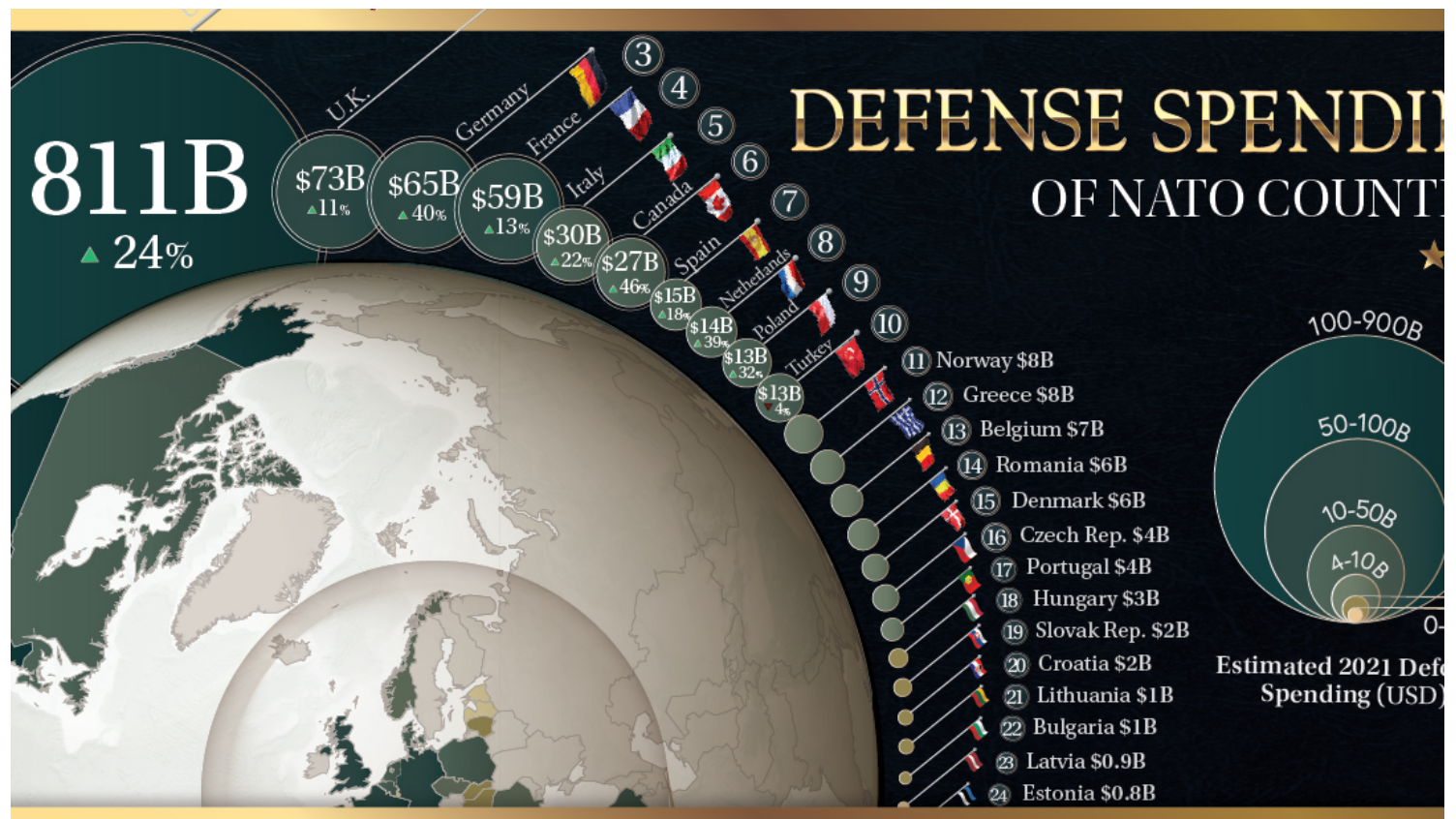
This is How Much NATO Countries Spend on Defense

How much does each country in the military alliance contribute to NATO defense spending? We break it down with this map.



Published 6 days ago on September 23, 2021

By **Avery Koop**



This Is How Much NATO Countries Spend on Defense

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) exists for the sole purpose of facilitating a political and military alliance between almost 30 countries. All are obligated to one another in times of war, but some countries have much stronger militaries and defense systems than others.

Using data from [NATO](#), this map reveals what each NATO member country spends on its own national defense.

Note: Numbers are 2021 projections.

Biggest NATO Defense Spenders

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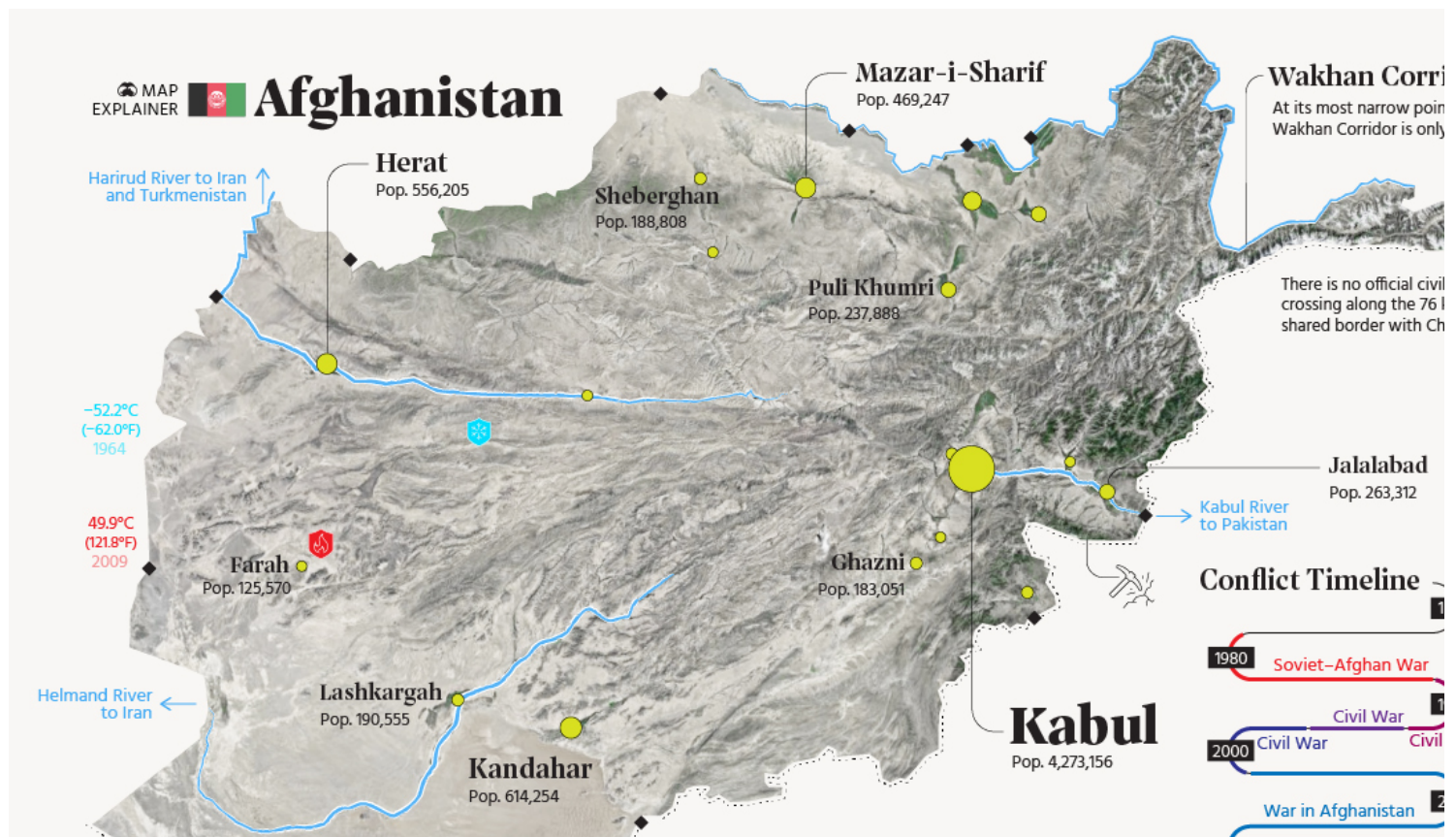
Map Explainer: Key Facts About Afghanistan

This map explainer looks at Afghanistan from a structural point of view, delving into its geography and population patterns.



Published 1 month ago on August 18, 2021

By **Nick Routley**



Map Explainer: Key Facts About Afghanistan

The country of Afghanistan has a long and complicated history of domination by foreign powers and conflict between factions within the country.

While Afghanistan is well covered in headlines and news stories, the lion's share of coverage is directly related to conflict. As a result, Afghanistan is viewed by many in Western countries as a war-torn desert, with conflict, ideology, and geopolitical power obscuring more practical information about the country and its people.

In the Afghanistan map graphic above, we step back and examine Afghanistan from structural point of view. How does its unique landscape influence population pattern? How does this geography influence the economy and relationships with neighboring nations? Let's dive in.

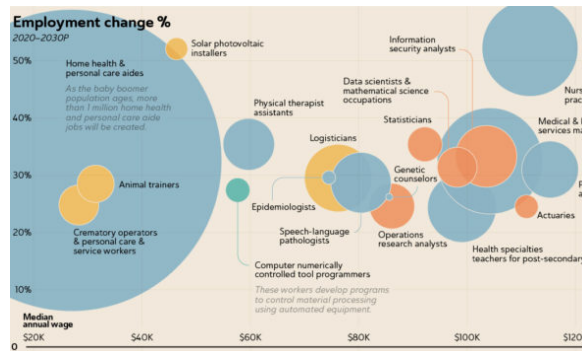
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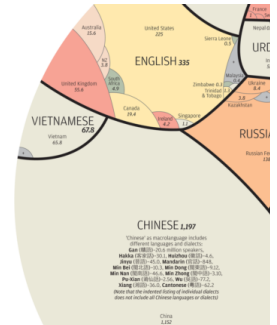
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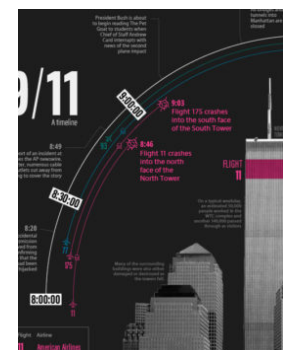
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