

LANGUAGE AND DATA GOVERNANCE

Afghan Language Governance

in Healthcare, AI, Law Enforcement and Cross-Border Data

The 24 languages of Afghanistan, and the identification, handling, and transfer standards each sector is held to.

Abstract ·

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ABSTRACT

Afghan Language Governance

Afghanistan is not a two-language country. Twenty-four languages are spoken across five families, and the institutions that serve Afghan communities — hospitals, agencies, laboratories and courts — routinely treat them as one or two. The first failure in almost every downstream problem is a failure of identification.

This document sets out the 24 languages of Afghanistan, their families and their names in Arabic script, and then the standards each sector is held to when it handles them.

Identification comes first. Booking a Pashto interpreter for a Dari speaker, or supplying Iranian Persian where Afghanistan Dari is required, is not a near miss; it produces a record that reads as complete and is not. The same applies to Afghan Turkmeni against the standard Turkmen of Turkmenistan.

In healthcare, the document addresses what correct identification requires at intake, and why language-access obligations depend on getting the dialect and the region right rather than the language alone.

In artificial intelligence and data work, it addresses what a laboratory needs to establish before training or evaluating on Afghan-language material: which varieties are represented in a corpus, which are absent, and what an absence means for a model's claims about coverage.

In law enforcement and cross-border transmission, it addresses the handling and transfer standards that apply to Afghan-language material moving between jurisdictions, and states the compliance boundary Ariana Nexus operates within — the firm does not route documents, data or inquiries through channels controlled by the de facto authorities in Afghanistan.

The canonical list of the 24 languages is published separately as the Ariana 24-Language Atlas, at ariananexus.com/research/ariana-24-language-atlas.

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ACCESS

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To register for it, or to request the underlying research in the meantime, contact us through ariananexus.com/initiate and name the publication.

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