

Country Information Sheet for Return and Reintegration Counsellors



People's Republic of Bangladesh



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Table of Contents

1. General information	6
2. Reintegration partner	7
3. Travel documents	8
3.1 Types, procedure and required documents	8
3.2 Fees	8
4. Transport	9
5. Emergency contacts	10
6. Health-care	10
6.1 Overview	10
6.2 Health insurance	10
6.3 Private Health Expenditure	10
7. Education	11
7.1 Overview	11
7.2 Education system structure	11
7.3 Enrolment procedure to public education	12
8. Economy	13
9. Labour market	14
9.1 Overview	14
9.2 Recruitment agencies/ websites:	14
10. Housing	15
11. Security situation	16
12. Operational details	16
13. Cultural tips	17

1. General information



Population

total: 175 031 857 (2025 est.)

Population growth rate

1,22%

Ethnic groups

Bengali at least 99%, other indigenous ethnic groups 1%

Government type

Parliamentary republic

Languages

Bangla 98,8% (official, also known as Bengali), other 1,2%

Capital

Name: Dhaka

Religions

Muslim 91%, Hindu 8%, other 1%

Telephone code

880

2. Reintegration partner

About BRAC

IRARA collaborates with BRAC for the delivery of the EURP services in Bangladesh. BRAC has been creating opportunities for people and driving social and economic transformation across Bangladesh since 1972.

Together with IRARA they have extensive experience in resettling citizens and providing advice and support for successful reintegration.

Over the last five years over 28 000 returning individuals have accessed reintegration services such as social counselling, skills training, financial support and referrals provided by BRAC.



BRAC Centre, 75 Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212



reintegration@irara.org



www.irara.org/returnees



+8801712-197854



Sunday-Thursday 9am-5pm

3. Travel documents

3.1 Types, procedure and required documents

Travel permit to return is a document issued to a Bangladeshi citizen who does not possess a valid Bangladeshi passport but intends to return to Bangladesh.

Requirements for Travel Permit:



Duly filled in Travel Permit application form



Three passport size photographs



Copy of previous passport



Physical presence of the applicant at the Embassy for an interview



Digital Birth Certificate

Biometric passport:

For details, application procedure for a MRP (Machine Readable Passport) and required documents, please access the following links:

<https://unb.com.bd/category/Bangladesh/bangladeshi-passport-renewal-process-for-expatriates-living-abroad/108855>

thimphu.mofa.gov.bd/en/site/page/new-mrp-application

3.2 Fees

The availability, requirements, and fees for such documents can vary by country and specific circumstances. It is advisable to contact the nearest embassy or consulate to obtain the most current information.

4. Transport

Airports

The primary airport in Bangladesh facilitating the return of Bangladeshi nationals from abroad is Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka.

Public transportation

BY AIR

National carrier, Biman Bangladesh Airlines, offers domestic services from several airports, including those in the capital Dhaka and the districts of Barisal, Chittagong, Jessore, Sylhet, and Rajshahi. The longest internal flights

While Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport is the central hub for these operations, other international airports in Bangladesh include:

- Hazrat Shah Amanat International Airport in Chattogram
- Osmani International Airport in Sylhet

BY ROAD

The local driving standards are poor as the road rules are routinely disregarded and traffic lights often ignored. Traffic is chaotic and gridlock is common in cities. The large concentration of three-wheelers (auto-rickshaws) and two-wheelers (scooters, motorcycles and bicycles), as well as stray animals and cattle, can aggravate the traffic conditions. Travelling outside city limits at night, even with a driver, is considered risky due to poor street

only take around one hour. Business travellers are advised to contact their local hosts or respective embassies to verify the safety standards of domestic flights.

and vehicle lighting. Banditry is a concern while travelling between towns.

Rural areas often have poorly maintained or unpaved roads that contribute to a high accident rate. Inadequate road maintenance and lack of proper road signage and safety shoulders, especially on highways, are additional hazards.

BY TAXI

Taxi availability in Bangladesh is high, especially in cities like Dhaka, where you can hail taxis on the street, book them via phone, or use ride-hailing apps such as Uber, Pathao, and Shohoz. Pre-booking airport transfers and

long-distance car rentals through travel sites like [FTD Travel](#) or [Tranigo](#) are other convenient way to secure a ride.

BY TRAIN

The extensive rail network serves several destinations in the country. To check real-time train seat availability in Bangladesh, use the official [Bangladesh Railway website](#)

or a third-party site like [EaseMyTrip](#) by entering your origin, destination, and travel date. You can also use the [Bangladesh Railway application](#) for detailed information.

BY BUS

Traveling in Bangladesh by bus is a viable option, particularly for intercity travel, but requires careful consideration of potential issues like poor bus conditions, narrow roads, and irregular schedules, especially in urban areas like Dhaka. While a comprehensive public bus network serves major cities and towns, with private companies dominating in cities, passengers may encounter less-than-ideal bus appearances and potentially lengthy wait times due to a fleet shortage.

For specific bus lines, these are useful:

- BusBD – online bus ticket booking across many routes.
- Desh Travels – their own website offers ticket booking for their routes.
- Shyamoli Paribahan (SP / Shyamoliparibahan) – they support online ticket booking on their site.
- Green Line Paribahan – they have e-ticketing service.
- Bangla Star Paribahan – website for bus ticket booking for their network.

Popular application for tickets purchasing: Shohoz, BGTickets, Bus Ticket BD, Jatri.

5. Emergency contacts

- Police, Fire and Ambulance: 999

- Various government services: 333

6. Health-care

6.1 Overview

The Bangladesh health-care system consists of a combination of public and private health services, a mix that aims to serve all segments of the population. The public health sector is organised into 6 tiers (national, division, district, upazila (sub-district), union, and ward), including the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, which oversees health policies and programmes.

Meanwhile, the private sector has been expanding. Private hospitals and clinics provide services that often cater to more affluent populations. This dual system

creates a complex landscape where access and quality can vary significantly. In urban areas, there tends to be a concentration of advanced medical facilities, while rural regions may remain underserved.

Moreover, non-governmental organisations play a critical role in health service delivery. They often provide essential services, especially in areas like immunisation, family planning, and disease management. This structure demonstrates a collaborative yet fragmented system where integration of services remains a challenge.¹

6.2 Health insurance

There is no nationwide, comprehensive health insurance that covers all citizens but steps are being taken toward expanding health financing and protection.

The Health Care Financing Strategy (HCFC) 2012-2032 aims to introduce social health protection schemes for the poor and for formal sector employees and to move towards provision for the entire population.

In principle, all citizens with an identity card have access to public health facilities without paying a contribution. For outpatient consultation a low user charge is required, and while medical supplies should be provided for free, they are commonly not available in the facilities so the patients will need to supply them. OOP payments are still the main financing source for health services, through the purchase of pharmaceuticals and medical goods.²

6.3 Private Health Expenditure

Private health expenditure plays a significant role in Bangladesh's health care landscape. A large portion of health care funding comes from out-of-pocket expenditures by individuals and families. Many people depend on private health facilities due to perceived deficiencies in public services, leading to an increased financial burden. Despite its convenience, this model can

create inequalities, as those with lower income levels often struggle to cover such expenses.

In addition to direct payments, private health expenditure often includes informal payments to health workers, which poses challenges for transparency and equity in health care delivery.³

¹ <https://researcher.com/articles/bangladesh-health-care-system-overview/>

² https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2023-06/2023_06_EUAA_MedCOI_Report_Bangladesh_Healthcare_provision.pdf

³ <https://researcher.com/articles/bangladesh-health-care-system-overview/>

7. Education

7.1 Overview

The education system of Bangladesh is structured into several levels and is a mix of public, private, and religious institutions. The system follows a 5-3-4 structure and has

undergone significant reforms to improve literacy and access to education.

7.2 Education system structure

1. Pre-Primary Education (1 year)

- Starts at age 5
- Mostly provided by public and private schools
- Focuses on basic literacy and social skills

2. Primary Education (Grades 1-5)

- Free and compulsory for children aged 6-10
- Managed by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
- Ends with the Primary Education Completion Examination (PECE)

3. Secondary Education (Grades 6-12)

- Divided into Junior Secondary (Grade 6-8) and Secondary (Grade 9-12)
- Students choose between Science, Humanities, or Business streams in Grade 9
- Ends with SSC (Secondary School Certificate) Exam (Grade 10)
- Higher Secondary (Grade 11-12) ends with HSC (Higher Secondary Certificate) Exam

4. Tertiary Education

- Includes universities, colleges, and technical institutions
- Bachelor's degrees (3-4 years) and Master's degrees (1-2 years)
- Managed by the University Grants Commission (UGC)
- Leading institutions include Dhaka University, BUET, and NSU

5. Technical and Vocational Education

- Offered by polytechnic institutes and technical colleges
- Focuses on skill-based training
- Managed by the Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB)

6. Madrasah Education (Islamic Studies)

- Parallel system with Dakhil (SSC equivalent) and Alim (HSC equivalent)
- Higher education available through Fazil and Kamil degrees

7.3 Enrolment procedure for public education

The Government School Admission System in Bangladesh has transitioned to a centralized online platform to

streamline the enrolment process for both government and non-government schools.



A concise overview can be found on the following site: gsa.teletalk.com.bd

1. Admission Circular Release:

The Ministry of Education typically publishes the admission circular in early November, detailing guidelines and timelines for the upcoming academic year.

2. Online Application Submission:

- Access the official portal at gsa.teletalk.com.bd
- Complete the online application form with accurate student information.
- Pay the application fee through designated payment methods.
- Applicants can select up to five schools, treating each shift (morning/afternoon) as separate choices.

3. Lottery Draw and Result Publication

4. Final Admission Process:

- Merit List Admissions
- Waiting List Admissions: If vacancies remain, admissions from the waiting list occur in two phases

This centralised system enhances transparency and efficiency in school admissions across Bangladesh.

8. Economy

The economy of Bangladesh has transformed significantly over the past decades, evolving from a primarily agrarian society to a dynamic and rapidly growing industrial and service-based economy. As the second largest economy in South Asia and the 10th largest in the Asia Pacific region, Bangladesh has established itself as a significant player in the global market.

With an average 7% GDP growth over the past decade and not a single year of contraction over the past 30 years, Bangladesh has become the fastest-growing economy in the world, making it an example of unprecedented economic development and an inspiring model of poverty eradication.⁴

Poverty declined, human development outcomes improved along many dimensions, like a reduction in infant mortality and stunting, and an increase in literacy rates and access to electricity. Despite these gains, inequality has slightly narrowed in rural areas and widened in urban areas.⁵

Major Industries

Ready-made Garments, Textiles, Chemical/Organic Fertilizer, Pharmaceuticals, Jute and Jute Goods, Tea Processing, Paper and Newsprints, Cement, Light Engineering, Sugar, Leather Goods, Food, Fish, Poultry.

Socio-Economic Indicators:

- Unemployment rate: 4,63 %
- Youth unemployment rate: 16%
- Average monthly Nominal Earnings: approx. BDT 26.000 (USD 245)
- GDP growth in 2025: 3,3%
- Inflation rate: 10,7% in 2025
- Currency: Bangladesh Taka (BDT)

Bangladesh has applied for and benefitted from loans and funding from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. As of December 2024, the IMF's total financial assistance amounted to approximately USD 5.5 billion.

In April 2025, Bangladesh and the World Bank signed two financing agreements for a total amount of USD 850 million to develop the Bay Terminal deep sea port and to 'provide cash transfers and livelihood services for 4.5 million people, focusing on youth, persons with disabilities, women, and workers in climate-vulnerable regions'.

The unstable situation in the country during the uprising in July-August 2024 negatively impacted the country's economy, with customers in the textile industry cancelling their orders and, disruption of supply chains, and protests and the restrictions on movement and internet shutdowns heavily impacting business operations.

⁴ [Economic Profile - Consulate General of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Dubai](#)

⁵ [Bangladesh Overview: Development news, research, data | World Bank](#)

9. Labour market

9.1 Overview

Significant developments:

- Bangladesh has demonstrated a remarkably high poverty reduction linking with structural employment shifts and a relatively high social safety net coverage.
- Bangladesh is establishing a comprehensive labour-related policy framework at the national level.
- Workers in the industrial sector are gaining more awareness about their rights and welfare.
- Coverage for persons above retirement age receiving a pension is expanding, and the new Universal Pension Scheme is a pathway to self-sustained retirement for citizens.
- More younger women are gaining participation in salaried work and self-employment.

Workforce:

- Employed population of 77 million.
- The relatively low unemployment rate of 4,63%.
- High employment by the informality of 85%.
- Child labour rate of 4,4%.
- Labour share of national income is 42%.
- Men's and women's employee rates are 49% and 18%, respectively.



For a comprehensive overview of the labour market situation in the country, please see:

<https://www.ulandssekretariatet.dk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/LMP-Bangladesh-2024-final.pdf>

Unemployment safeguards

A Labour Information Management System is under development and already includes data for over 650,000 workers across the formal and informal sectors. The Employment Injury Scheme pilot is now providing lifelong pensions in cases of workplace or commuting

accidents and is expanding to more sectors, including export processing zones. Moreover, for the first time, over 1,200 unemployed workers from one factory have received benefits under the government's unemployment support programme.

9.2 Recruitment agencies/ websites:

- <https://old.bmet.gov.bd/>
- <https://ejobs.com.bd>
- <https://bmtradeinternationalbd.com>
- <https://www.baira.org.bd/>
- <http://www.bdjobs.com/>
- <http://bdesh>

10. Housing

Approximately 40 million people in Bangladesh live in urban areas, and 21% of them live below the poverty line. Rapid urban growth has put considerable burden on urban infrastructure, most notably housing. Every year, about half a million people arrive in urban areas in Bangladesh. Lack of adequate planning and development of cities results in an inability to accommodate this influx and this strains urban infrastructure including water supply, sanitation, transport and especially, housing.⁶

This growth has created an overwhelming demand for affordable housing. Currently, there is a housing deficit of about 6 million units, projected to rise to 10.5 million by 2030, with 70% of that demand for affordable options. Unfortunately, only 31 500 units are built annually—just 1% of what's needed. This imbalance has led to a

surge in slum growth, including in Dhaka with a 20% population increasing from 2010 to 2020. Today, 1.73 million people still live in slums, highlighting the urgent need for sustainable housing solutions.⁷

According to The Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (REHAB) representing housing sector owners, recent hikes in the price of construction materials have taken a toll. Sales of plots and flats have hit rock bottom, instalment payments have stopped, and there is no liquidity flow in the market.⁸

The research carried out by Global Property Guide in April 2025 found the **average advertised apartment price** for a 2-bedroom unit at USD 35 970 in Dhaka and USD 37 826 in Chattogram.

Average advertised apartment price, by unit type:

City	1-bedroom unit April 2025	2-bedroom unit April 2025	3-bedroom unit April 2025	4+bedroom unit April 2025
Dhaka	USD 27 826	USD 35 970	USD 47 586	USD 82 232
Chattogram	n/a	USD 37 826	USD 63 763	USD 131 571

Data Sources: Global Property Guide, based on [bproperty.com](https://www.bproperty.com) listings.



Bangladesh's Residential Property Market Analysis 2025:

<https://www.globalpropertyguide.com/asia/bangladesh/price-history>⁹

Finding accommodation portals:

<https://bikroy.com/en/ads/bangladesh/>

<https://www.bproperty.com/>

<http://bdhousing.com/>

<https://rents.com.bd/>

<https://rentberry.com/for-rent/bangladesh>

Rent Per Month				
Apartment (1 bedroom) in City Centre	11,091.23 ₳	6,000.00		20,000.00
Apartment (1 bedroom) Outside of City Centre	5,970.48 ₳	3,000.00		12,000.00
Apartment (3 bedrooms) in City Centre	27,202.70 ₳	15,000.00		50,000.00
Apartment (3 bedrooms) Outside of City Centre	16,821.92 ₳	8,500.00		30,000.00

https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/country_result.jsp?country=Bangladesh

⁶ [Bangladesh's Residential Property Market Analysis 2025](#)

⁷ [Why Housing Matters: Insights from the Affordable Housing Program Field Visit to Chandpur, Bangladesh | United Nations Development Programme](#)

⁸ <https://www.banglanews24.com/english/business/news/bd/155416.details>

⁹ [Bangladesh's Residential Property Market Analysis 2025](#)

11. Security situation

According to the 2025 Global Peace Index (GPI) published by the Institute for Economics and Peace, Bangladesh is ranked 123rd out of 163 countries globally, a significant drop of 33 places from the previous year. This low ranking is attributed to increased political unrest, mass protests, and violence in 2024, including clashes between opposition groups, students movements, and the military.¹⁰

Bangladesh stands at a crossroads in 2025, emerging from a year of significant political upheaval and regional challenges. The removal of Sheikh Hasina in 2024 marked the end of a political era, ushering in a period of transition under a Nobel laureate-led interim government.

Amidst this shift, the nation is redefining its political framework, balancing diverse political forces, and

addressing complex security concerns. The political vacuum left by Hasina's fall has emboldened militant groups and ethnic factions. Smaller Islamist parties, once suppressed by the Awami League, are leveraging the turmoil to increase their presence and influence. The Chattogram Hill Tracts and the Myanmar border have become hotspots for unrest, presenting significant challenges to the interim government's authority.

For more information on the security situation, access: EUAA, Country of Origin Information Report: Bangladesh: Country Focus, August 2025.

https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2025_08_EUAA_COI_Report_Bangladesh_Country_Focus.pdf

¹⁰ <https://www.solaceglobal.com/report/bangladesh-2025/>

12. Operational details

EURP support in Bangladesh apply to Voluntary Returns and Forced Returns. The Post-Arrival Package is exclusively handled and delivered by airport team based in the BRAC Migration Welfare Centres. The assistance is preferably provided by the local partner during the airport reception. If the returnee misses or avoids the BRAC staff at the airport and returns home, they will need to travel again to the airport area to collect the package. BRAC migration Programme maintains 31 offices in districts prone to migration, enabling effective support and assistance for migrants. Among these facilities are 15 Migration and Reintegration Centres, which offer a more specialised and comprehensive assistance. There are also three BRAC Migration Welfare Centres (BMWC) located by the Dhaka, Sylhet and Chattogram airports providing temporary accommodation, food, psychosocial counselling, medical treatment, and onward transportation, as well as assistance for vulnerable returnees. They can accommodate and provide services to several hundred people simultaneously. In addition, the centres serve as educational hubs where returnees can access valuable resources, including learning opportunities.

The Post-Arrival Package can only be delivered by the airport team based in the BRAC Migration Welfare Centres, therefore if the returnee misses/avoids the BRAC staff at the airport and returns to their place of origin, they will have to travel again to the airport area to collect the Post-Arrival Package.

BRAC's preferred method of delivery of the post-arrival assistance is during airport reception, as they have a permanent stall in the arrivals area and available staff on rotation.

For cash delivery as a part of the Post-Return Package, every local Support Centre has a finance department or officer that can authorise the withdrawal of cash and then complete the documentation once the signed confirmation of cash receipt by the returnee is presented.

BRAC prefers to travel and meet the returnees at their place of residence or business to have a better overview of the situation of the returnee including the family relations. In case a more private space is needed, there are offices available at the local Support Centres.

BRAC Migration Programme has a total of 31 offices in migration prone districts, that enables them to cover migrants/returnees needs all over Bangladesh.

Among these offices are 15 Migration and Reintegration Support Centres (MRSCs) that offer a more specialised and comprehensive assistance than the regular offices.

There are also three BRAC Migration Welfare Centres (BMWC) located by the Dhaka, Sylhet and Chattogram



airports providing temporary accommodation, food, psychosocial counselling, medical treatment and onward transportation, as well as assistance for vulnerable returnees. Their capacity ranges up to several hundred people, that can be served and assisted at once.

BRAC Migration Welfare Centre (BMWC) is an excellent multi-purpose facility offering temporary accommodation, food provision, psychosocial counselling and skills training. The Centre also hosts the Airport Support Team offices.

The location close to the airport gives returnees easy access to the facilities and allows for effective coordination of the airport reception assistance. The centre functions also as an education hub, where returnees can receive vocational training for affordable/below market prices. We visited a training room and met people that are undergoing training to increase their chances on the Bangladeshi labour market.

13. Cultural tips



Personal Space: Bangladeshis tend to stand or sit close together during conversations. The proximity between people conversing is smaller if they are the same gender. Close proximity indicates warmth and familiarity.



Physical Contact: For those of the same gender, holding hands, touching arms or putting hands around shoulders are common and acceptable. The more familiar people are with one another, the more common physical contact is during conversation. However, it is generally considered socially unacceptable for people of opposite genders to touch one another. Public displays of affection such as kissing and hugging are especially taboo.



Eye Contact: In Bangladesh, openly staring at someone is not considered impolite. Eye contact is generally held during conversation and acts as a sign of sincerity.



Facial Expression: Bangladeshis tend to minimise their facial expressions. They may not smile during conversations. This is not thought of as being unfriendly or cold, but rather related to the idea that a serious face is believed to show maturity. The proverb, 'the face is the index of the mind' reflects the rationale for this cultural norm.



Listening: Bangladeshis tend to be careful listeners. Their courteous communication style means that they try not to interrupt their conversation partner.



Gestures: Bangladeshis may point with their chin rather than their finger. Beckoning with the index finger is considered rude.



Be respectful of elders. Bangladeshis consider elders to be deeply important and requiring deference.

Do not criticise or joke about anything that may offend a Bangladeshi's national pride. The country has faced a struggle to distinguish itself, hence Bangladeshis value their national symbols and Bangla language.

People greatly respect their elders, so avoid any remarks that criticise or disregard an older person's status or opinion.



Drawing parallels between Bangladesh and other countries on the Indian subcontinent such as India or Pakistan may offend your Bangladeshi counterpart. Bangladeshis often get these comparisons, yet take great pride in being culturally and politically distinct.



FRONT_{EX}



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COAST GUARD AGENCY

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