Since 2002, UNHCR Iran has supported nearly 1 million refugees to voluntary repatriate in safety and dignity to Afghanistan and Iraq, taking into account the UNHCR Non-Return Advisory\(^1\) and UNHCR Global Guidance Note on the International Protection Needs of People Fleeing Afghanistan\(^2\). However, as the situation in Afghanistan remains fragile, only a small number of Afghan refugees in Iran have shown willingness to return to their home country. Repatriation of Afghan students to obtain visas to continue their studies in Iran has significantly declined to 13% of the repatriates in 2023.

UNHCR supports the Iranian Government in providing Afghans with health, education and livelihood opportunities. Individuals who are healthy, educated and have marketable-skills are typically more likely to return and feel capable of rebuilding their lives. Nonetheless, ultimately, a longer-term, political solution for Afghanistan’s protracted crisis is the only way to ensure safe, sustainable and voluntarily return of refugees.

As of end of June 2023, UNHCR facilitated the repatriation of 292 individuals to Afghanistan – 74 individuals only in the month of June 2023. This represents a 67% increase compared to the same period in 2022. Amongst the main reasons for return, returnees stated facing financial difficulties in Iran, and an improvement in the security situation in country of origin.

Trend over the years (2016-2023)

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Top 5 reason of return to Afghanistan by month (% of individuals)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Family reunification</th>
<th>Financial constraints in COA</th>
<th>Get married</th>
<th>Improved security in COO</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>To acquire documentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01 January</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 February</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 March</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 April</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 May</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 June</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age gender breakdown

- **60% Females**
- **40% Males**
- **20% 60+**
- **10% 18-59**
- **5% 0-17**

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Trend over the years (2016-2023)

**2022 monthly trend**

- **32** individuals repatriated in January
- **22** individuals repatriated in February
- **25** individuals repatriated in March
- **25** individuals repatriated in April
- **12** individuals repatriated in May
- **34** individuals repatriated in June
- **50** individuals repatriated in July
- **52** individuals repatriated in August
- **21** individuals repatriated in September
- **9** individuals repatriated in October
- **52** individuals repatriated in November
- **26** individuals repatriated in December

**2023 monthly trend**

- **10** individuals repatriated in January
- **22** individuals repatriated in February
- **3** individuals repatriated in March
- **16** individuals repatriated in April
- **83** individuals repatriated in May
- **74** individuals repatriated in June

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**UNHCR helps returnees with specific needs including unaccompanied or separated children and elderly persons.**

- **4 Persons with specific needs**
- **60% Females**
- **20% 60+**
- **10% 18-59**
- **5% 0-17**

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**Province of residence in Iran**

**Intended return province in Afghanistan**

[1] UNHCR, UNHCR Position on Returns to Afghanistan, August 2021, available at: [www.refworld.org/docid/611a4c5c4.html](http://www.refworld.org/docid/611a4c5c4.html);