

97

individuals repatriated

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 Advisory¹ and UNHCR Global Guidance Note on the International Protection Needs of People Fleeing Afghanistan². 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 from 40% of the repatriates in the first three month of 2022 to 8% of the repatriates in the same period of 2023. UNHCR supports the Iranian Government in providing Afghans with health, education and livelihoods 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.

8 / 8%

total students



UNHCR facilitates the return of Afghan students from Iran to Afghanistan to obtain student visas to pursue their studies back in their country of asylum.

3

persons with specific needs



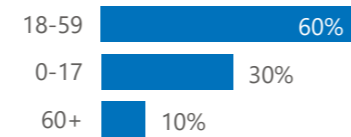
UNHCR helps returnees with specific needs including unaccompanied or separated children and elderly persons.

60%

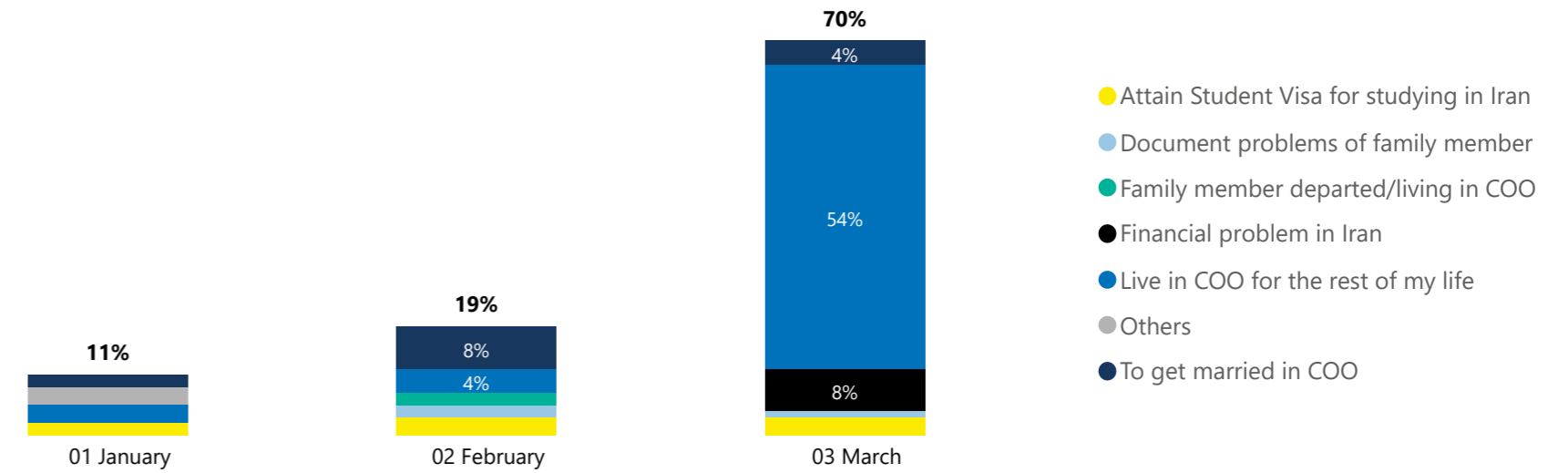
females



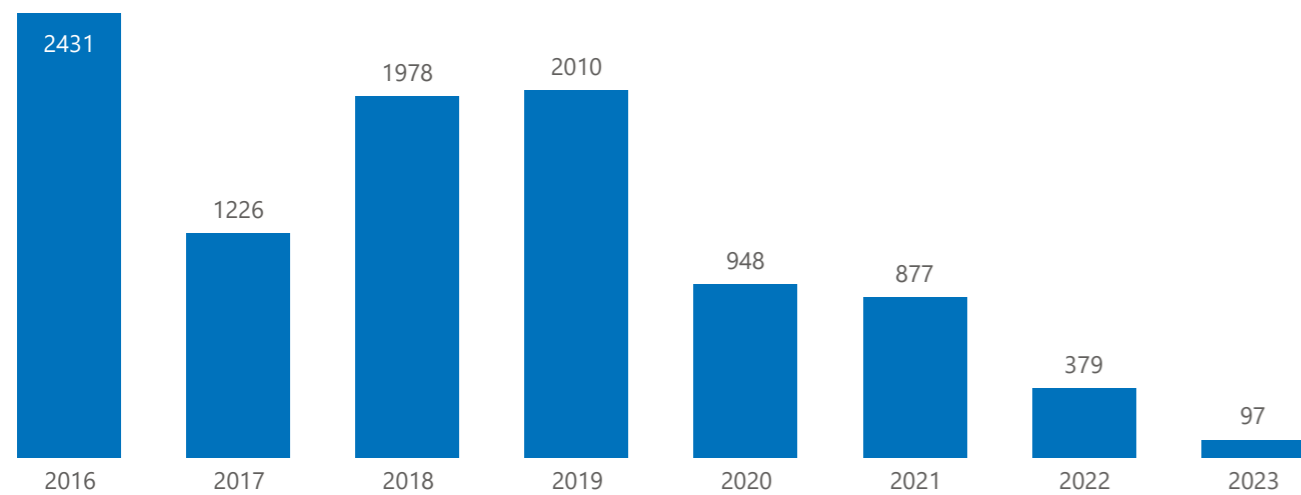
Students excluded, the age distribution for men and women combined:



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



Trend over the years (2016-2023)

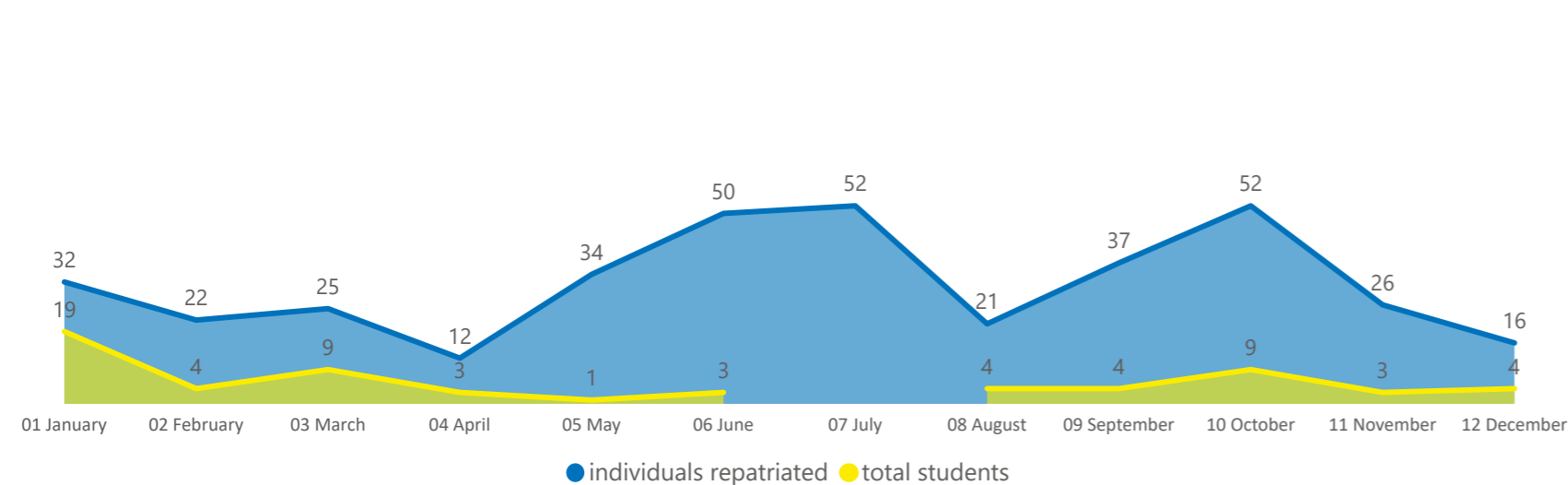


As of end of March 2023, UNHCR facilitated the repatriation of 97 individuals to Afghanistan – 65 individuals only in the month of March 2023. This represents a 23% increase compared to the same period in 2022. Amongst the main reasons, returnees expressed facing financial difficulties in Iran and willingness to join relatives and start a new life. Several returned to obtain documentation to be able to engage in onward movement.

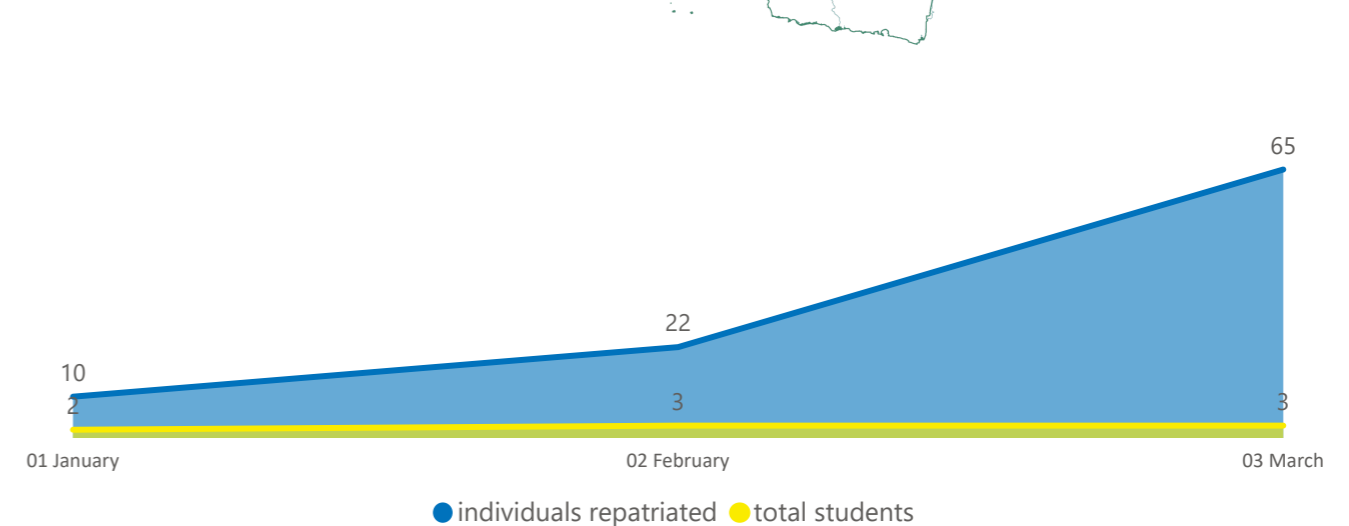
Voluntary repatriation by province in Iran & intended area of return in Afghanistan



2022 monthly trend



2023 monthly trend



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

[2] UNHCR, *UNHCR Guidance Note on the International Protection Needs of People Fleeing Afghanistan*, February 2022, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/61d851cd4.html>