IRAN, Islamic Republic of

Reception - Jan to Jun 2023

UNHCR's reception and counseling facilities provide an accessible and easy way for refugees and asylum seekers in need to connect with UNHCR and receive assistance for any challenges impacting their lives. In Iran, these facilities go above and beyond by offering counseling services, identifying cases, and referrals, as well as hosting information-sharing sessions and focus group discussions as required. These facilities are instrumental in ensuring the safety and protection of asylum seekers and refugees, as they continually monitor their concerns and priorities, leveraging their feedback to enhance the UNHCR program and provide the best possible support.

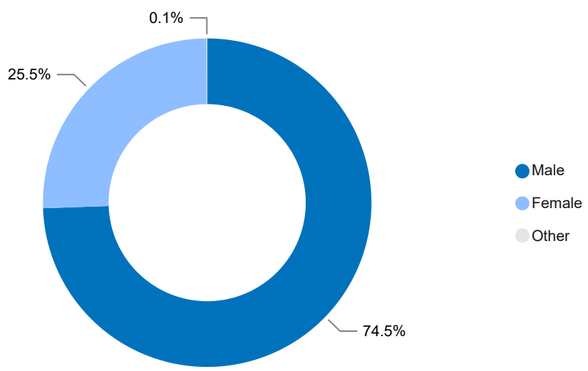
Number of new households

2,831

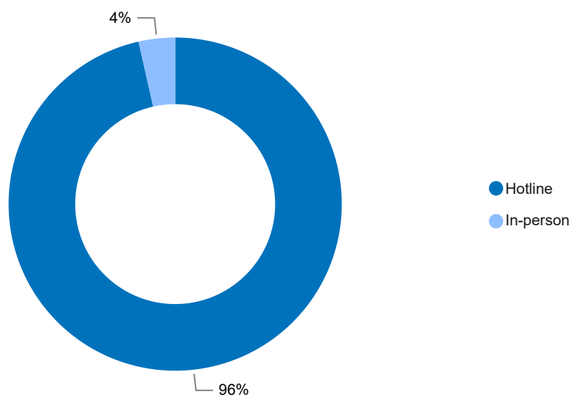
Number of new individuals

12,246

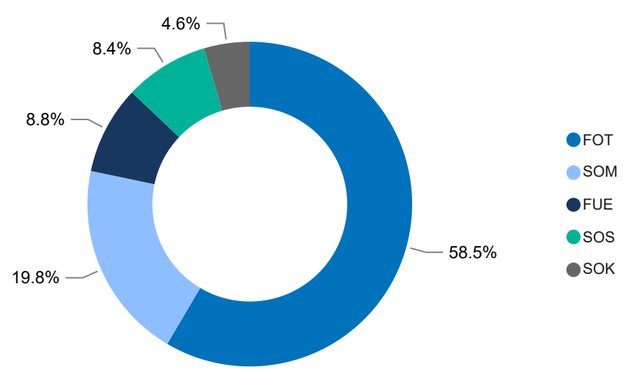
Sex disaggregation



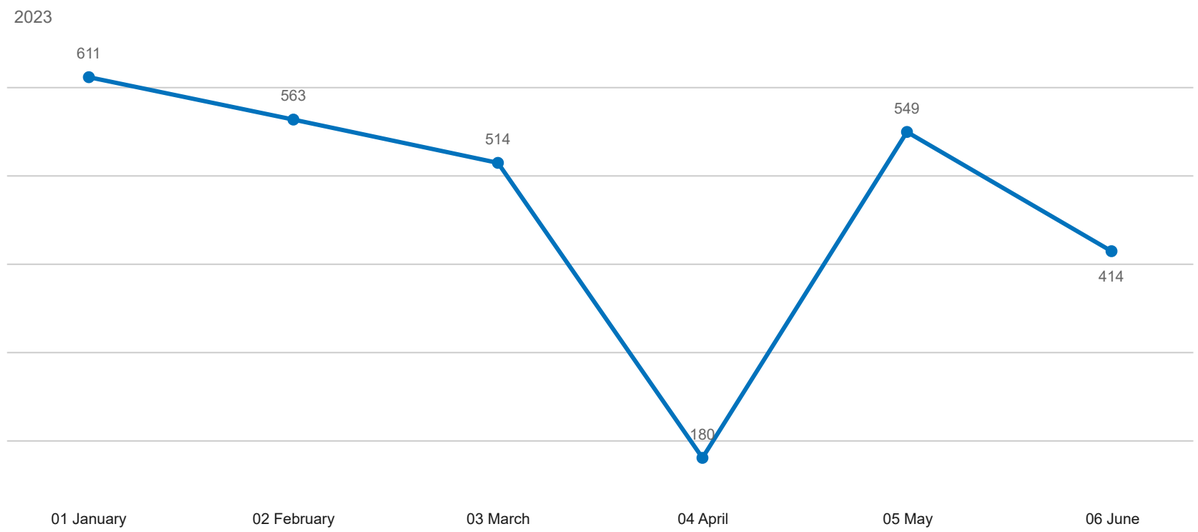
Hotline vs. in-person



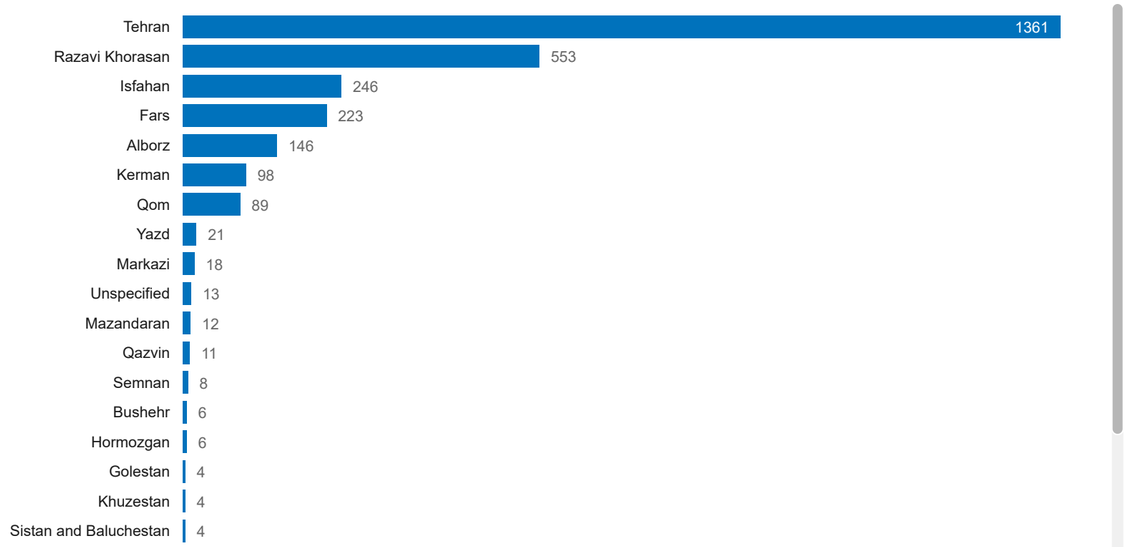
Records by office



Records by month



Reception records by province



For more information please contact **Suprity Timilsina** at timilsis@unhcr.org or **Parisa Masjedi** at masjedi@unhcr.org.

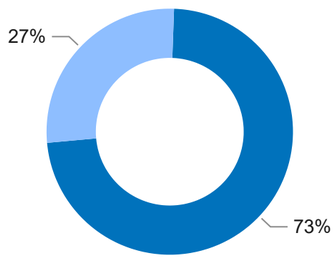
Participatory community engagement is key to improving the efficiency, legitimacy, and transparency of program planning which are the core values of Community Based Protection (CBP). The CBP approach seeks to ensure that refugees are empowered, and their capacities and resilience are strengthened, enabling them to minimize their exposure to protection risks and improve their overall protection environment. CBP interventions are aimed at enhancing the communities' capacities and strengthening access to services through meaningful participation of individuals and groups of diverse age, gender, ability and background.

Help website analytics

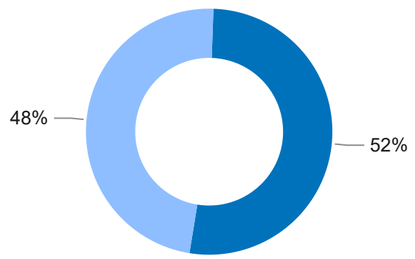
155,635
users visited the Help website

Since the launch in August 2021, 772,557 users visited it, with the Latest News page receiving the highest views (14%) . 7% of the visits (155,635) happened in the Q2 of 2023, which shows an increase in the number of visits compared to the same period last year (148,598). The announcement on the new national scheme for determination of the employment status of Afghan nationals was the most visited post on the website during this period.

Visitors' sex



Returning vs. new visitors



Communications

65,756 communications were made by CBP colleagues, of which **6,231** were the result of in-person communications while **59,525** were made by other means including voice calls, and email.

Cash based interventions

CBP staff conducted **6,390** CBI assessment interviews and filled prioritized vulnerability scorecards. Based on the assessments conducted, cases that met the criteria were provided assistance; **7,441** cases under multi-purpose cash, cash for protection, and for disability relief items.

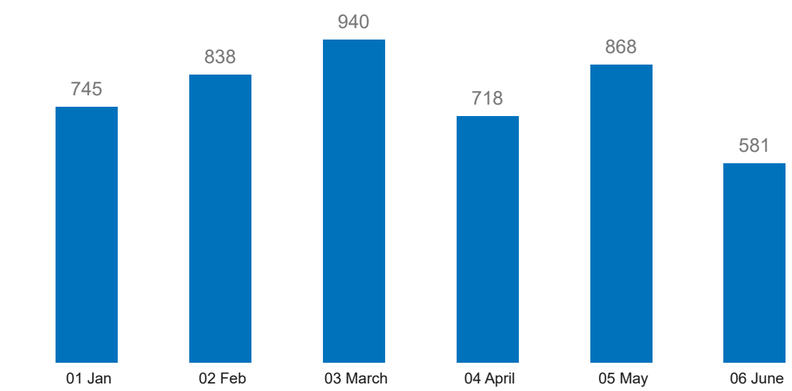
Distributed items

12,137 items including sanitary materials, masks, walkers, hygiene packs and stationary were distributed for different health and hygiene purposes.

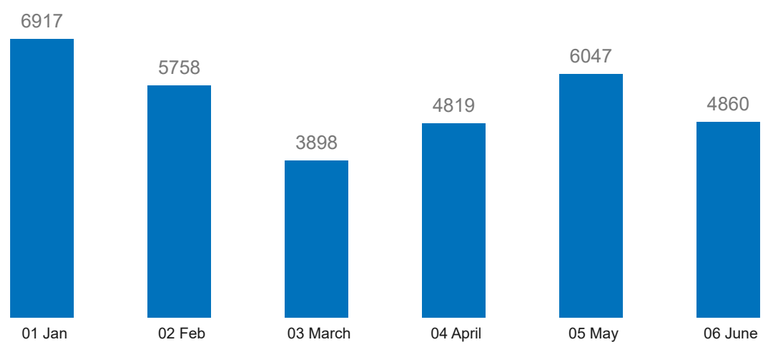
Group counseling at the reception centers

32,299
refugees and asylum seekers received counselling through 4,690 sessions by UNHCR CBP staff

Group counseling sessions by month



Individual refugees/asylum seekers reached out through group counselling



Correspondence received through Protection Mailbox

Awareness raising sessions by offices

Refugees/asylum seekers benefited from awareness raising sessions

Awareness raising sessions

During the reporting period different awareness sessions were conducted by offices to ensure that refugees are well informed and sensitized on the issues such as sensitization on their rights and responsibilities in the country of asylum, parenting skills, adolescent life skills awareness raising session, improve up social-emotional skills focusing on anger control, aggression, and high-risk behaviors during adolescence, importance of education for women and young girls, amongst others.

Youth-led initiative

Based on the findings of a participatory training needs assessment, Sub-Office Kerman and BAFIA Kerman agreed to collaborate on a training package for refugee volunteers to improve their strategic planning, enhance their understanding of diverse legal frameworks, and develop their skills in transferring knowledge to the Afghan community.

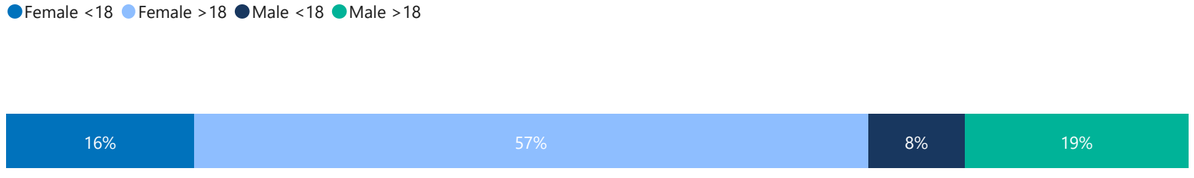
Capacity-building for staff

In April, amidst the freezing period of the UNHCR database, proGres, the Protection Unit conducted 12 capacity building and training sessions throughout the country. The topics covered included Community-Based Protection (CBP), Communication with Communities (CWC), Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Sexual Harassment (SH), Accountability to Affected Population (AAP), Registration, Legal matters, and more. A total of 149 staff members actively participated in these training sessions.

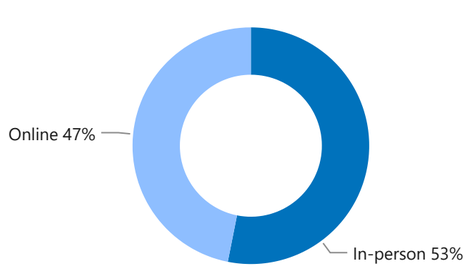
Psycho-social counselling

The 5 psycho-social counsellors hired in UNHCR offices in Iran attended to a total of 790 refugees (579 woman, 174 men and 37 from other genders), providing a total of 1065 individual counselling sessions and 78 group counselling sessions. In this period, 653 sessions were held in person, while 490 were online. Priority is given to GBV incidents, resulting in 67 GBV cases received psycho-social counselling.
Among those receiving the psycho-social counselling, majority of the sessions were addressing non-clinical issues (1046), such as parenting skills (85), communication skills (81), and anger management (31).
Among the clinical issues, the sessions focused on depressive disorder (395), anxiety (106) and self-harm/suicide (24).
Additionally, 186 refugees were referred externally for further follow-up, and 98 were referred internally to UNHCR to receive additional services.

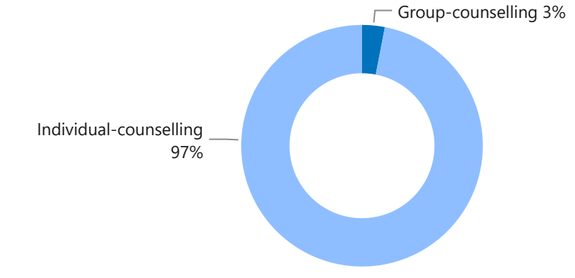
Age and gender breakdown



In-person vs online



Group-counselling vs individual-counselling



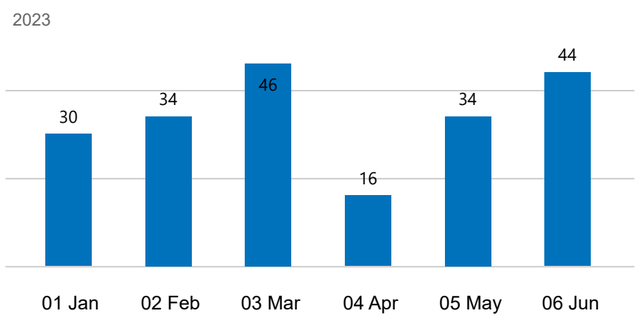
For more information please contact **Suprity Timilsina** at timilsis@unhcr.org, **Kianoush Ghasemi** at ghasemia@unhcr.org or **Anita Sorrentini** at sorrenti@unhcr.org.

Child Protection - Jan to Jun 2023

The Child Protection Unit aims at supporting the development of an effective child protection system, that prevent and respond to the needs of children at risk. This is to ensure that all children have non-discriminatory access to adequate and qualityservices. UNHCR tries to provide comprehensive, multi-faceted child protection case management services, including psychosocial support, cash assistance, legal assistance, and durable solutions. Data collected by the UNHCR field offices in Iran shows that refugee children face risks in access to education, documentation, and child labor, among others. The Supreme Leader's decree in 2015 provided refugee and undocumented Afghan children access to primary and secondary education within the national system. This allows them to study side by side with children from the host community and follow the same national curriculum. Despite Iran's progressive educational policy, Afghan children face barriers that hinder their education access. In the area of documentation, birth registration is a fundamental prerequisite for basic rights and an important measure against statelessness. UNHCR is following legislative developments with the Nationality Bill closely and advocates for the maintenance of access to the scheme. Key focus areas for this year include the regular provision of technical support to the CP staff and authorities; support to enhance case management/ Best Interest Procedures; improving information management in CP; the ongoing training of staff and improving engagement with the national NGOs in designing and implementing the CP projects.

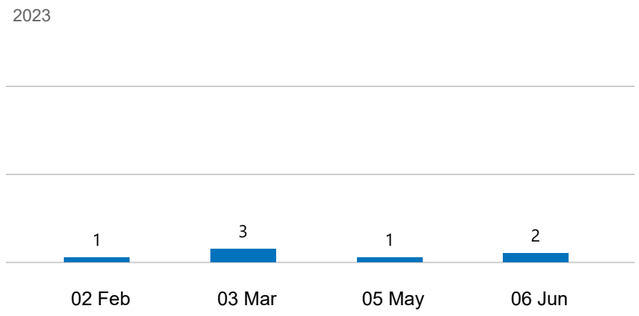
Best interest assessment

204



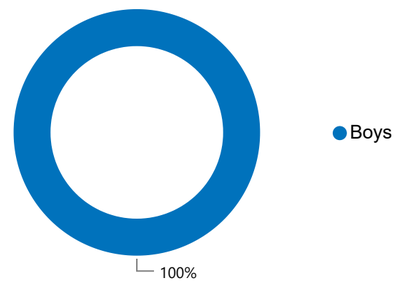
Best interest determination

7



Unaccompanied or separated children

60



Child Protection assistance: Identified children at risk referred and assisted

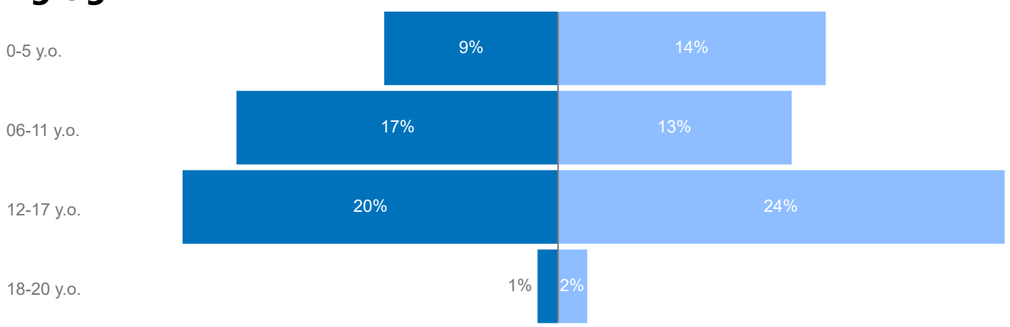
Children assisted

305

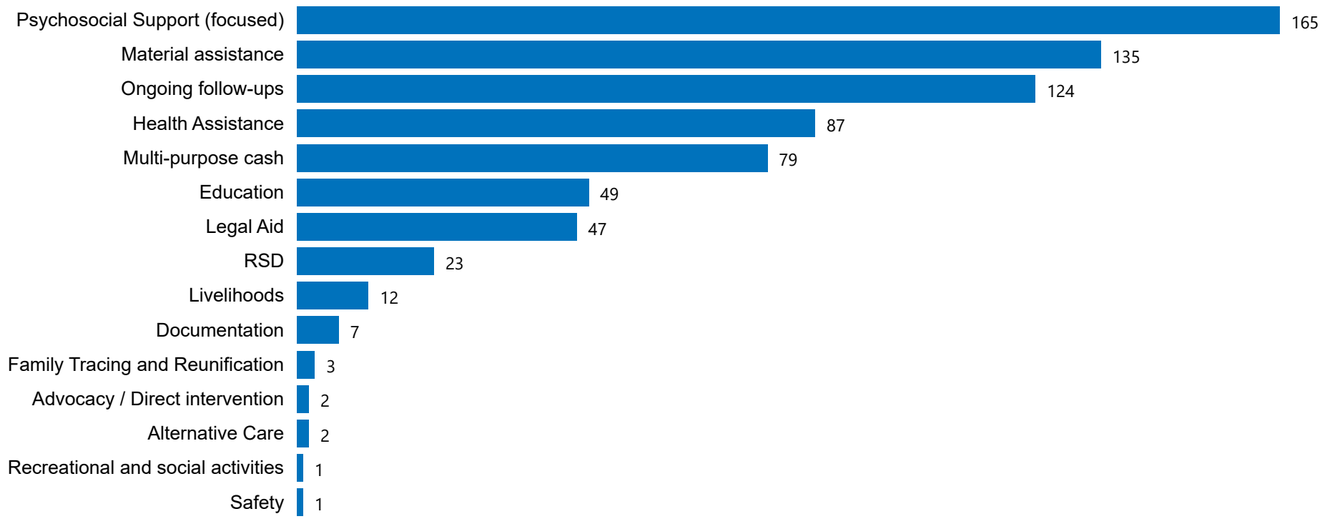
Interventions

737

Age/gender breakdown of children assisted



Child Protection assistance/interventions



For more information please contact **Homa Maddah** at maddah@unhcr.org or **Marzieh Shafieihanjani** at shafieih@unhcr.org.

IRAN, Islamic Republic of

Cash Based Interventions - Jan to Jun 2023

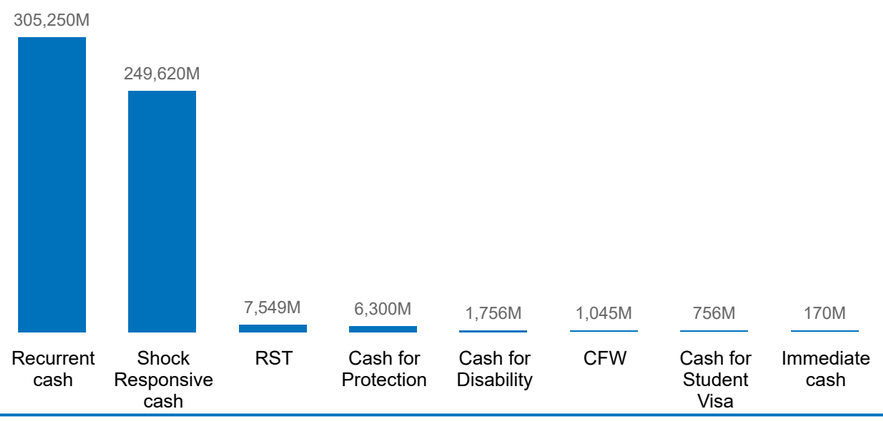
UNHCR utilizes Cash-based Interventions (CBI) to extend protection, assistance, and services to the most vulnerable individuals. CBI employs cash as a means to address both basic necessities like food and shelter, as well as specific needs. This approach offers a higher level of dignity, allowing refugees to promptly prioritize and choose what they require. By implementing CBIs, the displaced population is less likely to resort to harmful coping strategies, including child labor. Furthermore, these interventions directly contribute to the local economy through the purchase of goods and services, fostering peaceful coexistence with host communities

29,495
unique individuals

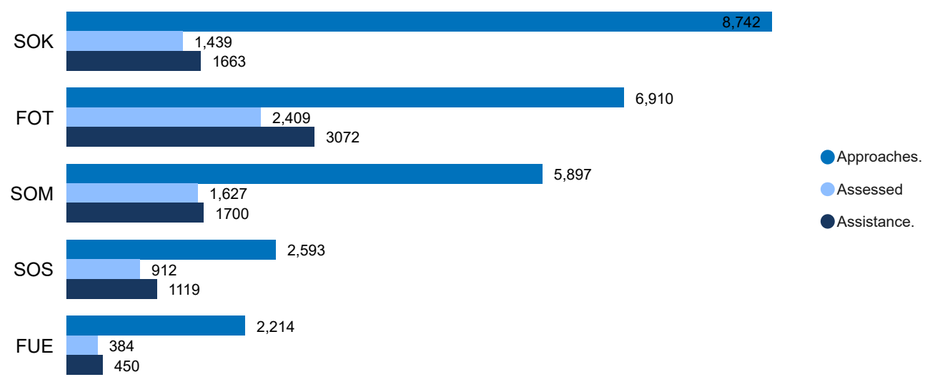
6,147
unique households

IRR 572bn
total amount disbursed

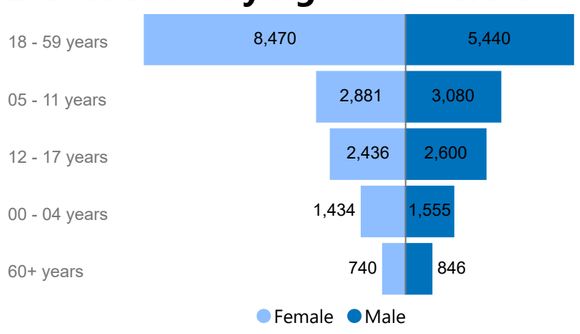
Expenditures by Cash Program (IRR)



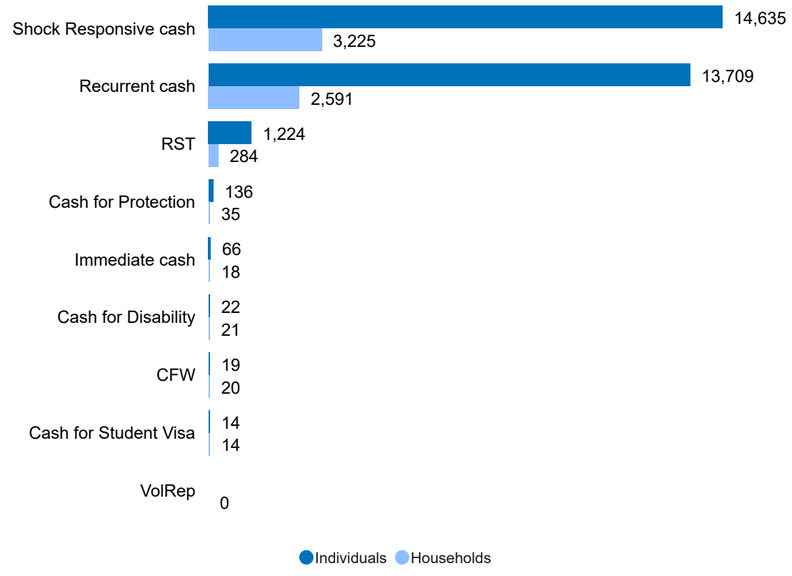
Request, Assessment, Assistance



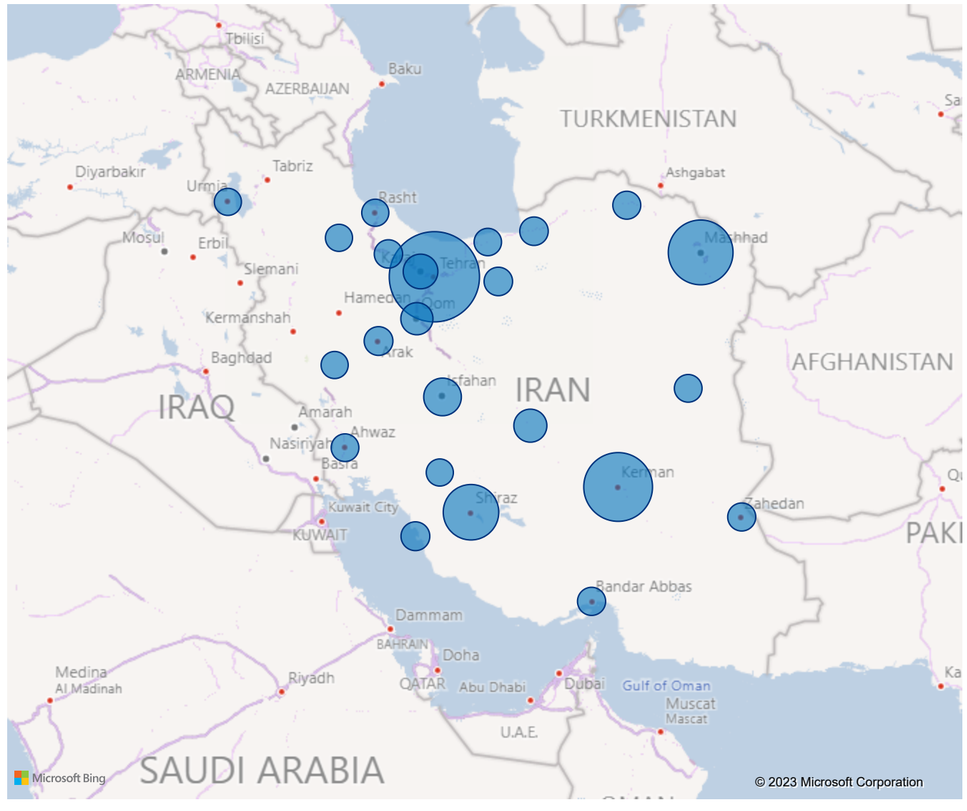
Beneficiaries by Age and Gender



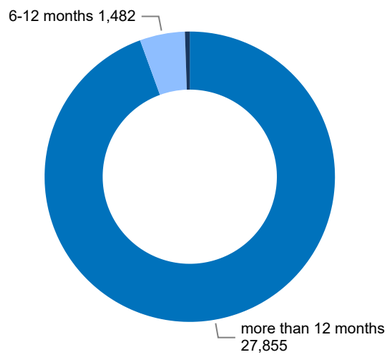
Beneficiaries by Intervention Type



Refugees Assisted by Location



Assisted refugees by time of arrival



81 % of all assisted refugees have multiple vulnerabilities.

A total of **91 %** of households have received assistance via bank transfer and **9 %** via gift card.

Source: UNHCR

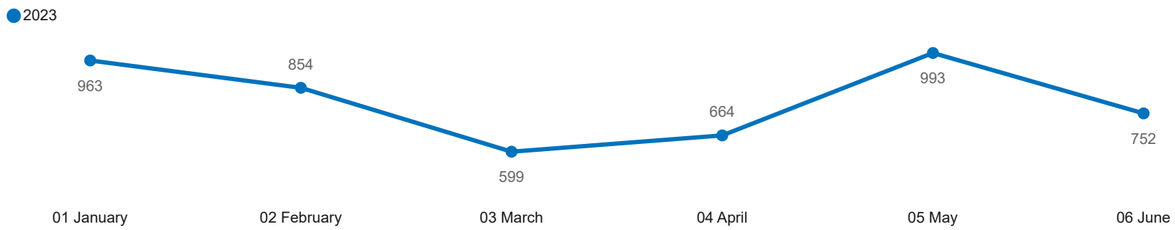
For more information please contact: **Jamal Abu Musa**, abumusa@unhcr.org

IRAN, Islamic Republic of

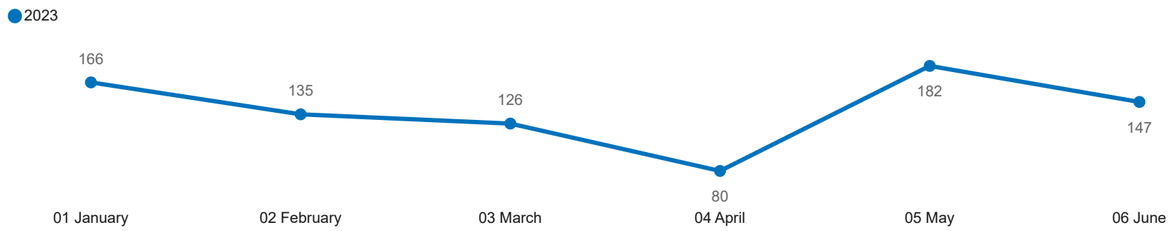
Legal Support - Jan to Jun 2023

UNHCR operates a Legal Services Project (LSP). The LSP components include 16 Dispute Settlement Committees (DSCs) and 17 UNHCR Hired Lawyers (UHLs). The DSCs are an alternative dispute resolution mechanism that provides refugees with an easily accessible forum where issues can be resolved expeditiously and free of charge compared to the formal legal system. The decisions of the DSCs are reached amicably and whilst they are not binding, most refugees -and Iranian nationals involved in the dispute- do abide by them. UHLs were originally contracted to take part in the DSCs and to monitor their activities on behalf of UNHCR. Their role has been expanded into providing free legal counseling, aid and at times legal representation to asylum seekers, refugees and stateless populations in need. By the end of June 2023, UHLs provided consultations to **4,824** beneficiaries. The majority of the cases that UHLs supported concerned Family, Civil & Financial, and Criminal related disputes. DSCs provided services to **836** beneficiaries. The majority of the cases that DSCs supported concerned Family, Financial and Employment related disputes.

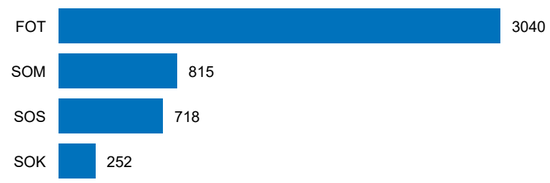
UHL services by month and year



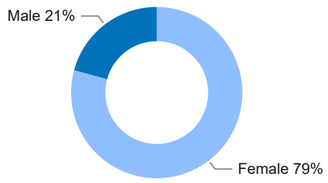
DSC services by month and year



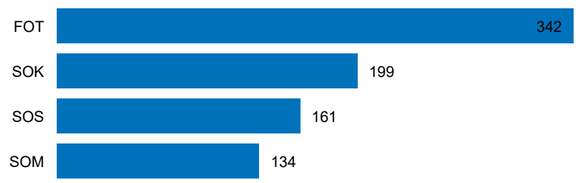
UHL cases by offices



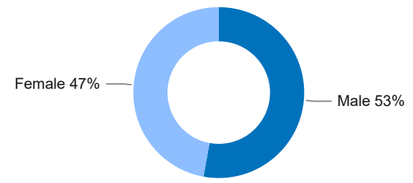
UHL approaches by gender



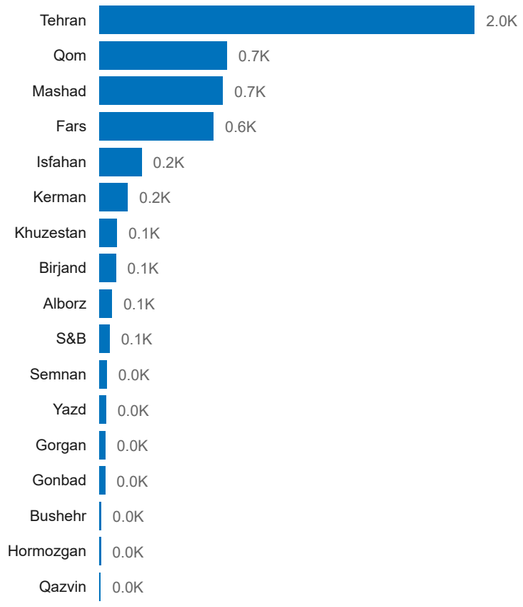
DSC cases by offices



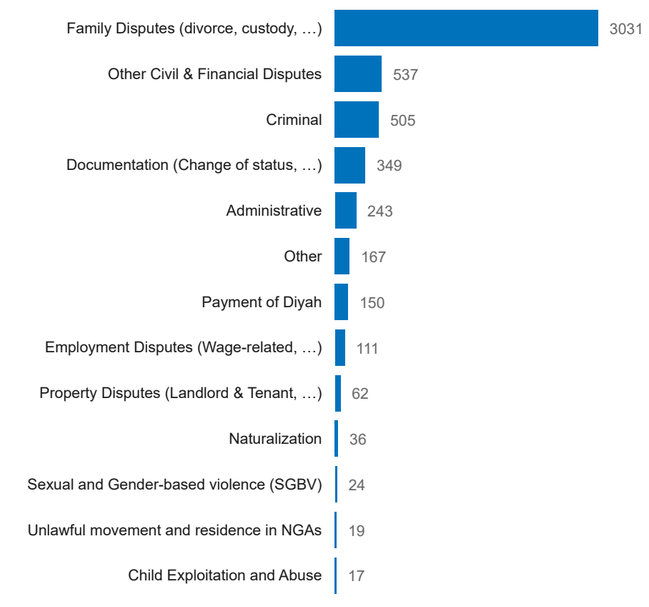
DSC approaches by gender



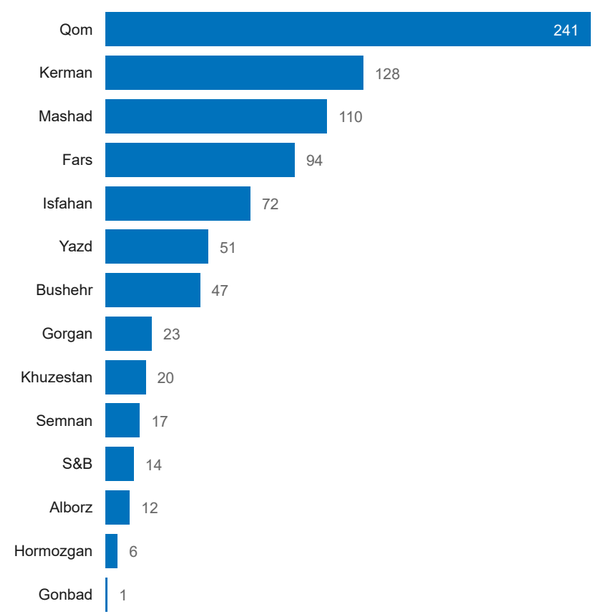
UHL cases by province



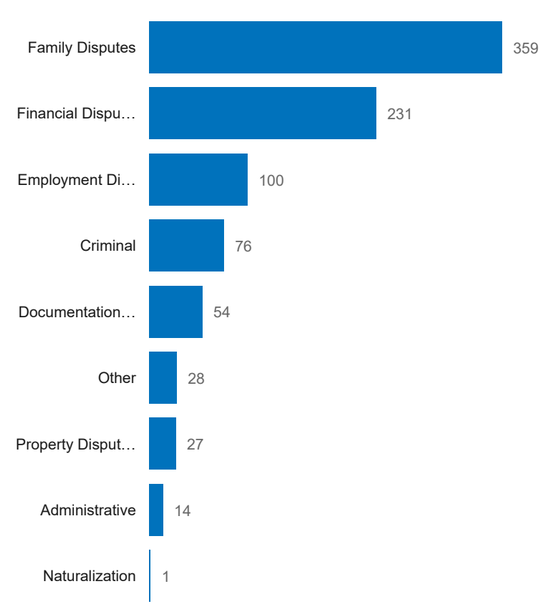
UHL types of cases



DSC cases by province



DSC types of cases



ADD - Jan to Jun 2023

ADD incidents reported to UNHCR directly by affected refugees and asylum seekers (or relatives on their behalf) represent a minimal portion of the total number of ADD incidents taking place in Iran.
During the reporting period, only **71** ADD incidents concerning **99** individuals were reported to UNHCR mainly on grounds of lack of valid documentation and accusation of committing crimes. Lack of valid documentation can lead to arrest, detention and deportation, additionally, it is required for *Amayesh* card holders to obtain a Laissez-Passer (travel permit) from BAFIA authorities for traveling outside their designated province of residence.
During the reporting period, round up operations mainly targeted undocumented foreign nationals and those not carrying their documentation at the time of apprehension. Key informants reported that detainees are not abruptly deported but undergo a screening process following which some are released and allowed to remain in the country.

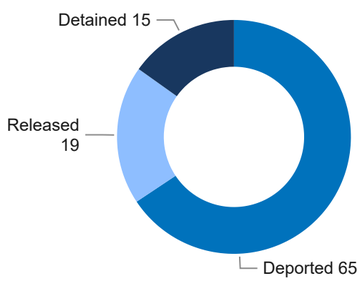
Number of ADD incidents

71

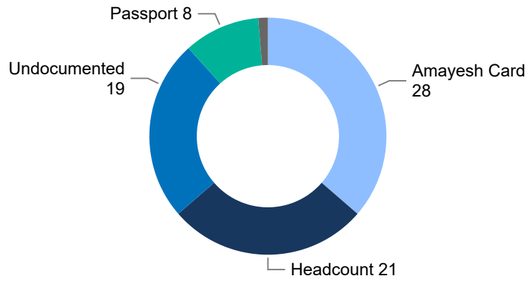
Number of ADD individuals

99

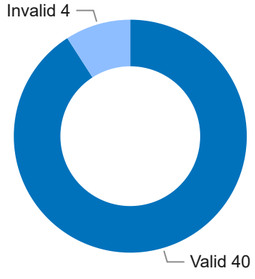
Last reported status



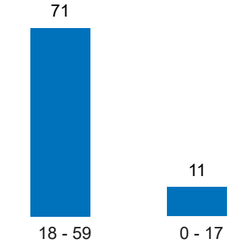
Documentation status



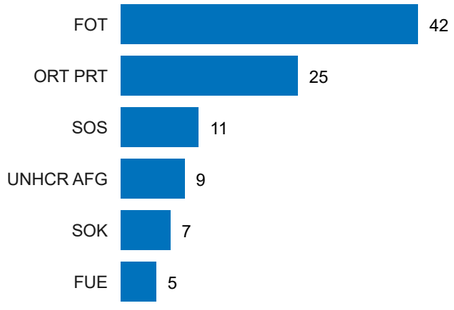
Documentation validity



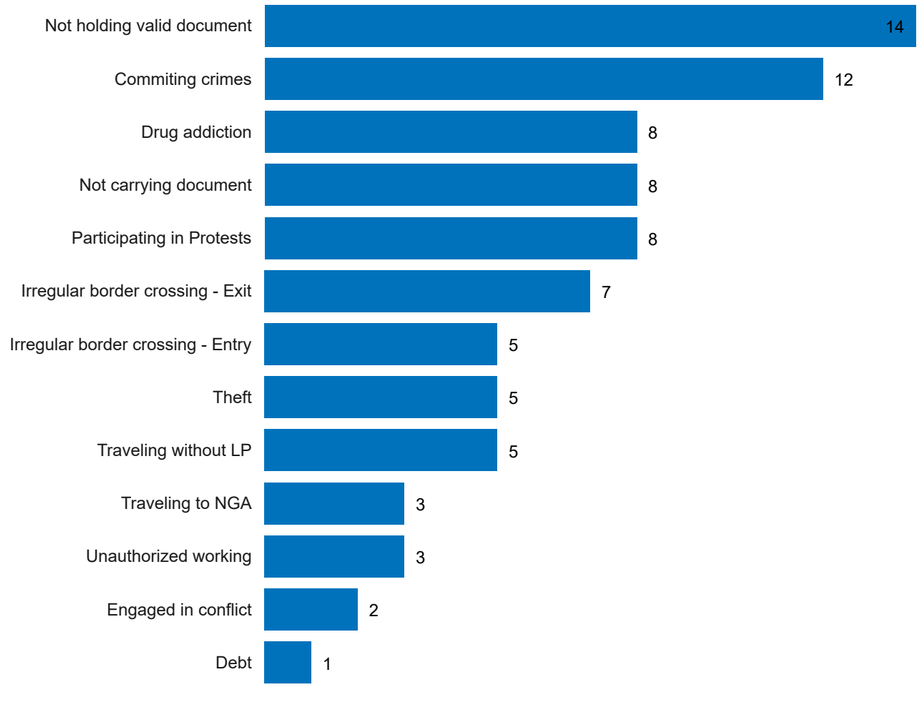
Age of the detained or deported person



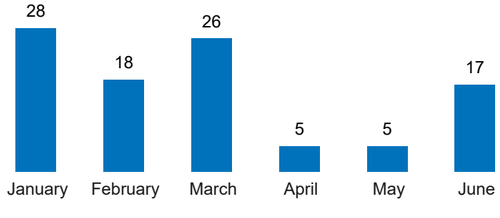
Reporting office



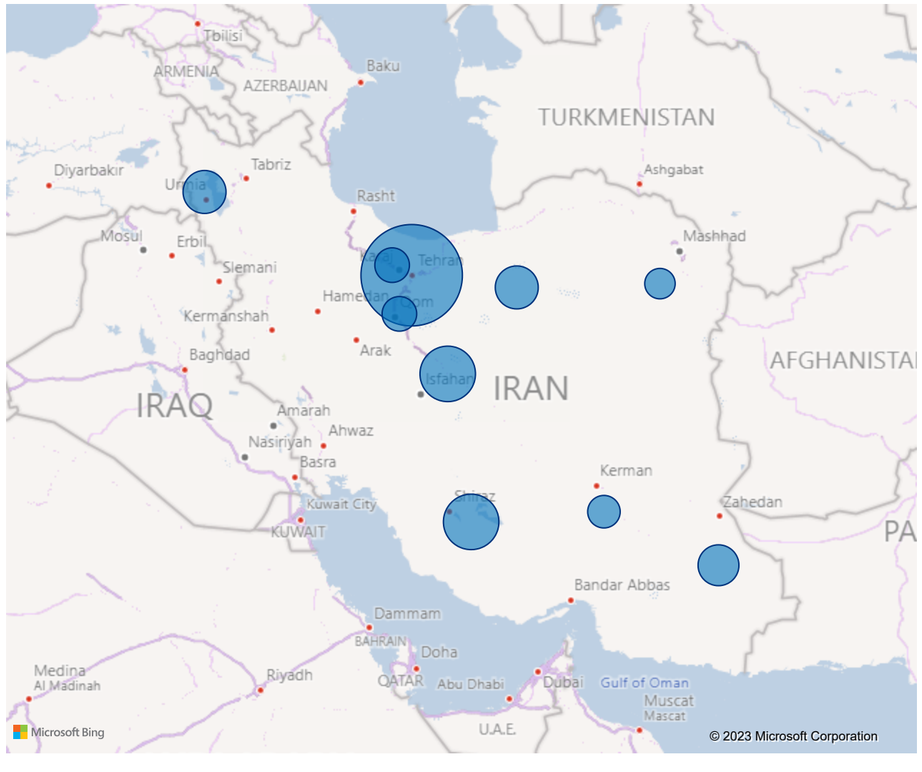
ADD reason



ADD monthly trend



Arrest location



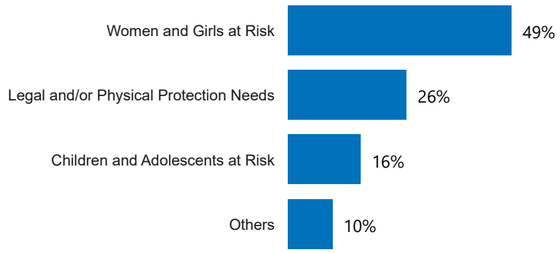
Iran, Islamic Republic of

Resettlement - Jan to Jun 2023

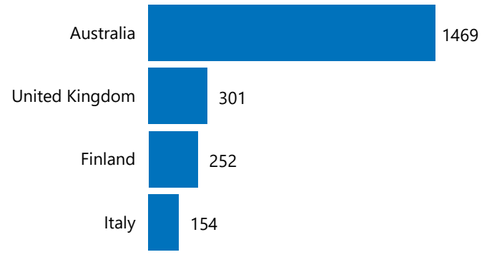
2176

Individuals submitted for resettlement

Primary submission categories



Submissions by countries



Submitted individuals age and gender

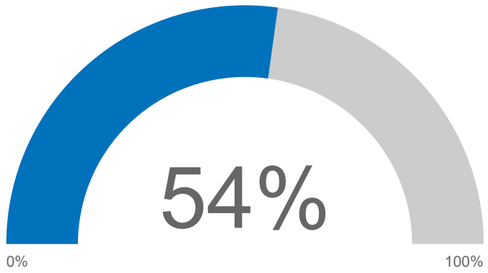
65.3% Female adult.

0.1% Female children.

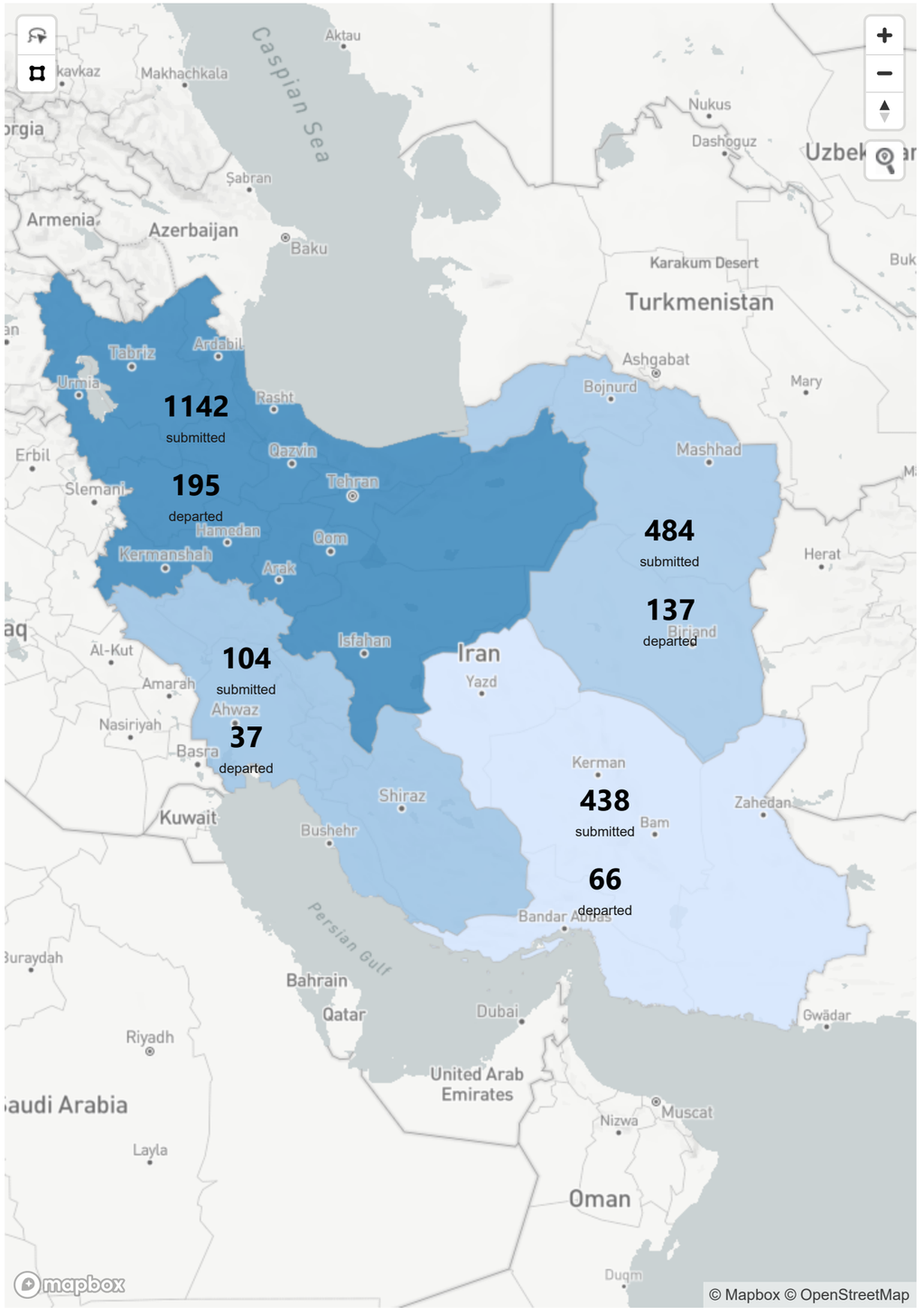
34.5% Male adult.

0.0% Male children.

2023 submissions



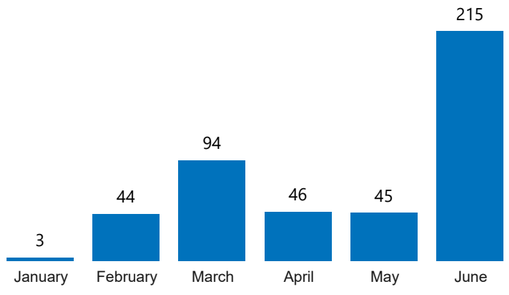
Submissions and departures



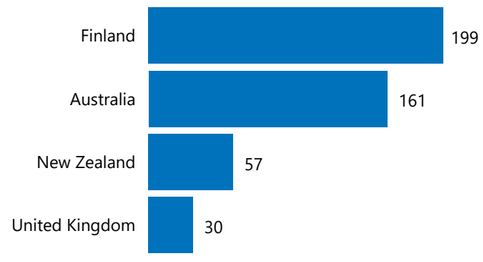
Departure by month

447

Individuals departed for resettlement



Departures by countries



Departed individuals age and gender

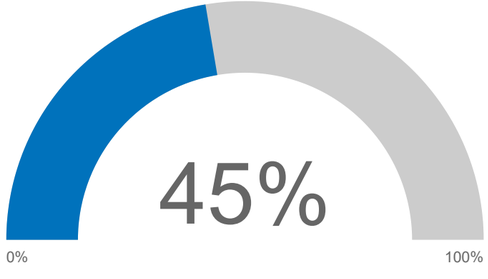
41.6% Female adult

21.0% Female children

11.0% Male adult

26.4% Male children

2023 depurtures



Voluntary Repatriation - Jan to Jun 2023

292

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 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 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.

10

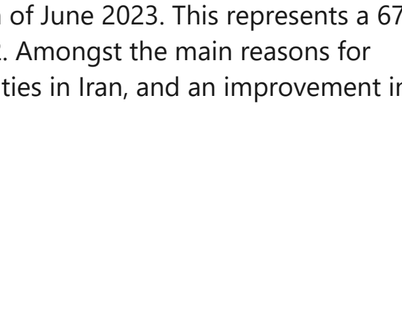
Persons with specific needs

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

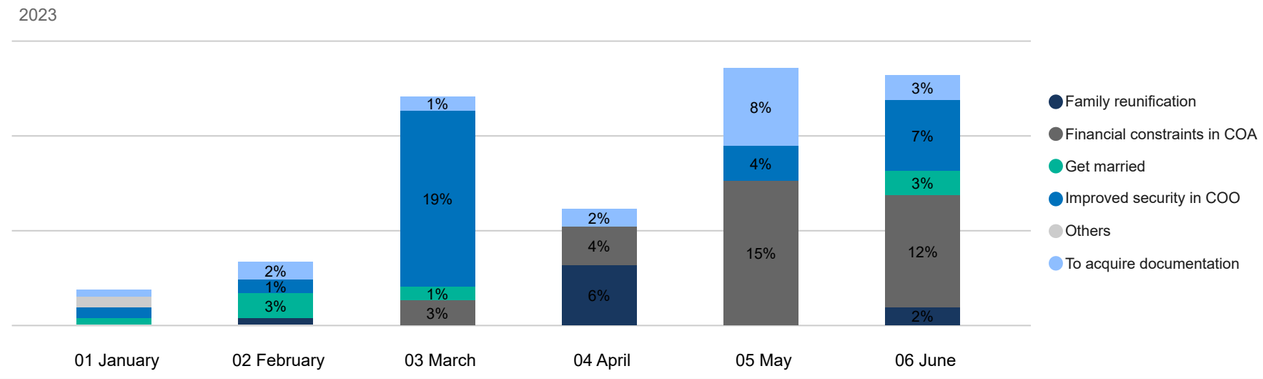
60%

Females

Age gender breakdown

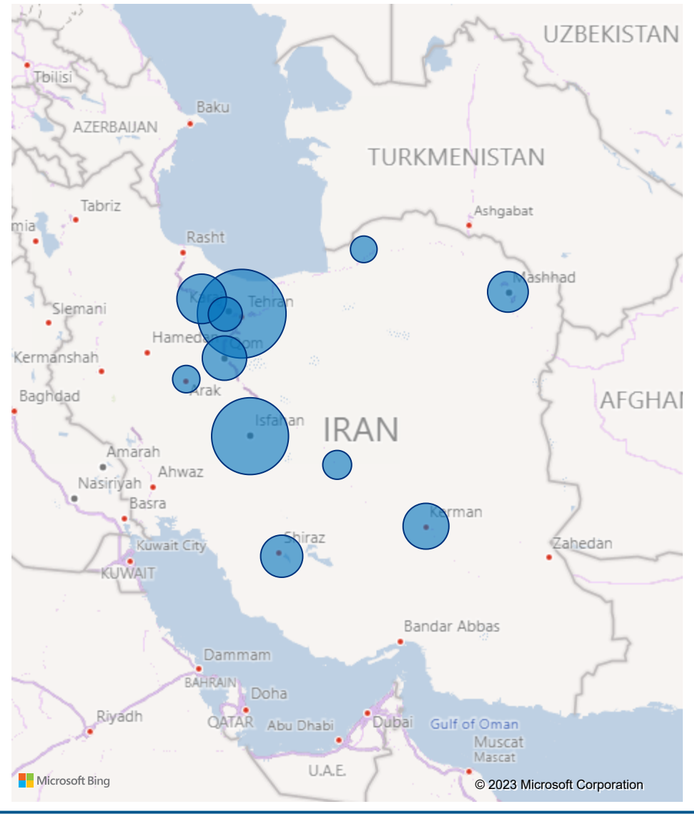


Top 5 reason of return to Afghanistan by month (% of individuals)

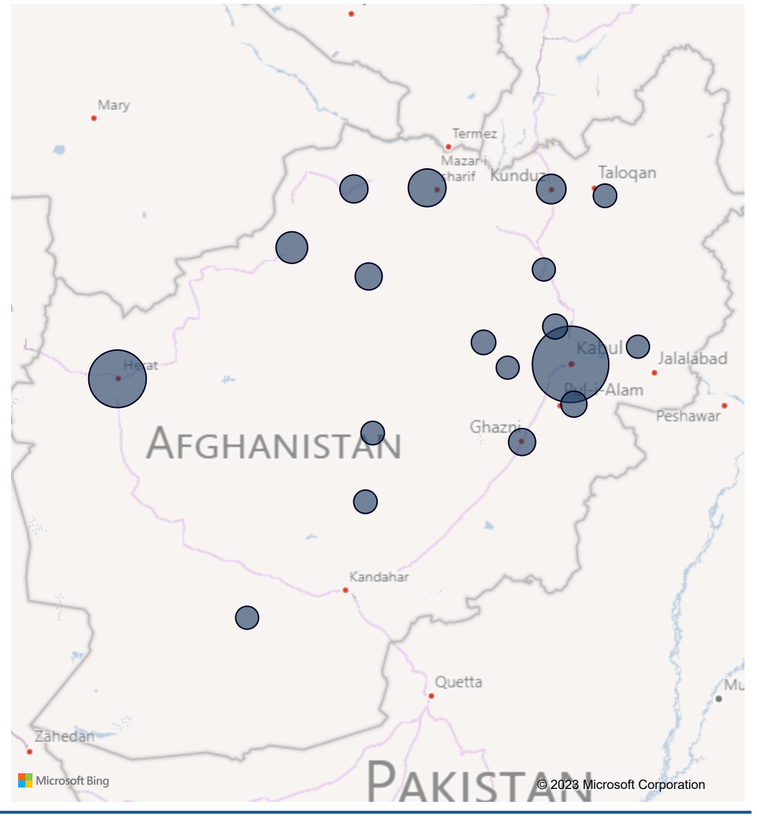


As of end of June 2023, UNHCR facilitated the repatriation of 292 individuals to Afghanistan – 74 individuals only in the month of June 2023. This represents a 67% increase compared to the same period in 2022. Amongst the main reasons for return, returnees stated facing financial difficulties in Iran,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

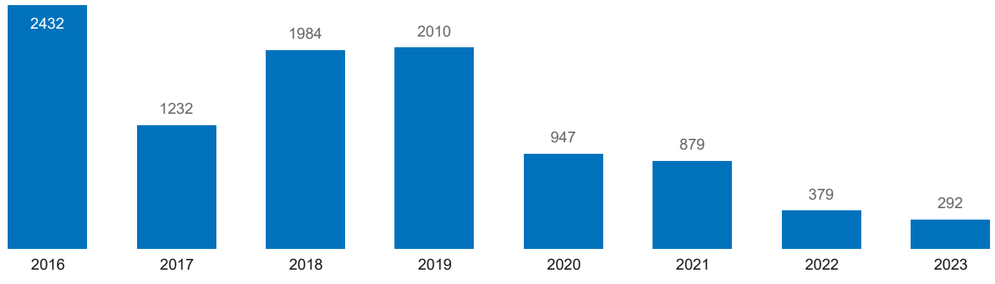
Province of residence in Iran



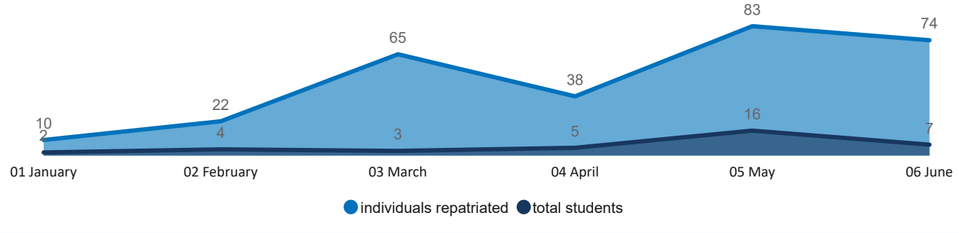
Intended return province in Afghanistan



Trend over the years (2016-2023)



2023 monthly trend



For more information please contact **Patricia Delis-Gomez** at delis@unhcr.org.

[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 2023, available at: https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/63e0cb714.pdf.