UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency | CORE

IRAN-AFGHANISTAN

Returns Emergency Response

as of 9 July 2025

Key figures

1,347,100
total returns[1]

800,700
deportations

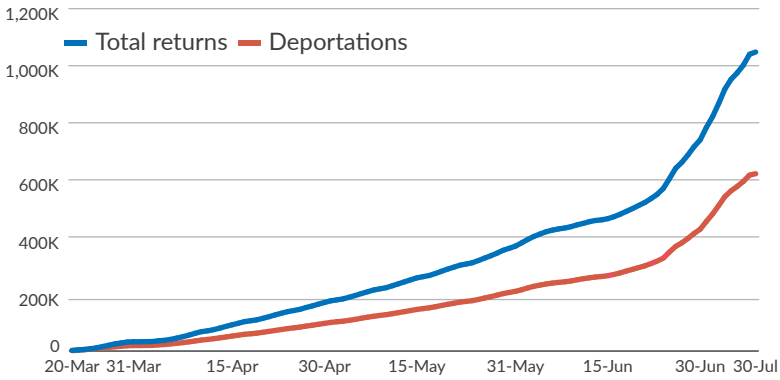
1,081,000
80%

59%
of total returns are **deportations**

The **blue figures** above correspond to the period 1 January 2025 to 9 July 2025. While the **navy figures** refer only to those who arrived from 20 March 2025 to 9 July 2025.

Total returns (cumulative since 20 March 2025)

Number of people in thousands



Context

Following headcount slip expiry on 20 March 2025, the Government of Iran launched a regularization/return scheme for the two million affected Afghans. Slip holders must undergo government assessments to determine whether they are allowed to remain.

Daily returns climbed steeply after 13 June, with further spikes following 25 June which continue during the reporting period. **From 3 to 9 July the average daily returns exceeded 37,000** with peaks of some 46,000 and over 50,000 Afghan returnees on 3 and 4 July respectively. The proportion of deportees during the same reporting period increased further to 64% compared to 61% of the previous seven days.

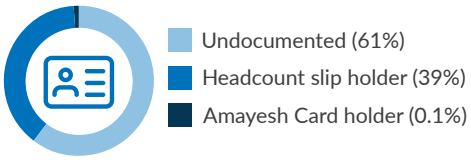
As of 9 July, over 1.08 million Afghans returned from Iran since 20 March 2025 and more than **1.3 million since the beginning of the year** bringing the total returns from both Iran and Pakistan to over 1.6 million in 2025.

UNHCR reiterates concern that many Afghans —regardless of status—face serious protection risks in Afghanistan due to the current human rights situation, especially women and girls.

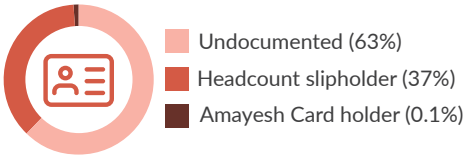
Returns by documentation status

From 3 to 9 July headcounted slip holders made up 60% of total returnees—confirming the increasing trend observed since 13 June. A similar trend was observed in deportations, with **61% of total deportees being headcounted slip holders** during the same reporting period. Looking at the broader period since 20 March 2025, approximately 39% of total returnees are headcounted slip holders and 37% of total deportees.

Total returns



Deportations



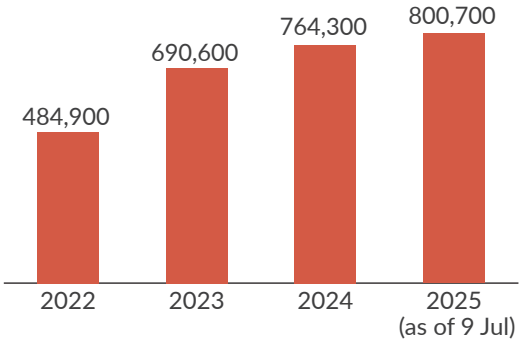
Deportations

In 2025, 800,700 returns — or 59% of the total — were deportations. Of these, over 388,500 Afghans were deported after 13 June.

Individual **Mental Health & Psychosocial Support Sessions** (MHPSS) conducted by UNHCR Iran **with men, women, and adolescents revealed widespread psychological and social distress linked to threat of deportation.**

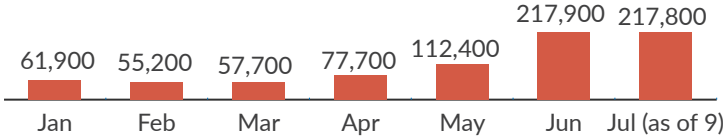
Many participants reported **severe anxiety, insecurity, and helplessness,** particularly those who had experienced temporary detention. A major concern raised was the lack of access to medical services for undocumented Afghans, especially affecting vulnerable groups such as the elderly, chronically ill, and pregnant women. Adolescents showed high levels of mental distress, with some expressing suicidal thoughts, while parents voiced fears of family breakdown and increased domestic violence under forced return conditions. Additionally, financial exploitation—such as landlords refusing to return rental deposits—was reported, adding to economic hardship and complicating return plans.

Yearly deportations



Monthly deportations in 2025

In the first nine days of July, 217,800 Afghans were deported — nearly the total for the entire month of June, which had the highest monthly deportation figures in the past three years.



[1] Includes deportations, assisted VolRep and other returns of Afghans of all statuses such as Amayesh cardholders and the undocumented, excluding passport holders.

Sources: UNHCR, DoRR

Returns profiles (since 20 March 2025)

Since the beginning of 2025, there have been **significant shifts in the proportion of returnees traveling as families rather than individuals.** The percentage of family returns rose substantially from 11% in Q1 to 40% between April and 12 June. During the conflict period from 13 to 24 June, family returns increased sharply to 67%, **continuing to rise to 84% after the ceasefire** on 25 June. This upward trend persisted, **reaching 87% in the last seven days (3–9 July).**

63% have returned as **families**

Education levels
refers to HoHs

- No education (67%)
- Primary school (Grades 1 - 6) (10%)
- Secondary school (Grades 7 - 14) (20%)
- University degree (2%)
- Madrasa (1%)

- Tajik (51%)
- Pashtoon (22%)
- Hazara (12%)
- Uzbek (11%)
- Others (4%)

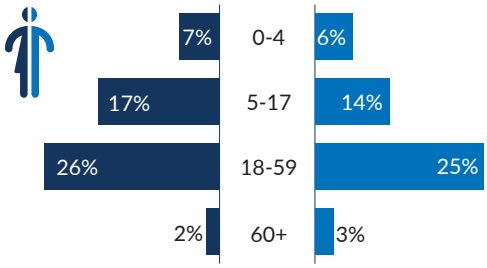
Occupational skills
refers to HoHs

- No skills (54%)
- Unskilled daily wage labour (22%)
- Masonry (12%)
- Agriculture (8%)
- Tailoring (4%)

Returns assisted by UNHCR Afghanistan

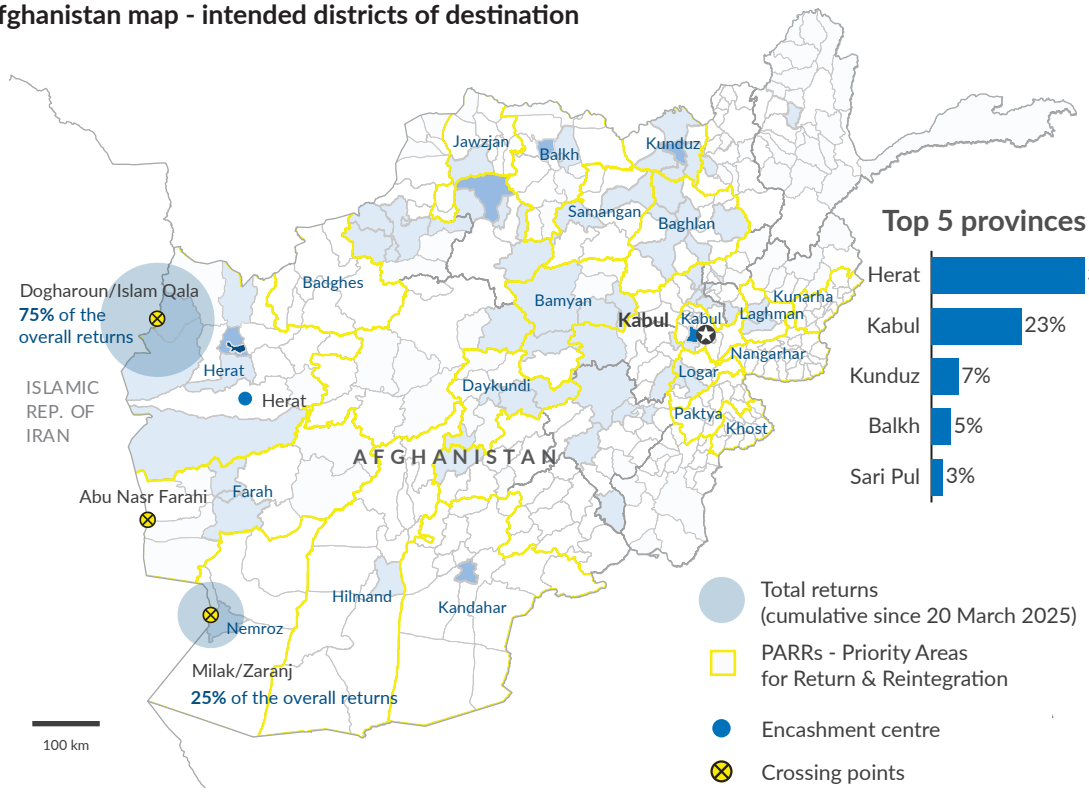
In addition to the cash assistance provided to returning Amayesh card and expired headcounted slip holders, starting from 27 June 2025, UNHCR mobilized resources to support the returnees with emergency relief items including blankets, plastic sheet, kitchen set, jerry cans, hygiene kits and hot meals in Islam Qala. From 27 June to 9 July **9,800 returning households covering 68,900 Afghan returnees were supported with Core Relief Items (CRIs). 9,900 returnees were assisted with transportation** from Islam Qala to Herat and **37,000 received hot meals.**

71% of assisted are **women & children**
32% are **Female headed households**

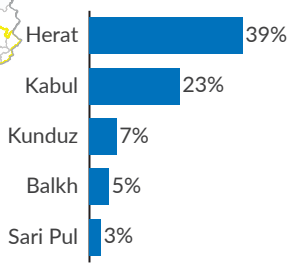


Out of those assisted
2.4% have disabilities

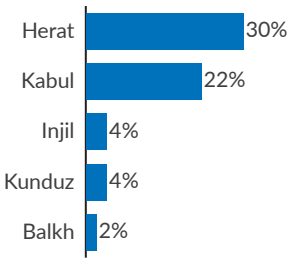
Afghanistan map - intended districts of destination



Top 5 provinces



Top 5 districts



Intended returns per district
- 0
- 0.1 - 2%
- 2 - 5%
- 5 - 25%
- 25 - 30%

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

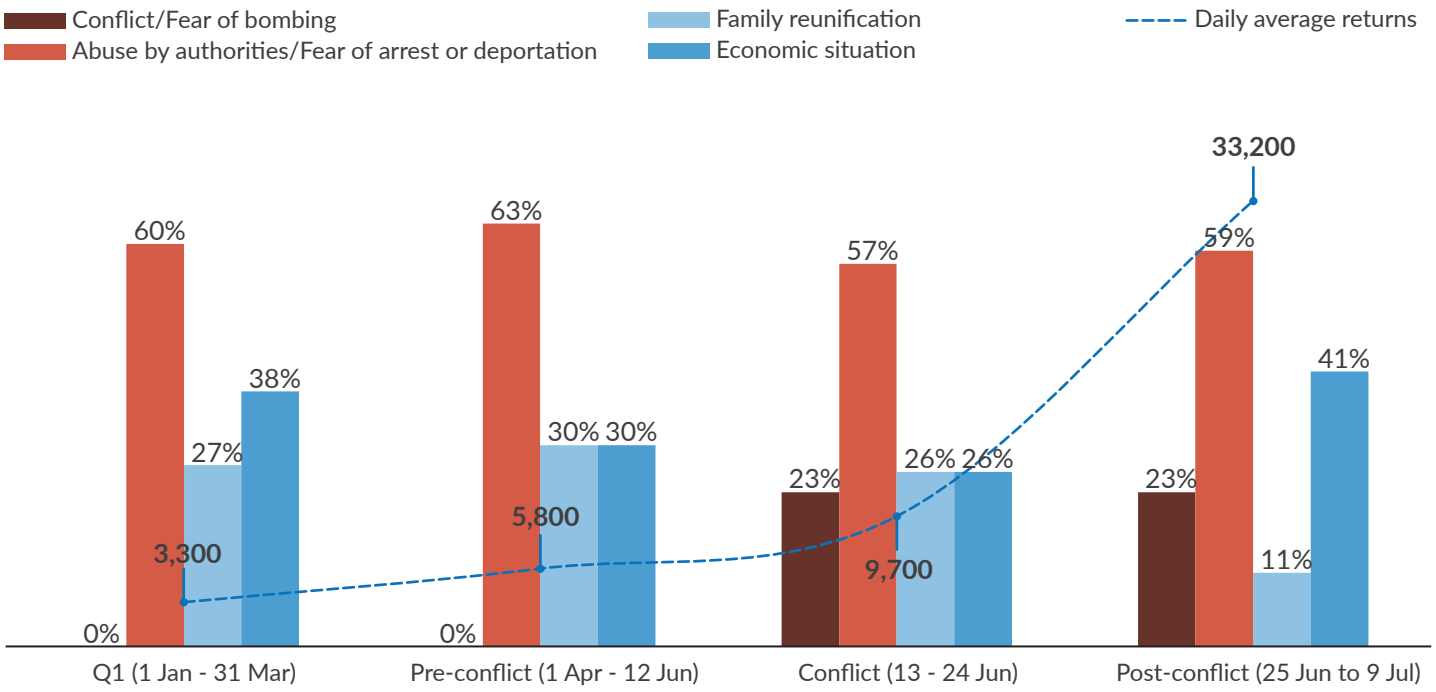
Border Protection Monitoring

UNHCR and its border partners WADAN and CHA in Afghanistan have scaled up protection activities at the border (Islam Qala, Zaranj and Abo Nasr Farahi) with Iran. Daily presence consists of Border Protection monitoring through interviews with returnees and deportees in order to identify protection concerns and risks, as well as their intended areas of return in Afghanistan. Help desks have been set up to boost protection screening interviews, identification and referral of individuals to be assisted by UNHCR at the border and in the Encashment Centers. Since 13 June deportation increased in Iran, also coinciding with a Government-announced 6 July deadline for holders of expired Headcount slips to exit Iran.

Over the past three months, **Afghan nationals have increasingly reported job loss, reflecting a growing trend in which Iranian employers are refusing to hire them** regardless of their documentation status, including some persons holding valid Amayesh cards and work permits. This is not a policy shift as such, but such instances have been more frequently reported following the implementation of the regularization policy, affecting not only male workers but **also women and girls,** particularly those employed in tailoring workshops and other small-scale income-generating activities. Reports indicate **a concerning change in local hiring practices, with employers citing social or political pressure to prioritize Iranian workers.**

Reasons for leaving Iran

Percentage of interviews reporting reasons | Multiple choice questions may add up to over 100%



Top 3 Needs upon arrival

Percentage of interviews | Multiple choice questions may add up to over 100%

- **88%** Food
- **74%** Financial support
- **71%** Housing/Accommodation

Top 3 Protection services requested in Afghanistan

Percentage of interviews | Multiple choice questions may add up to over 100%

- **63%** Documentation / Legal assistance
- **51%** Support with family reunification
- **21%** Protection services for women & girls