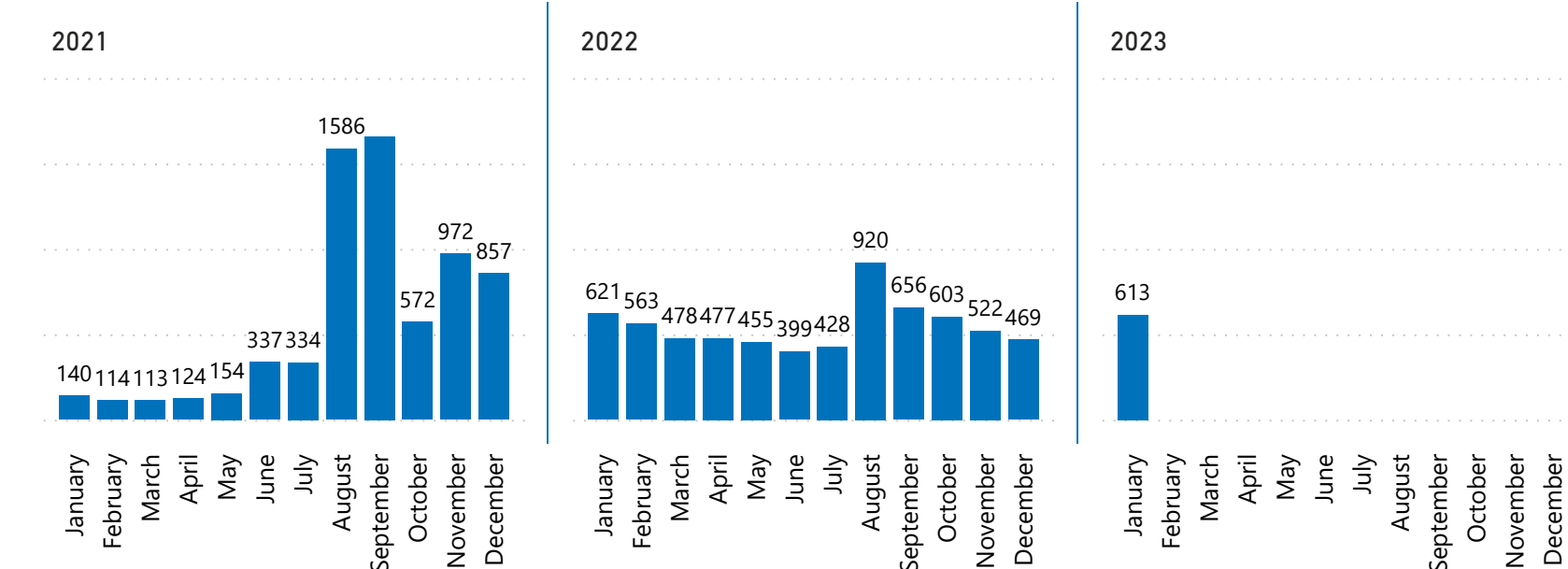


The situation in Afghanistan has remained highly volatile since August 2021, with civilians continuing to be gravely affected by the security, human rights, and humanitarian crises in the country. Many Afghans fleeing to Iran are doing so in an irregular manner through unofficial border crossings and with the help of smugglers, as official border points remain closed for entry to persons without valid passports and visas intending to seek asylum. Over 3 million Afghans are estimated to be internally displaced by the end of 2022 while at least 8 million Afghans reside in surrounding countries. UNHCR currently lacks sustained access to border areas and is only able to report on newly arrived Afghans who have approached UNHCR offices through hotlines and receptions. UNHCR provides information, including through counselling, to newly arrived. Based on an assessment of specific situations, UNHCR may provide further assistance, consisting of *inter alia* psychosocial support, referrals to legal counselling, and cash-based interventions.

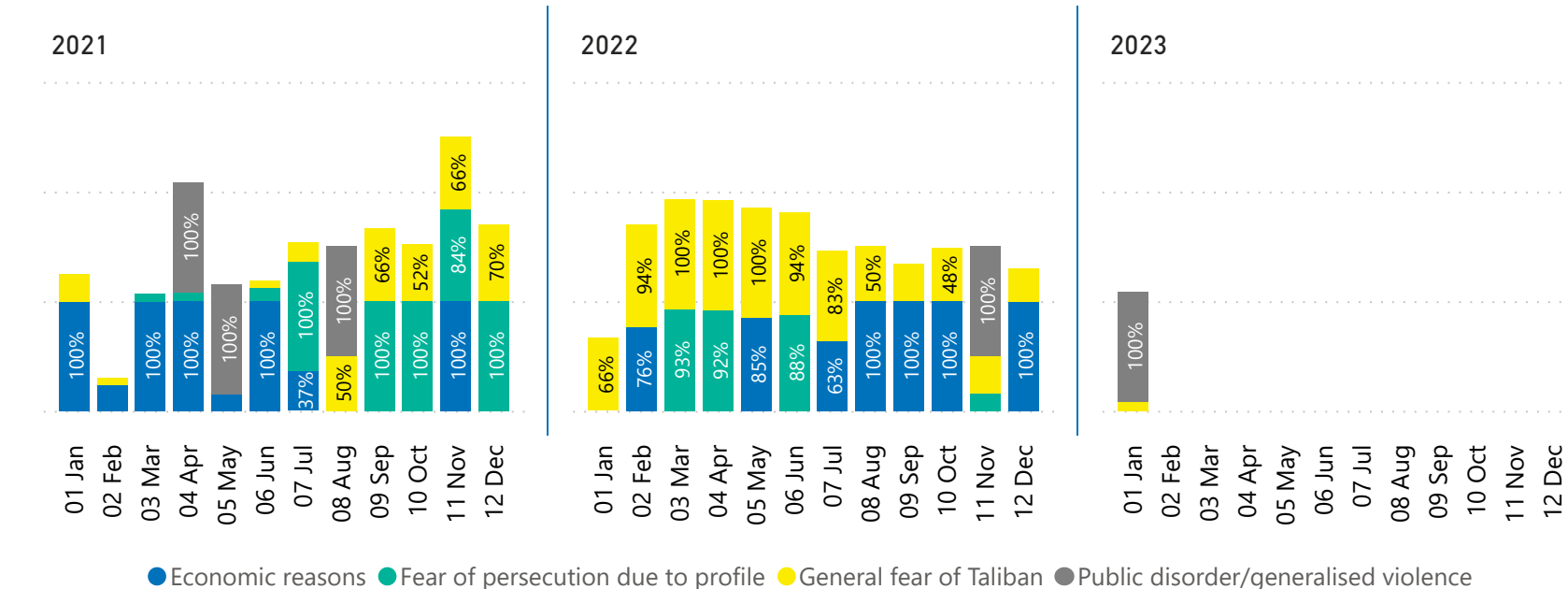
Pursuant to the 2022 headcount exercise Government officials have publicly mentioned a figure of approximately 1 million new arrivals since August 2021 out of the 2.6 million Afghans who participated and have been issued with a 'headcount slip', the validity of which is currently until 20 April 2023. UNHCR continues to advocate for a more predictable and sustainable extension of the validity of the 'headcount slips'.

In February 2023, UNHCR issued an updated Guidance Note on the International Protection Needs of People Fleeing Afghanistan (update 1). Considering the overall situation in Afghanistan, the Guidance Note calls on countries to allow civilians fleeing Afghanistan access to their territories, to guarantee the right to seek asylum, and to ensure respect for the principle of non-refoulement. It is noted that a bar on forcible return serves as a minimum standard and needs to remain in place until such time as the security, rule of law, and human rights situation in Afghanistan has significantly improved. Of note is the assessment that due to developments since 2021 Afghan women and girls, in addition to other groups, are likely to need of international protection under the 1951 Refugee Convention.

Number of newly arrivals approaches per month and year



Top 3 reported reasons for flight trend per month



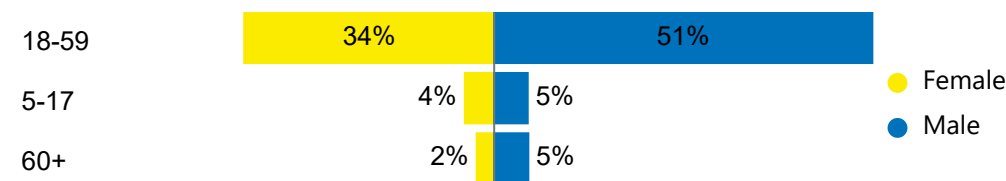
Number of newly arrived households who approached UNHCR

14,166

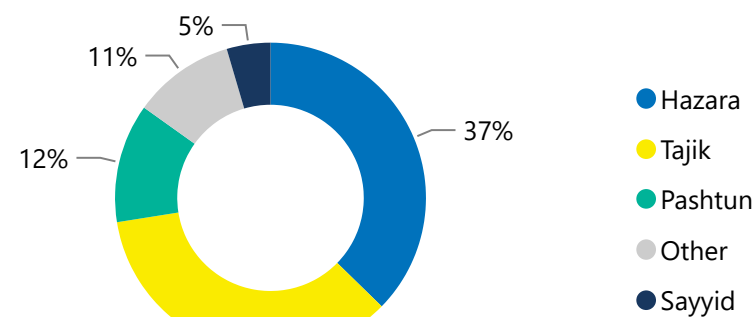
Number of newly arrived individuals who approached UNHCR

59,488

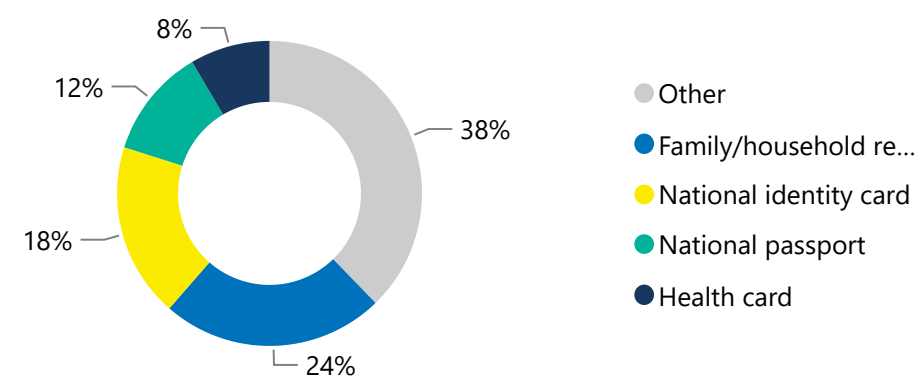
Age/Gender breakdown of heads of household



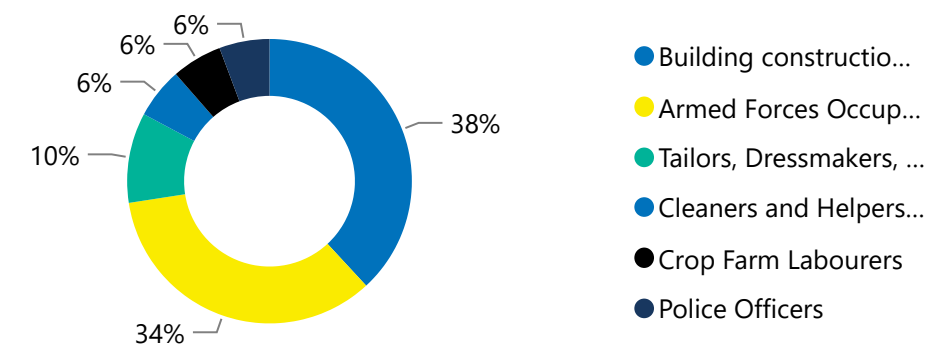
Ethnicity (Top 5)



Document Type (Top 5)



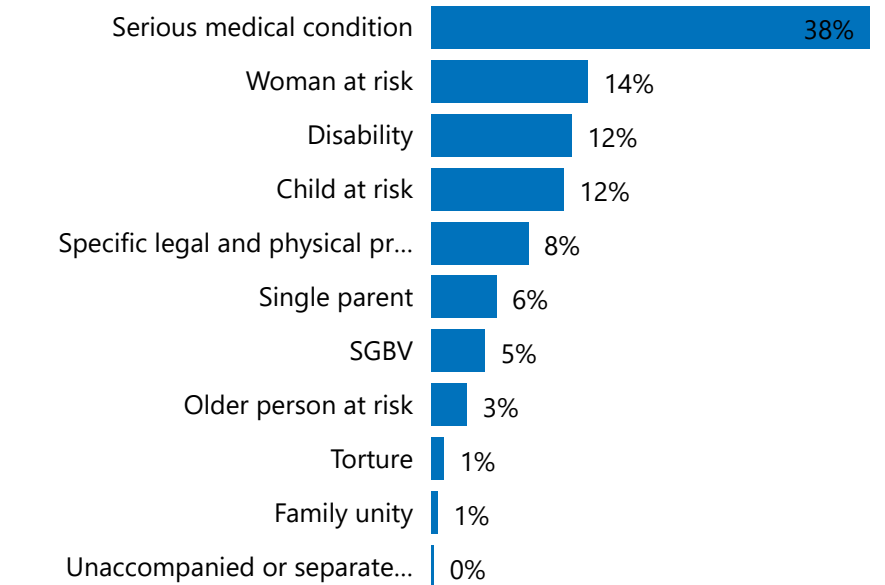
Occupation Type (Top 5)



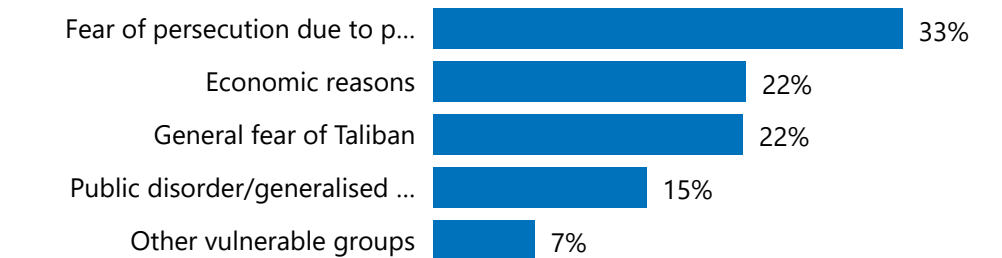
Specific needs among new arrivals approaching UNHCR

12,807 / 22%

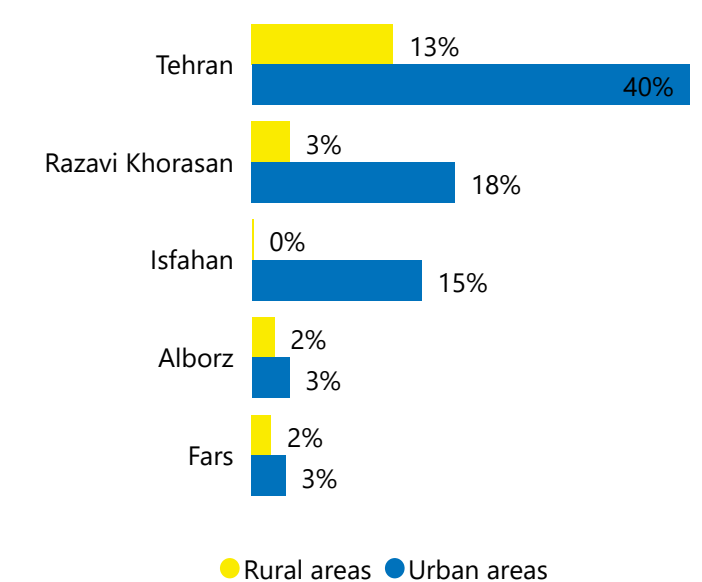
Reported specific needs



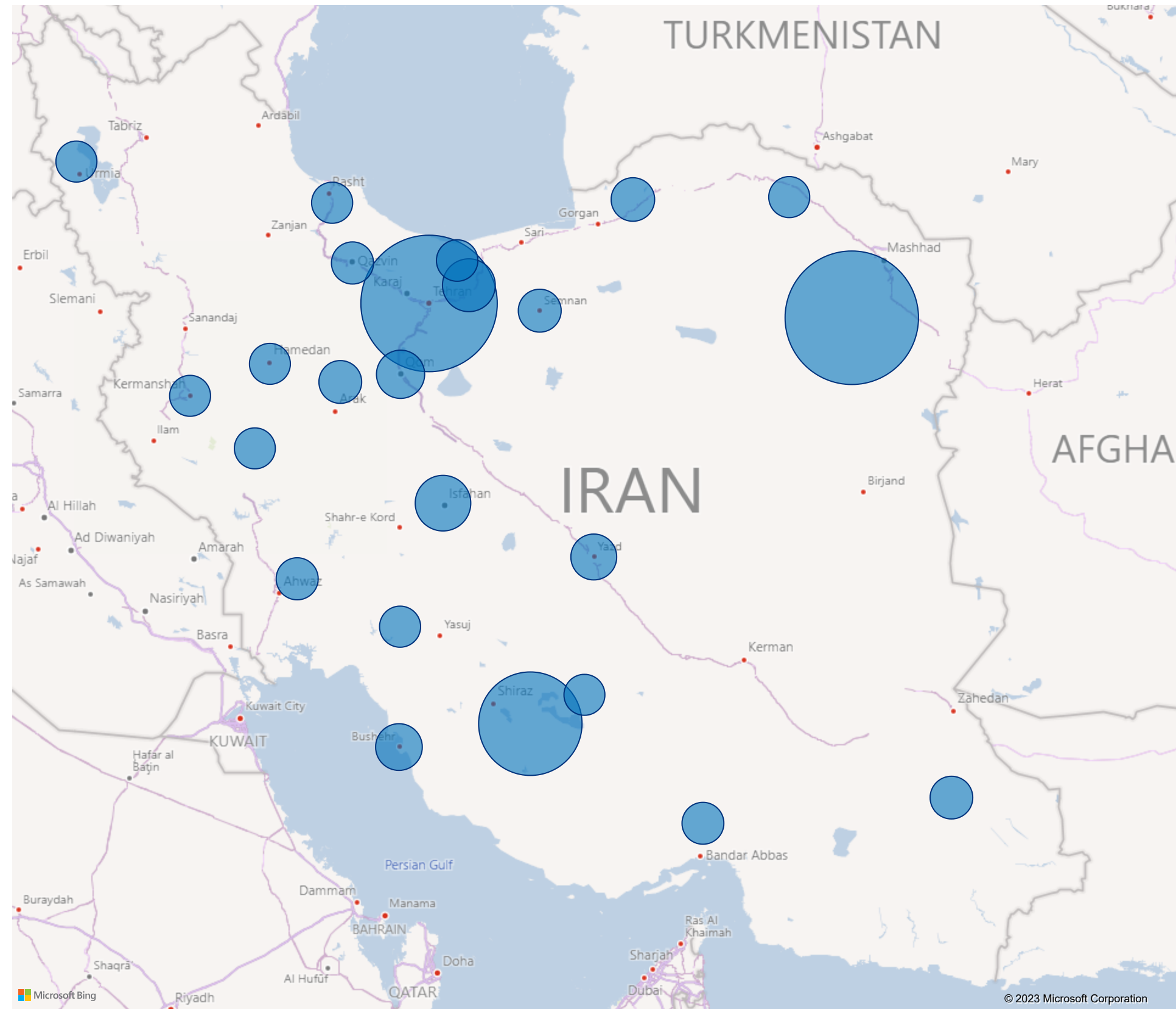
Reasons for flight



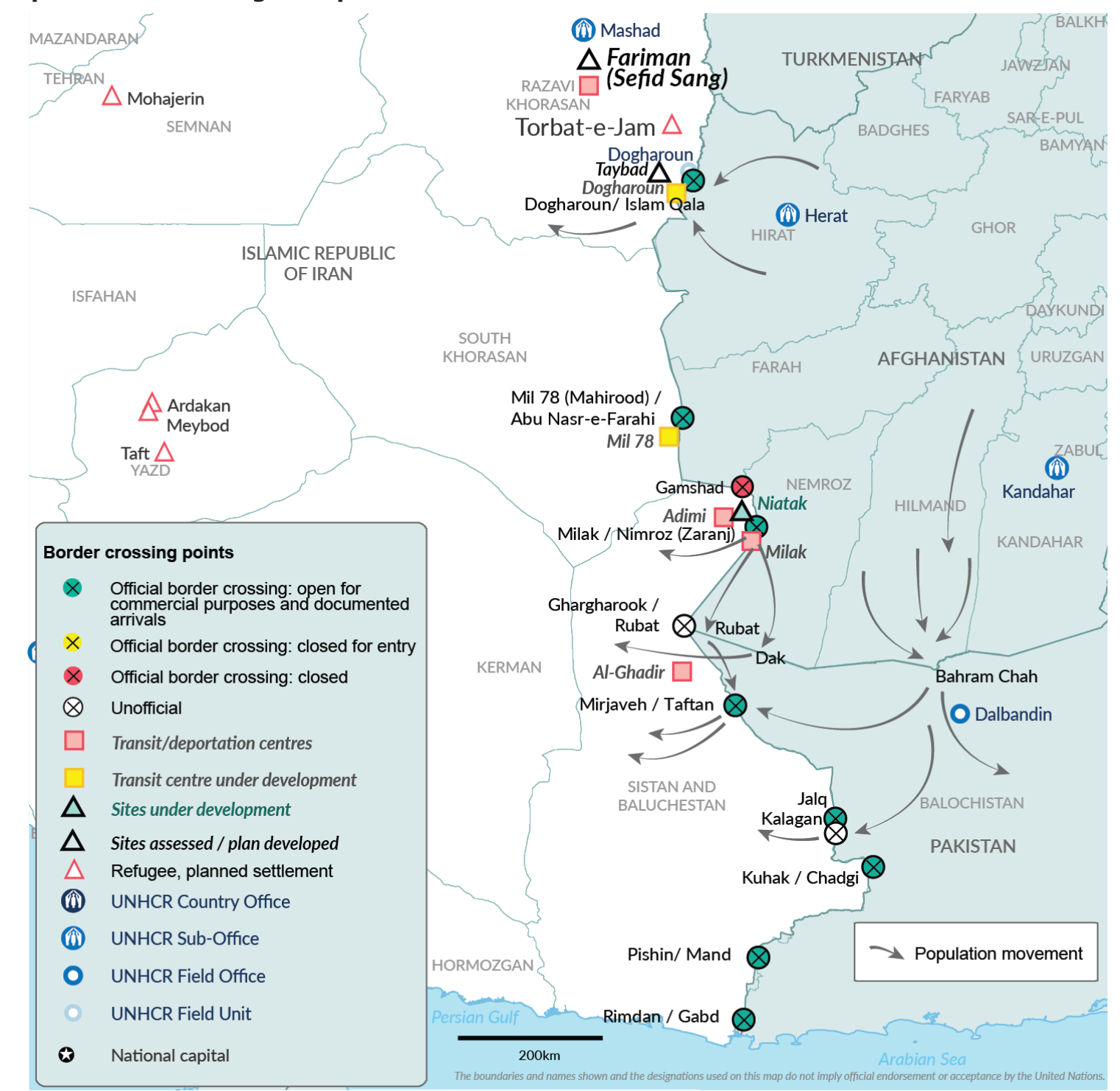
Area of residence in CoA (Top 5 provinces)



Province of residence in Iran



Map of border crossings and provisional sites



Borders between Iran and Afghanistan are open for Afghan passport-holders with valid visas for Iran, hampering access to territory of undocumented Afghans in need of international protection through official border points. UNHCR is aware of Afghans also accessing territory through unofficial border crossings. UNHCR and other actors, in coordination with BAFIA are involved in developing potential sites in border areas that will host new arrivals.