

218

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 29% of the repatriates in the first 5 months of 2022 to 14% 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.

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Persons with specific needs



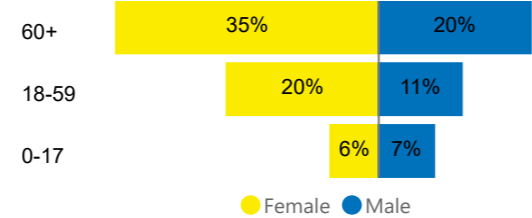
UNHCR helps returnees with specific needs including unaccompanied or separated children and elderly persons.

61%

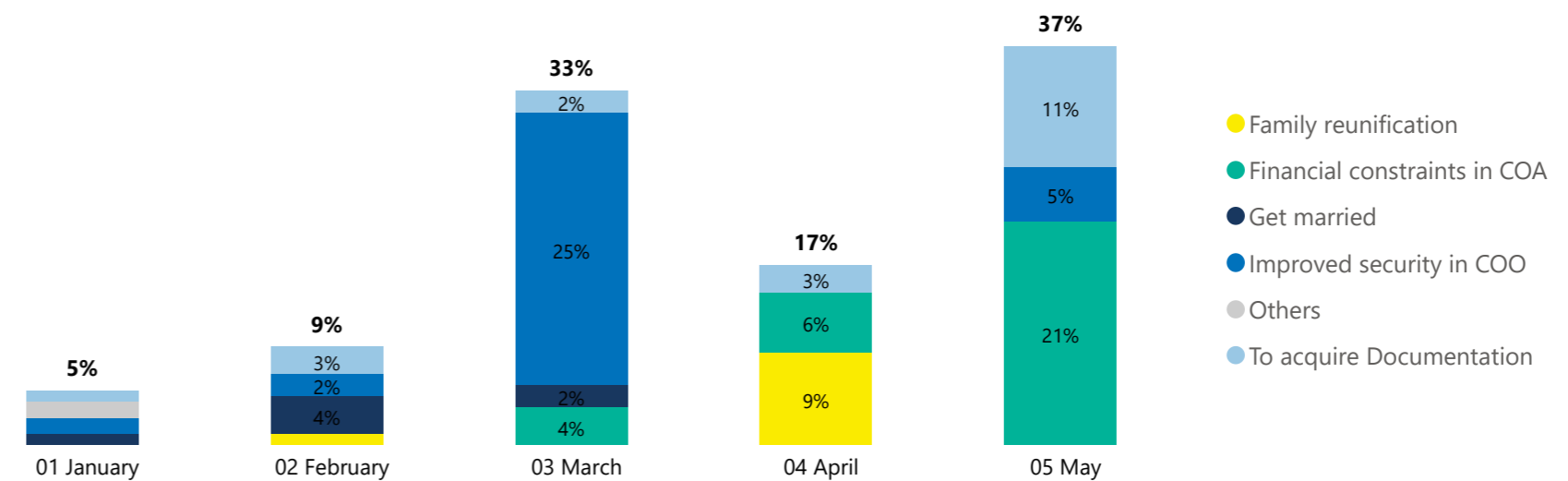
Females



Age gender breakdown

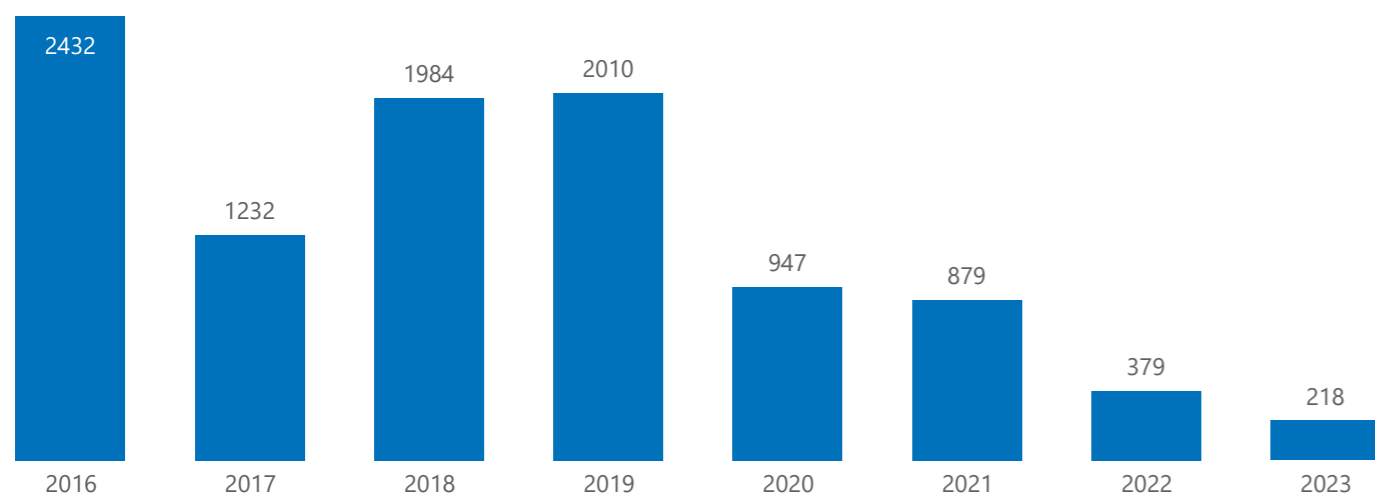


Top 5 reason of return to Afghanistan by month (% of individuals)

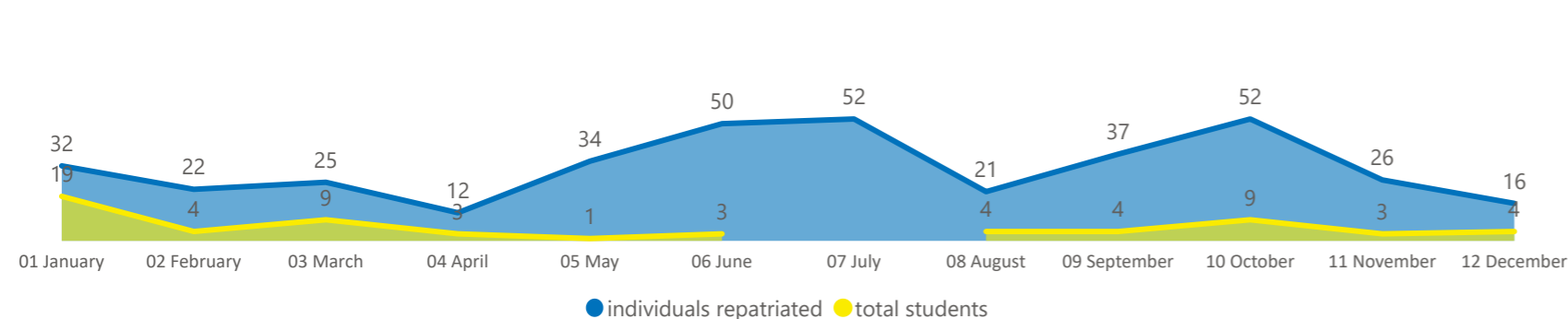


As of end of May 2023, UNHCR facilitated the repatriation of 218 individuals to Afghanistan – 83 individuals only in the month of May 2023. This represents a 74% increase compared to the same period in 2022. Amongst the main reasons for return, returnees stated facing financial difficulties in Iran, needing to acquire documentation, and an improvement in the security situation in country of origin.

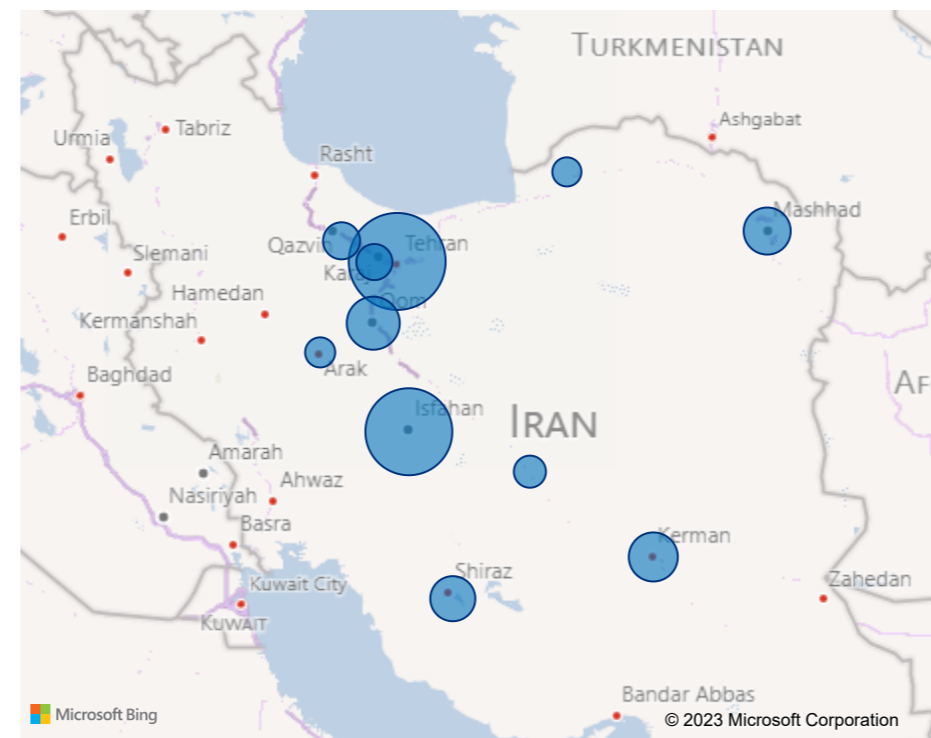
Trend over the years (2016-2023)



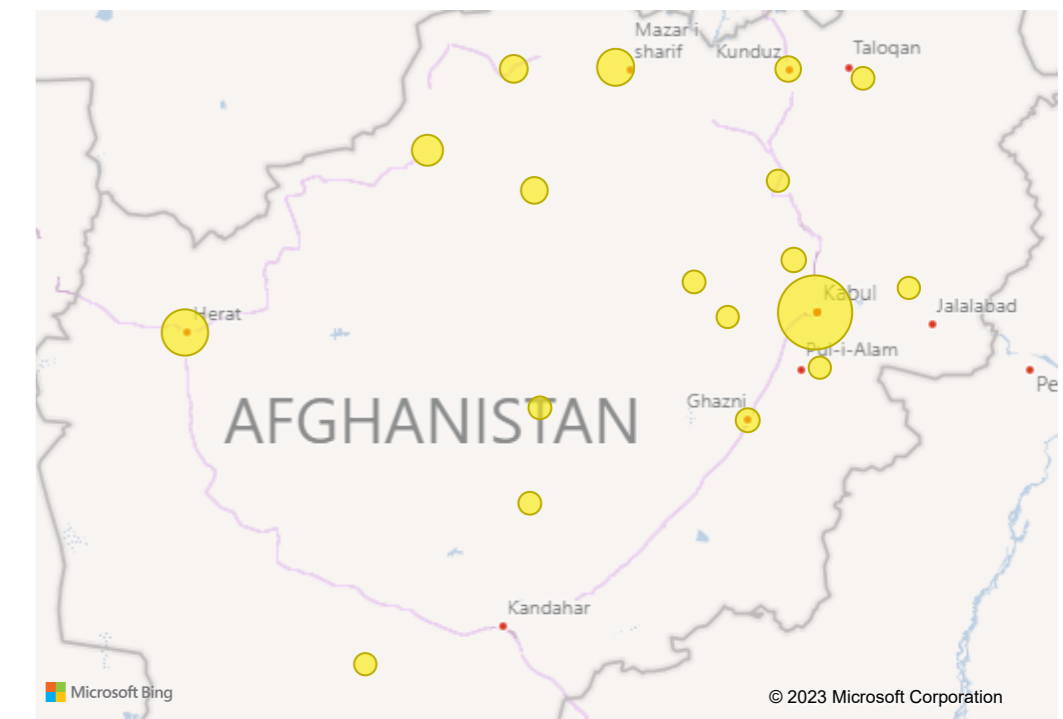
2022 monthly trend



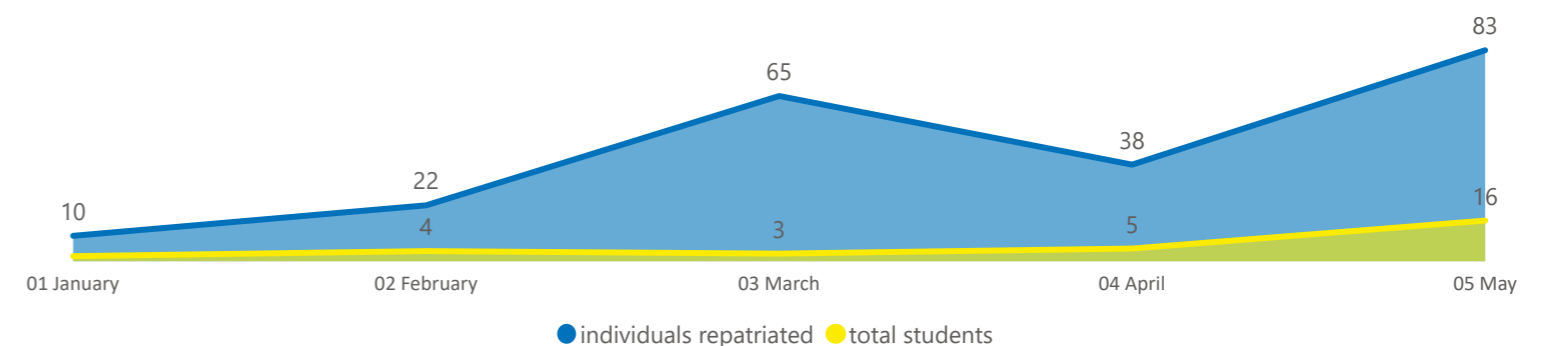
Province of residence in Iran



Intended return province in Afghanistan



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