

UNHCR-IOM FLASH UPDATE #1

ARREST AND DETENTION | FLOW MONITORING (15 September – 15 October 2023)

INTRODUCTION

In response to the Ministry of Interior’s (MoI) decision to enact an “Illegal Foreigners’ Repatriation Plan” on 26 September 2023, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency and IOM, the UN Migration Agency, have collated their data on the arrest, detention, and deportation of Proof of Registration (PoR) holders, Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders, and undocumented Afghan nationals, as well as on the outflows of Afghan nationals at the Torkham and Chaman border crossing points, to better understand the protection environment and movements of Afghan nationals returning to Afghanistan from Pakistan.

CHRONOLOGY

26 September 2023

The MoI in Pakistan internally issued its “Illegal Foreigners’ Repatriation Plan” to government institutions. The plan outlines that the “repatriation” of Afghan nationals will take place in three phases, starting with the identification and deportation of illegal, unregistered, and overstaying foreigners, with the second phase seeking to deport ACC holders, and the third phase seeking the forced repatriation of PoR holders.

3 October 2023

The MoI formally announced the decision by the caretaker government of Pakistan, to give a deadline of 1 November 2023 for all “illegal foreigners” to leave Pakistan, or else face expulsion.

7 October 2023

UNHCR and IOM issued a [joint statement](#) urging the Government of Pakistan to maintain the protection space for Afghan nationals in need of safety.

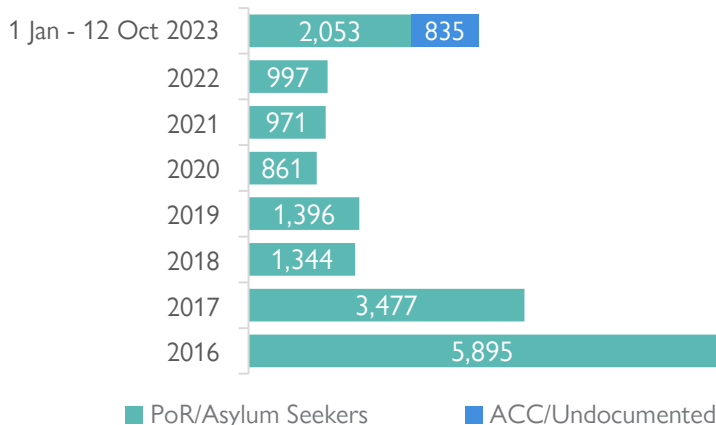
10 October 2023

Under the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), the Chief Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CCAR) issued a [government-wide circular](#), stating that PoR and ACC holders, are allowed to reside temporarily in Pakistan and can only be repatriated on a voluntary basis.

9 and 16 October 2023

The Home Departments of Balochistan and Sindh, issued a provincial-wide circular stating that Afghan nationals with valid PoR cards or ACC documents can only be repatriated on a voluntary basis, unless they are involved in criminal activities.

ARREST AND DETENTION BY YEARS



% OF ARRESTS BY LOCATION 1-12 OCTOBER 2023

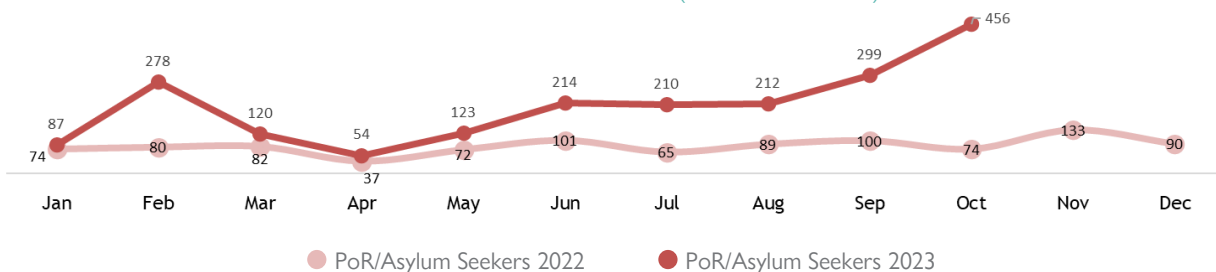


KEY FINDINGS AND LIMITATIONS

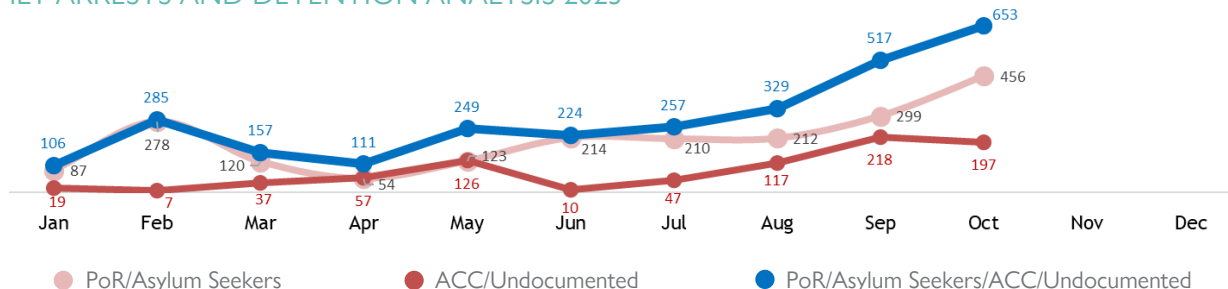
It is important to note that prior to 2023, there was no data collected on the arrest and detention of ACC holders or undocumented Afghan nationals. Since January 2023, IOM has started to collect this data, which should be considered indicative at this point. The figures, particularly of undocumented Afghan nationals, should be considered underreported..

- In comparing the rate of arrest and detention of PoR holders, as collected by UNHCR, for the months of October 2022 and October 2023, the rate has increased by six-fold.
- Since the issuance of the “plan”, the rate of arrest has been highest in the province of Balochistan, making up almost half of all arrests in Pakistan.

MONTHLY ARRESTS AND DETENTION TRENDS 2022-2023 (PoR HOLDERS)



MONTHLY ARRESTS AND DETENTION ANALYSIS 2023

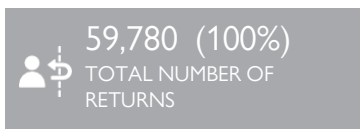




IOM DTM enumerator collecting flow monitoring data at Torkham border. [IOM Pakistan 2023]

KEY FINDINGS

- During the reporting period, UNHCR and IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) estimate a total of 59,780 Afghans returned through the Torkham and Chaman border crossing points to Afghanistan. Of these, 57,202 individuals spontaneously returned (96%), 1,567 individuals were facilitated by UNHCR (2%), and 1,011 individuals were forced to return (2%).
- The vast majority of the returnees were undocumented Afghans (95%), followed by ACC holders (3%) and PoR holders (2%).
- Fear of arrest (78%) was the most common reason among returnees to return to Afghanistan.
- Returnees were most likely to return from Punjab (35%) in Pakistan and intend to go to Nangarhar (23%), Kabul (21%) and Kandahar (21%) in Afghanistan.

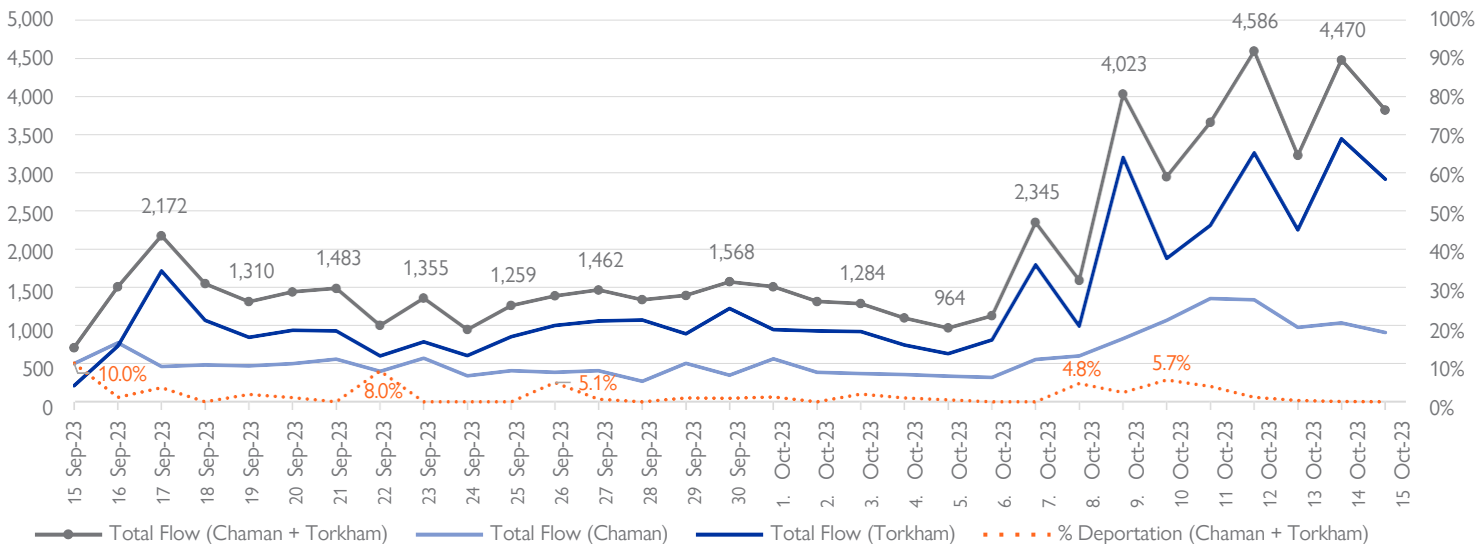


DOCUMENTATION CATEGORY OF RETURNÉES



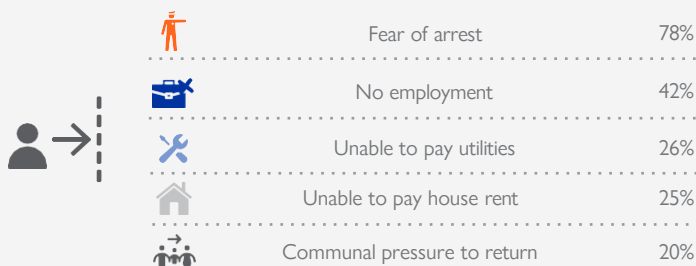
	Undocumented	95%
	ACC holder	3%
	PoR holder **	2%

TOTAL RETURNS AND % DEPORTATIONS | TORKHAM AND CHAMAN | 15 SEPTEMBER 2023 UNTIL 15 OCTOBER 2023



This section only applies to ACC holders and undocumented Afghans

PUSH FACTORS (Multiple answers, N = 2,650, can exceed 100%)



ORIGIN AND INTENDED DESTINATION (TOP 5, BY PROVINCE)

PROVINCE OF ORIGIN		PROVINCE OF DESTINATION	
1. Punjab	35%	1. Nangarhar	23%
2. Balochistan	23%	2. Kabul	21%
3. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	23%	3. Kandahar	21%
4. Sindh	14%	4. Kunduz	6%
5. Islamabad Capital Territory	4%	5. Laghman	4%