22 MAY 2024

UNHCR-IOM FLASH UPDATE #20

ARREST AND DETENTION | FLOW MONITORING (15 September 2023 – 18 May 2024)

INTRODUCTION

In response to the Ministry of Interior's (MoI) decision of 26 September 2023 to enact an "Illegal Foreigners' Repatriation Plan", 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.

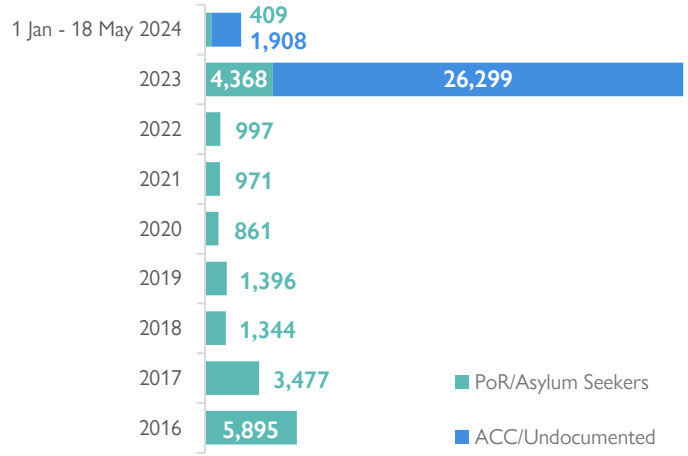
While the Government of Pakistan has yet to halt the "IFRP", the rate of arrest, detention, deportation, and returns has decreased significantly since its peak in October and November 2023. Furthermore, on 26 April 2024, the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) issued a notification that the validity of the POR card has been extended until 30 June 2024.

KEY FINDINGS AND LIMITATIONS

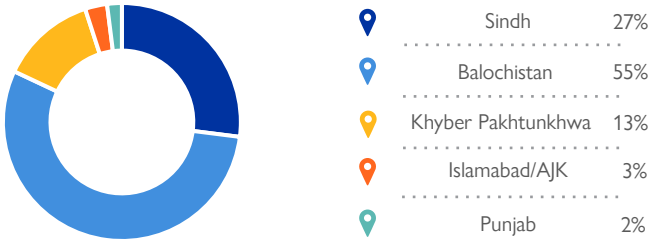
It is important to note that prior to 2023, there was no data collected on the arrest and detention of ACC holders or undocumented Afghan nationals. Since January 2023, IOM has started to collect this data, which should be considered indicative at this point. The figures, particularly of undocumented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

- The period from 5 to 18 May 2024 saw the overall reported rate of arrest and detention decrease by approximately 40 per cent, compared to the period from 21 April to 4 May 2024.
- From 5 to 18 May 2024, ACC holders and undocumented Afghans represented approximately 93 per cent of the total rate of arrests and detentions.
- Since the start of October 2023, the overall reported rate of arrest and detention remains highest for the province of Balochistan. During the period from 5 to 18 May 2024, approximately 85 per cent of the reported arrests and detentions occurred in Balochistan.
- Across Pakistan, the top three districts for arrest and detention between 1 January and 18 May 2024 are Chagai (Balochistan), Karachi (Sindh), and Pishin (Balochistan).

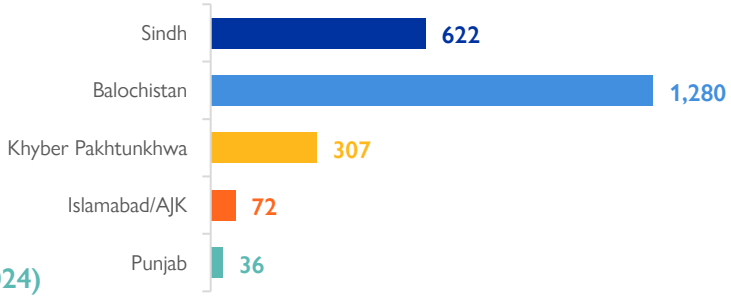
ARREST AND DETENTION BY YEARS



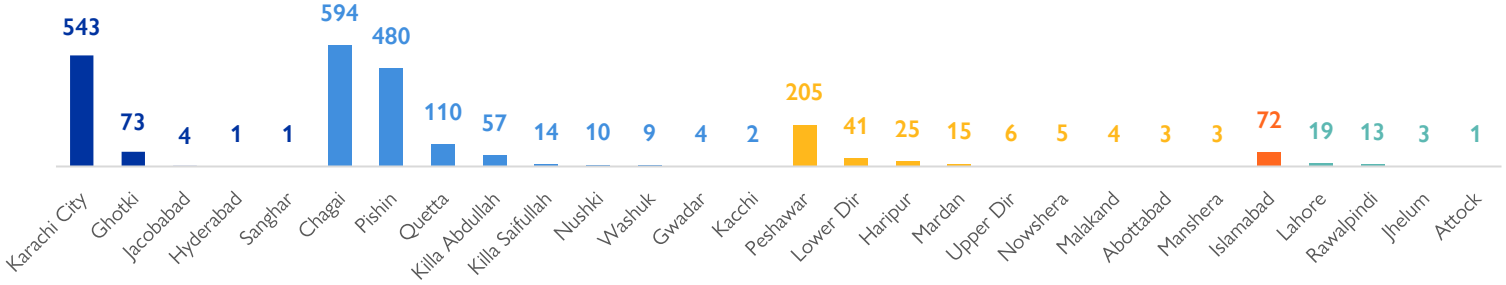
% OF ARRESTS BY LOCATION (1 January – 18 May 2024)



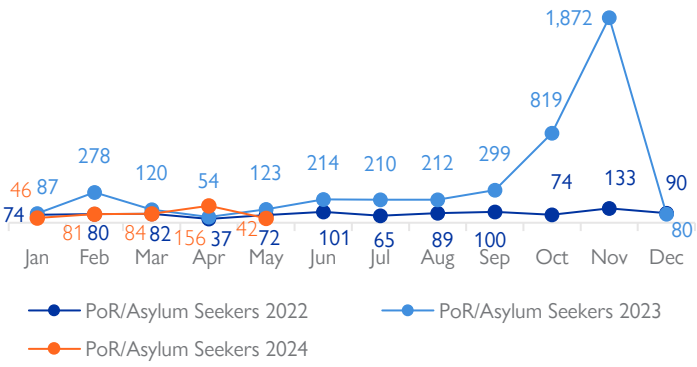
NO. OF ARRESTS BY PROVINCE (1 January – 18 May 2024)



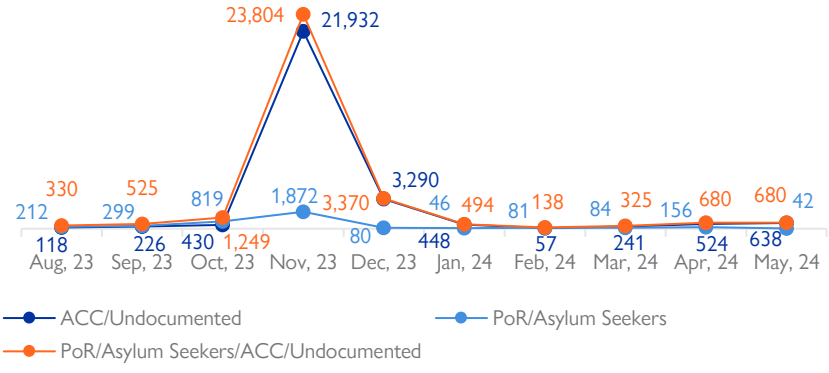
NO. OF ARRESTS BY DISTRICTS (1 January – 18 May 2024)



MONTHLY ARRESTS AND DETENTION TRENDS 2022 – 2024 (PoR HOLDERS)



MONTHLY ARRESTS AND DETENTION ANALYSIS 2023 – 2024



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ARREST AND DETENTION | FLOW MONITORING (15 September 2023 – 18 May 2024)

IOM enumerator collecting flow monitoring data at Chaman border. [IOM Pakistan 2024]

KEY FINDINGS

- During the last two weeks, UNHCR and IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) estimate 14,692 Afghans returned through the Torkham, Ghulam Khan (located in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Chaman, Badini and Bahramcha (located in Balochistan) border crossing points to Afghanistan.
- Cumulatively, from 15 September 2023 to 18 May 2024, 589,720 individuals have returned.
- The number of returns in the last two weeks (5 - 18 May; 14,692) decreased by 17 per cent compared to returns in the two weeks prior to that (21 April - 4 May; 17,712). The number of returns during this reporting period has seen a slight fall compared to the previous report, however, still surpassing the weekly return figures recorded since January 2024.
- Most of the returnees were undocumented Afghans (89%), followed by PoR holders (9%) and ACC holders (2%). Majority of the POR returns are facilitated by UNHCR.
- Vulnerable persons including chronically ill people, elderly individuals, persons with disabilities, and others account for 4 per cent of the population.
- Fear of arrest (89%) remains the most common reason to return to Afghanistan among undocumented/ACC holders while PoR holders cite social economic challenges.
- Returnees were most likely to return from Quetta (19%) and Peshawar (18%) in Pakistan and intend to go to Kandahar (30%), Nangarhar (29%) and Kabul (15%) in Afghanistan.

CUMULATIVE – 2023 AND 2024

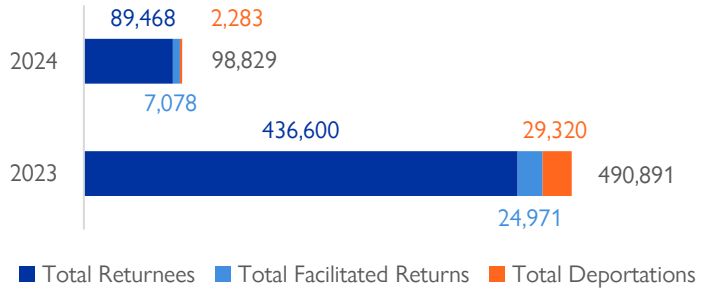
589,720 (100%) TOTAL NUMBER OF RETURNS

526,068 (89%) TOTAL RETURNEES

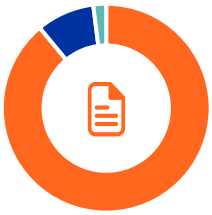
32,049 (6%)* TOTAL FACILITATED PoR RETURNEES

31,603 (5%) TOTAL DEPORTATIONS

Period	Total Number of Returns	Total Returnees	Total Facilitated Returnees	Total Deportees
15 Sep – 31 Dec 2023	490,891	436,600	24,971	29,320
1 Jan – 18 May 2024	98,829	89,468	7,078	2,283
Total	**589,720**	**526,068**	**32,049**	**31,603**



DOCUMENTATION – TOTAL NUMBER OF RETURNEES



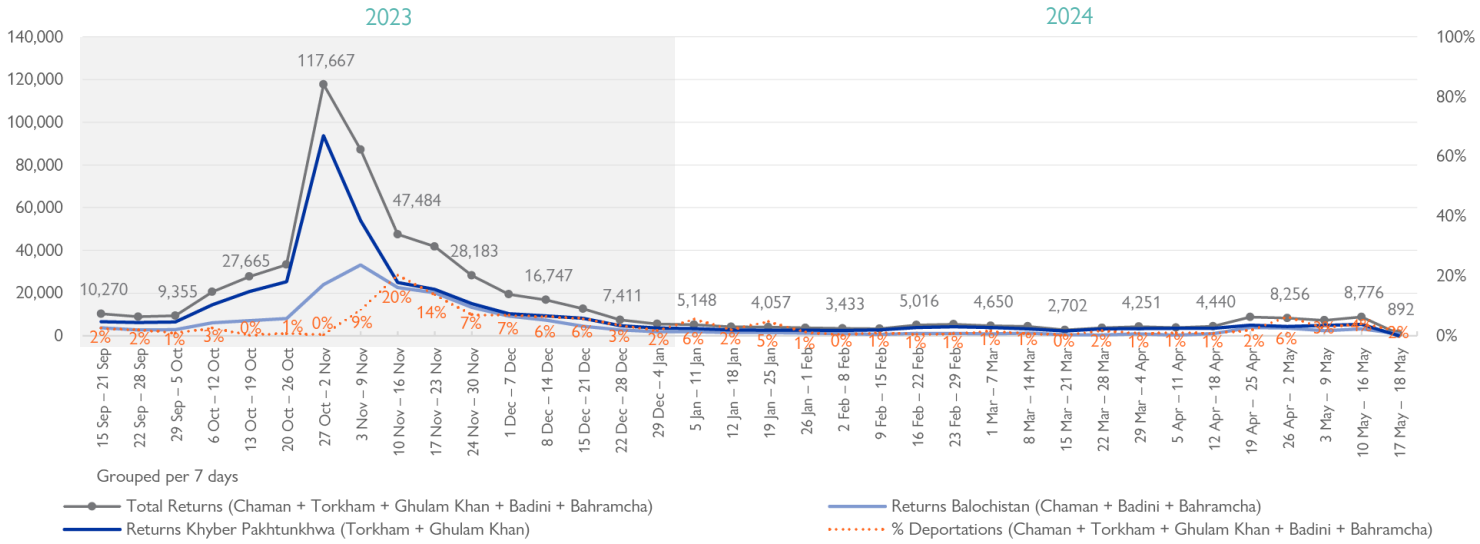
Undocumented	89%
PoR holder **	9%
ACC	2%

DOCUMENTATION – TOTAL DEPORTEES

Undocumented	94%
PoR holder **	6%

This section only applies to PoR holders and undocumented Afghans.

TOTAL RETURNS AND % DEPORTATIONS | 15 SEPTEMBER 2023 – 18 MAY 2024



*The number refers to facilitated PoR returns through VRCs who crossed the border during the reporting period.

** This figure refers to PoR holders based on interviews conducted with returnees in Afghanistan.

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UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency | IOM UN MIGRATION

ARREST AND DETENTION | FLOW MONITORING (15 September 2023 – 18 May 2024)

This section only applies to ACC holders and undocumented Afghans

TYPE OF VULNERABILITY

(Expressed as a percentage of the total numbers of vulnerable persons)

- (7,660) 40% Serious Medical Conditions
- (5,868) 31% Elderly (60+)
- (1,906) 10% Persons with Disabilities (PwD)
- (1,419) 7% Female Widows
- (772) 4% Pregnant Women
- (1,612) 8% Other

AGE AND GENDER

Female		Male
49.7% 202,252		50.3% 204,670
(10.5%) 42,676	0 – 4	40,805 (10.0%)
(18.7%) 76,095	5 – 17	82,028 (20.2%)
(19.1%) 77,599	18 – 59	75,554 (18.6%)
(1.4%) 5,882	60+	6,283 (1.5%)

REASONS FOR LEAVING PAKISTAN (TOP 5)

(Multiple answers can exceed 100%, N = 23,436)

Fear of arrest	89%
Loss of livelihood	20%
Communal pressure	14%
Unable to pay utilities	6%
Unable to pay house rent	6%

This section only applies to PoR holders

TYPE OF VULNERABILITY

(Expressed as a percentage of the total numbers of vulnerable persons)

- (763) 41% Serious Medical Conditions
- (331) 18% Elderly (60+)
- (192) 10% Women at Risk
- (191) 10% Persons with Disabilities (PwD)
- (373) 21% Other

AGE AND GENDER

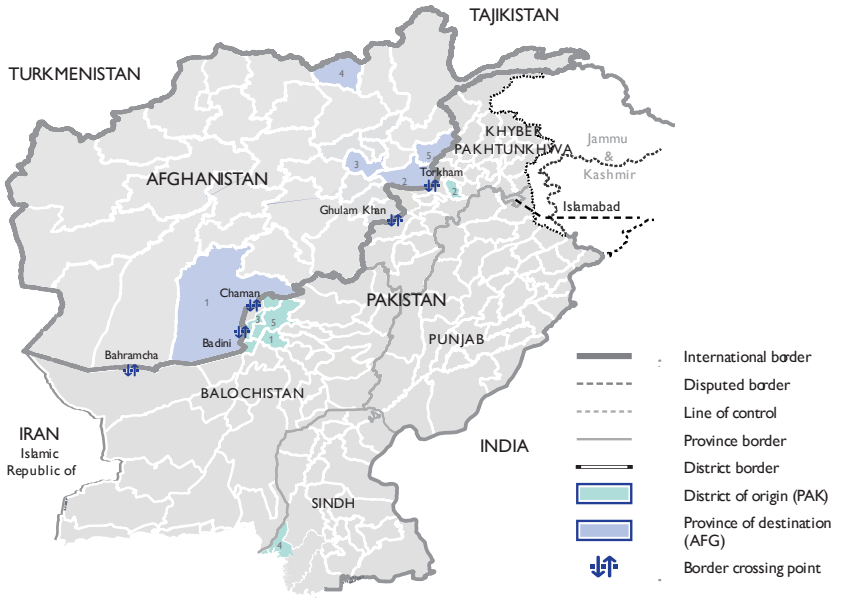
Female		Male
49.0% 15,691		51.0% 16,356
(9.3%) 2,987	0 – 4	2,826 (8.8%)
(19.5%) 6,250	5 – 17	6,501 (20.3%)
(19.1%) 6,123	18 – 59	6,485 (20.2%)
(1.1%) 331	60+	545 (1.7%)

REASONS FOR LEAVING PAKISTAN (TOP 5)

(Multiple answers can exceed 100%, N = 2,816)

Socio-economic challenges	30%
Fear of harassment/arrest	22%
Strict border entry requirement	21%
Uncertainty related to PoR card extension	9%
Other	19%

DISTRICT OF ORIGIN IN PAKISTAN AND PROVINCE OF DESTINATION IN AFGHANISTAN



DISTRICT OF ORIGIN (TOP 5)

1. Quetta	19%
2. Peshawar	18%
3. Killa Abdullah	9%
4. Karachi	8%
5. Pishin	5%

PROVINCE OF DESTINATION (TOP 5)

1. Kandahar	30%
2. Nangarhar	29%
3. Kabul	15%
4. Kunduz	4%
5. Kunar	3%

Disclaimer:

Dotted line represents approximately the line of control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IOM or United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. This document was produced jointly by IOM and UNHCR. The opinions expressed in the report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IOM or UNHCR. The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout the report do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

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