

Key figures



825,600

total returns¹



118,400

UNHCR-assisted



39,400

deportations

655,800

79%

114,000

96%

38,100

97%



Out of the overall returns **50%** are female, of which **29%** are girls. **59%** are children.

Blue figures above correspond to the period of 15 Sep. 2023 to 5 Feb. 2025, while the **navy figures** refer only to those who arrived from 1 Nov. 2023 to 5 Feb. 2025.

Context

Over 825,600 Afghans have returned since 15 Sep. 2023 as a consequence of the Government of Pakistan's "Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan."

In **January 2025**, some 18,300 individuals returned to Afghanistan, out of which some **1,000 were deported**. An uptick in arrests of Afghan nationals in the Islamabad Capital Territory and Rawalpindi has caused significant distress, with reports of Afghan nationals of various documentation statuses being rounded up.

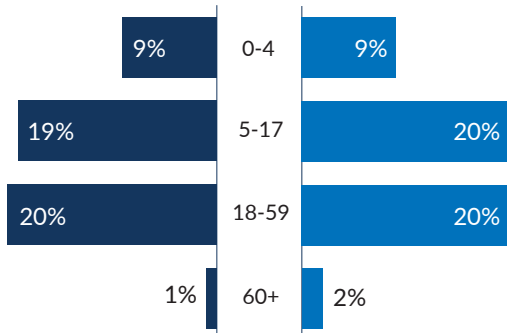
Out of the **1,000 more than 800 Afghan nationals, among them women and children, have been deported from Islamabad and Rawalpindi alone**. During the same reporting period, **some 1,245 Afghans were arrested or detained**. This is more than double compared to arrest/detention cases recorded in January 2024. Looking at 2024 trends, there is a rise in deportations since the last quarter.

Returns assisted by UNHCR Afghanistan

49% of assisted are **Female**



51% of assisted are **Male**



Out of those assisted **2.5%** have disabilities

Gender breakdown of head of households

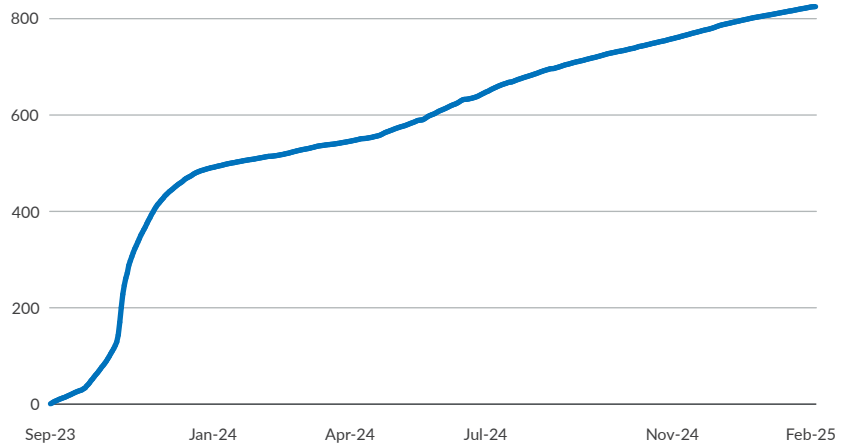
31% are **Female**



69% are **Male**

Total returns since 15 September 2023²

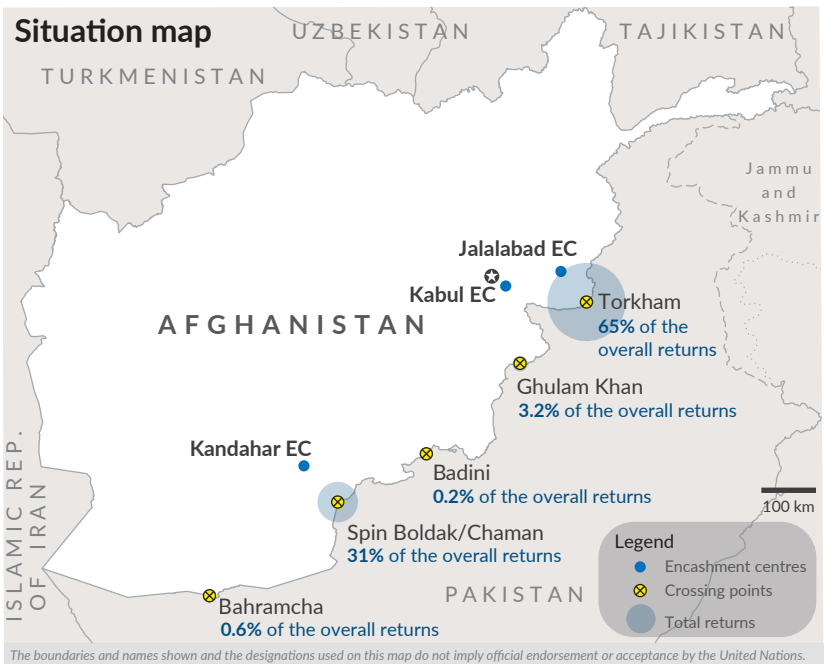
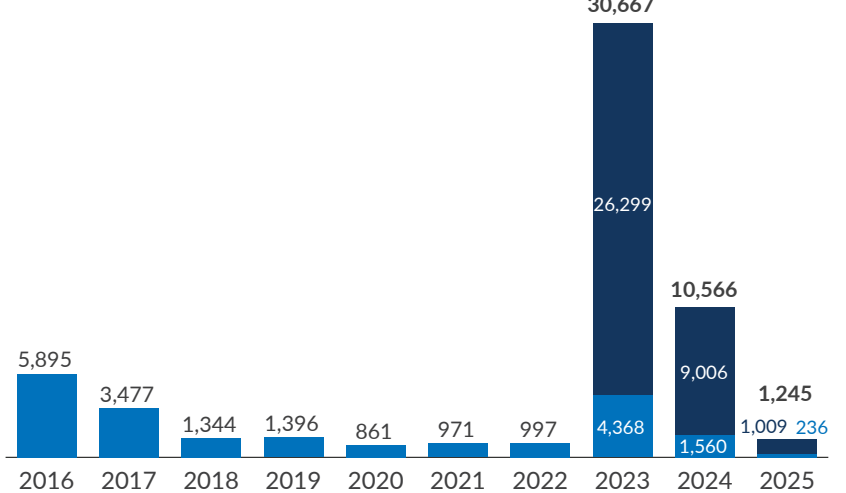
Number of people (thousands)



Arrests and detentions (from 2016 up to 31 January 2025)

■ Asylum seekers and holders of Proof of Registration (PoR)

■ Undocumented or holder of Afghan Citizen Card (ACC)³



¹ An umbrella term that includes all returns including deportations, assisted Voluntary Repatriation (VolRep) and other returns of Afghans of all statuses such as PoR cardholders, ACC holders, and the undocumented.

² Return figures from 31 January 2025 onwards may fluctuate till validation process is concluded.

³ Prior to 2023, there was no data collected on the arrest and detention of ACC holders or undocumented Afghan nationals.

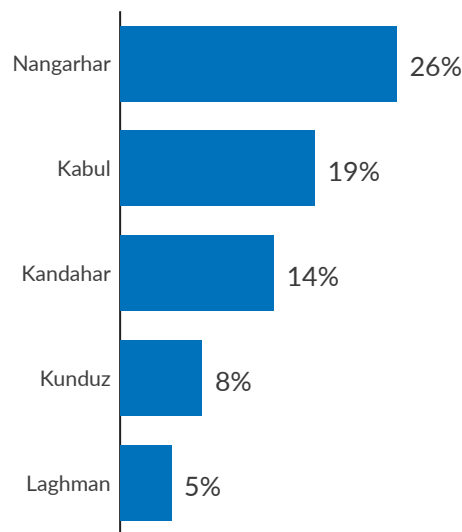
Returns assisted by UNHCR Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, UNHCR continued to biometrically process and provide cash assistance to PoR card holders and their nuclear family members, UNHCR slip holders, asylum seeker certificate holders and other Protection referrals. This support aimed to alleviate the difficulties faced by Afghan nationals who returned home hastily, and often largely unprepared due to the circumstances in Pakistan.

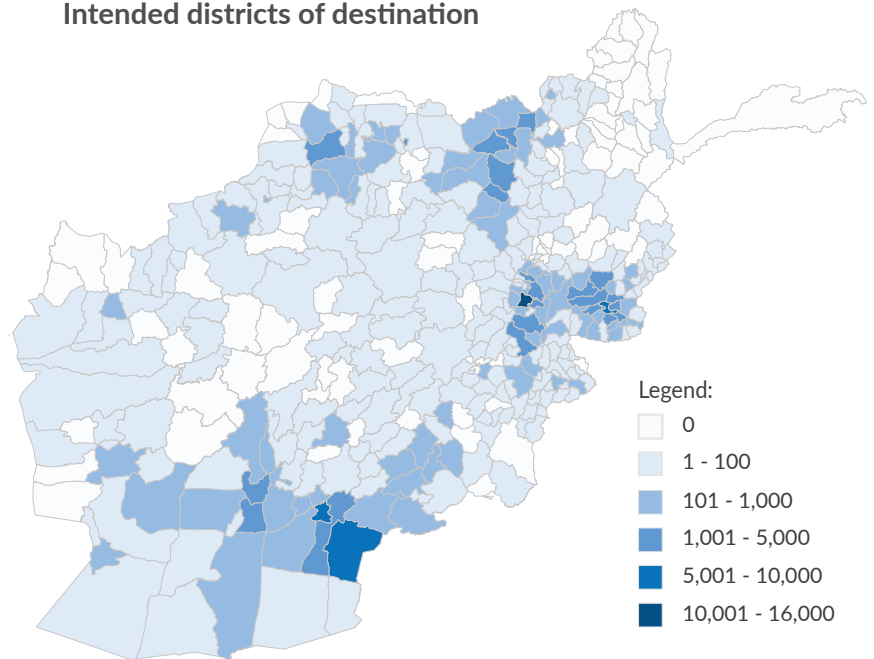
Since 15 September 2023, some 118,400 individuals returning from Pakistan have been provided with cash assistance in Kabul, Kandahar and Jalalabad encashment centres, including over 75,600 PoR cardholders. Out of the assisted, some 2.5% are individuals with disabilities and some 3,100 PoR card holders, UNHCR slip holders and Asylum certificate holders were deported.

The district with the highest percentage of intended return is Kabul (12%), followed by Kandahar (7%), Bihsod (6%), Jalalabad (6%), and Spinboldak (5%). Almost one-third of the households assisted are headed by women. 33% of them intend to return to five provincial capitals (Kabul, Jalalabad, Kandahar, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Kunduz).

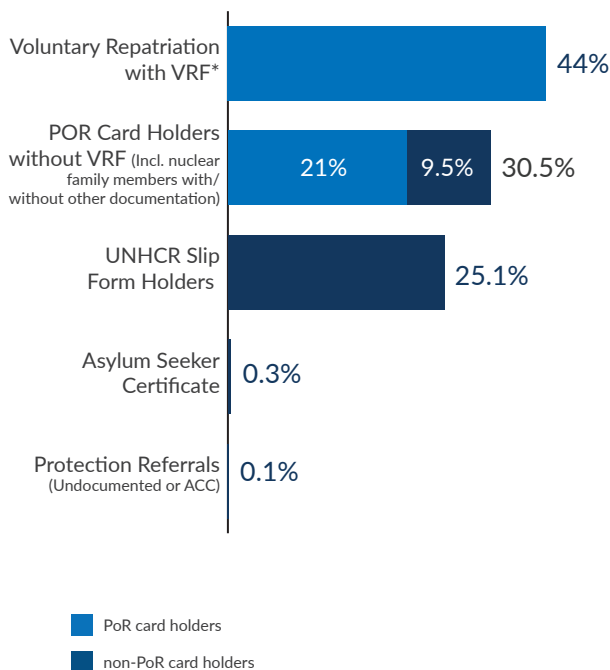
Top 5 provinces of intended destination



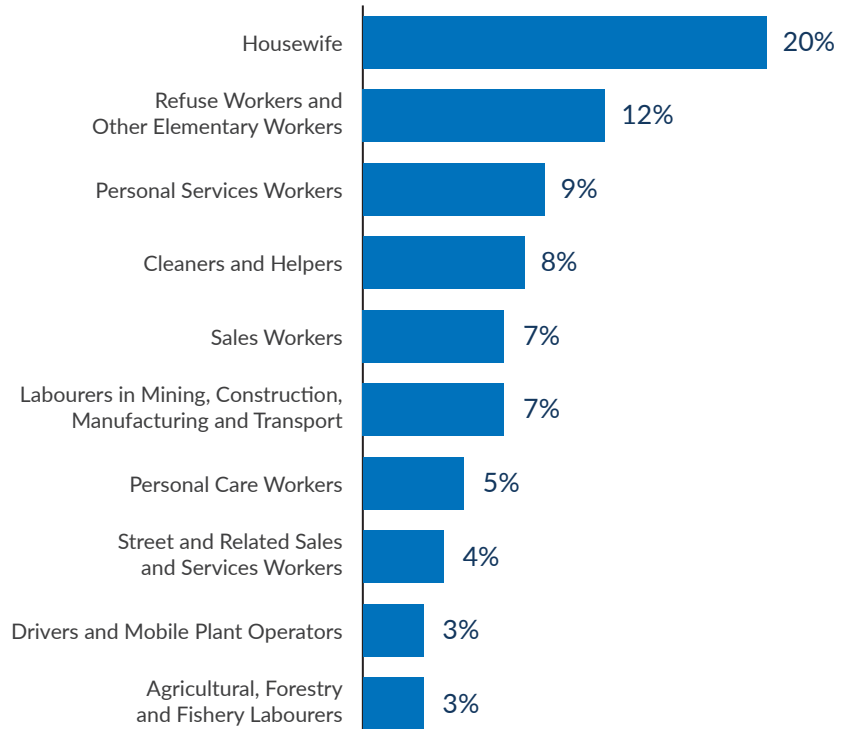
Intended districts of destination



Documentation status



Top 10 occupation of the head of households

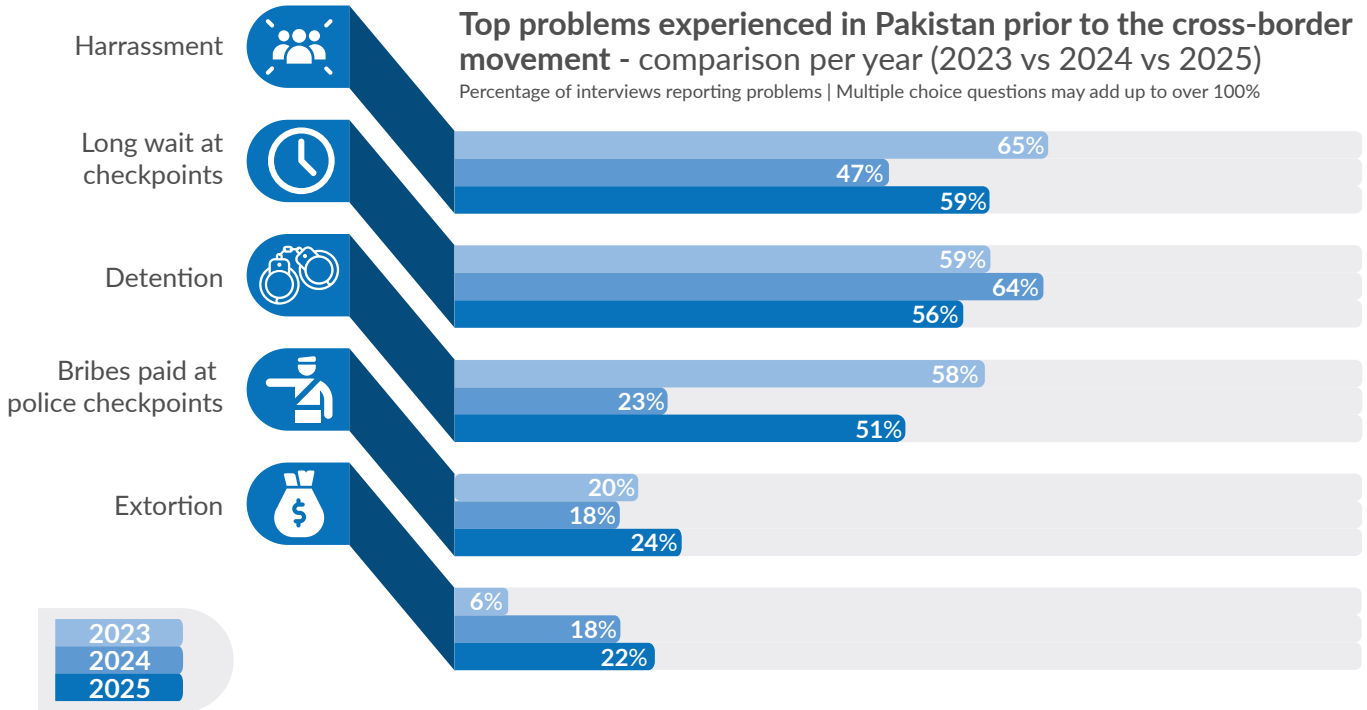


* Voluntary Repatriation Form.

Border Protection Monitoring

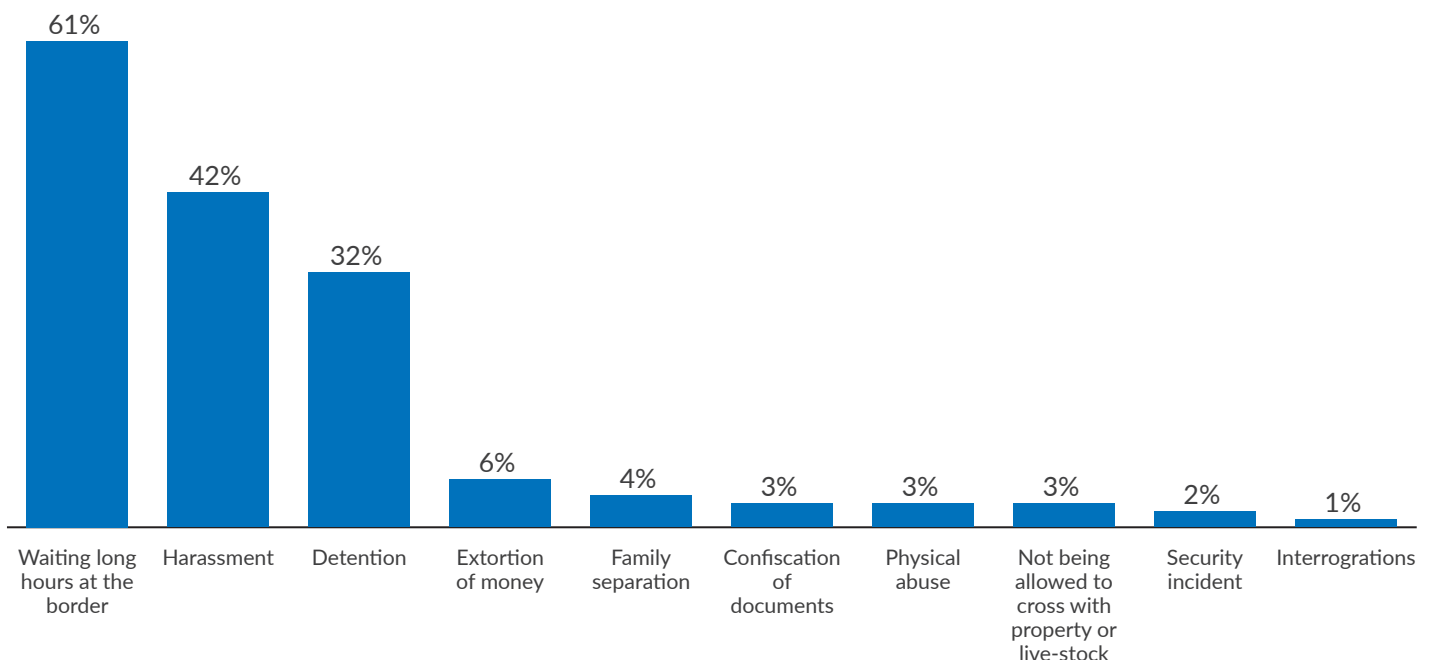
UNHCR and its partner Wadan in Afghanistan have scaled up protection activities at the border. Daily presence consists of Border Protection monitoring through interviews with returnees including deportees in order to identify protection concerns and risks, as well as their intended areas of return in Afghanistan. Five help desks have been set up to boost protection screening interviews, identification and referral of individuals to be assisted by UNHCR.

Since 12 November 2023, the most reported problems experienced prior to the cross-border movement have consistently been harassment, waiting long hours at checkpoints and detention.



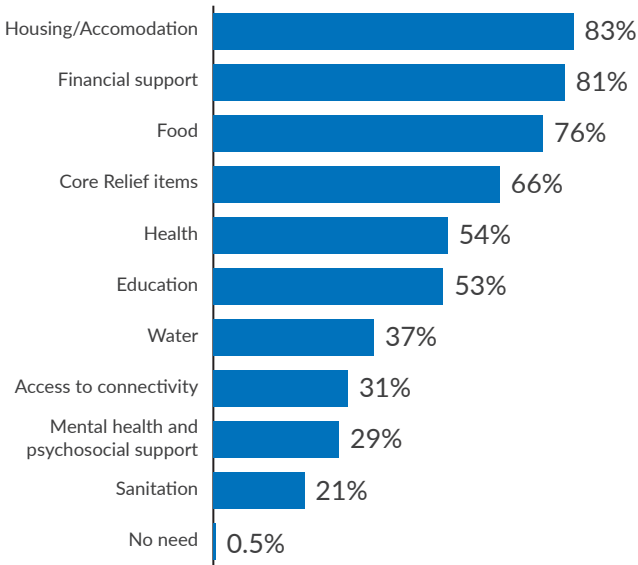
Problems experienced at the Pakistan border point

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



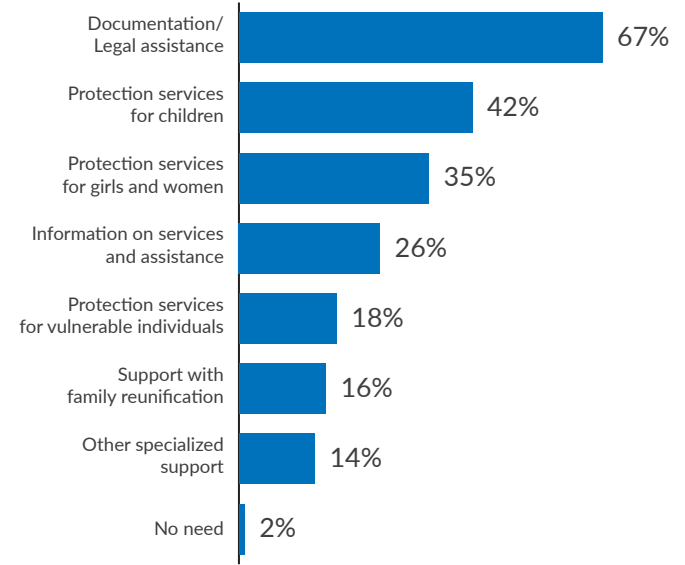
Needs upon arrival in final destination

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



Protection services required in final destination

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



Protection Analysis - using natural language processing

In addition to the border monitoring interviews, returnees who are enrolled and provided with cash assistance are asked to elaborate on topics that they would like to highlight to UNHCR. The descriptive experiences and perceptions shared were analysed with Artificial Intelligence using natural language processing for semantic similarities and patterns.

The analysis done with a word count of over 39,000, found 11 detailed clusters shown below. These 11 clusters can be broadly categorized into experiences leaving Pakistan, specific vulnerabilities in the household and requests for support to meet needs in Afghanistan. Amongst the 11 clusters, shelter and food needs, in need of service other than protection, paying bribes and experiences of being arrested were the top four most highlighted.

The top highlighted clusters vary with documentation status. For UNHCR Slip holders specifically, paying bribes was the most highlighted cluster followed by needing services other than protection. For those without documentation, in need of support other than protection services was the most frequently mentioned followed by bribes and female heads of households at risk. The protection risks faced by single women was also the most frequently mentioned by women heads of household.

■ Experience leaving Pakistan ■ Household vulnerabilities ■ Support needs

