UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency | CORE

PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN

Returns Emergency Response

as of 13 December 2025

Key figures

1.7M total returns[1]

931,700 53%

582,300 UNHCR-assisted

462,800 79%

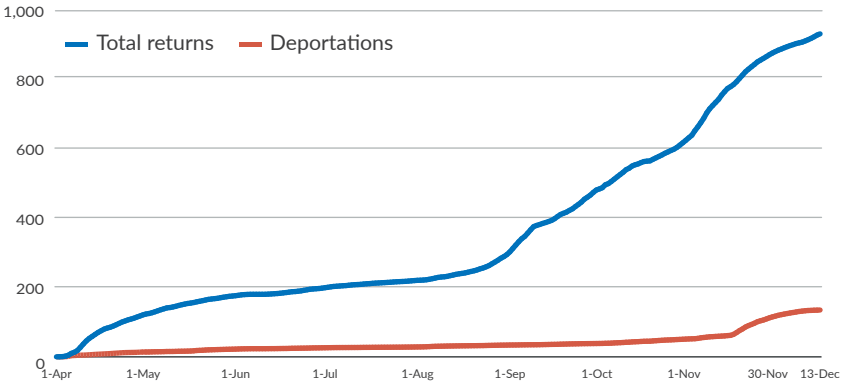
175,800 deportations

135,200 77%

Blue figures above correspond to the period of 15 Sep. 2023 to 13 December 2025, while the **navy figures** refer only to those who arrived from 1 April 2025 to 13 December 2025.

Total returns (cumulative since 1 April 2025)

Number of people in thousands



Context

On 7 March 2025, the Government of Pakistan announced the resumption of the 'Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan', initially targeting Afghan Citizenship Card (ACC) holders, who were instructed to leave voluntarily by 31 March or face deportation from 1 April. On 31 July, the Government expanded the plan to also include Afghan refugees holding Proof of Registration (PoR) cards who have been granted one-month grace period ending on 31 August.

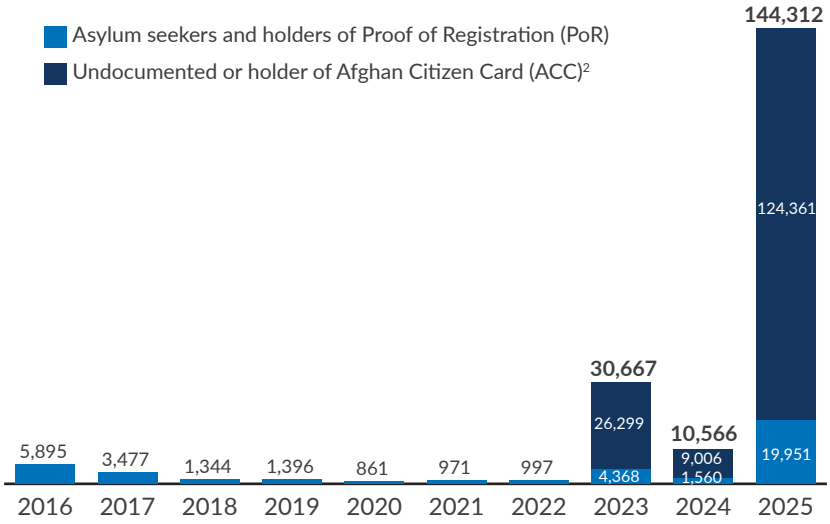
Since April, approximately 932,000 Afghans have returned from Pakistan to Afghanistan, including more than 180,000 in September and around 249,000 in November. November recorded the highest number of returns of any month in 2025 and, since September 2023, represents the second-highest monthly return figure, following November 2023 (262,000). In addition, November saw an unprecedented number of deportations, with nearly 70,000 individuals deported—the highest monthly total recorded to date.

Since 1 April, over 144,300 individuals have been arrested and detained, including PoR cardholders. Since September, over 17,000 PoR card holders have been arrested.

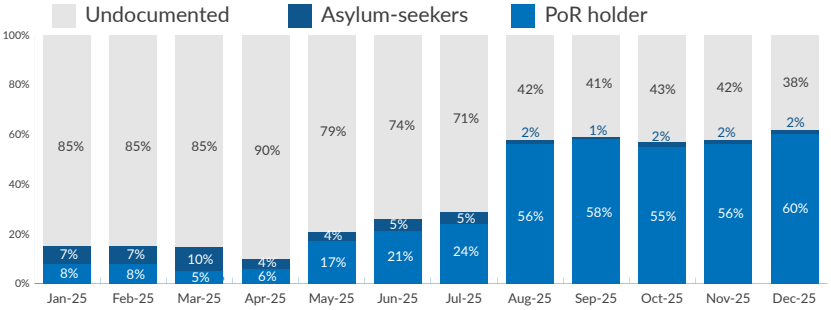
As of 13 December 2025, 942,200 Afghans have returned from Pakistan in 2025, bringing the total returns from Iran and Pakistan to 2.8 million in 2025.

UNHCR reiterates concern that many Afghans —regardless of status—face serious protection risks in Afghanistan due to the current human rights situation, especially women and girls.

Afghan arrests and detentions in Pakistan (as of 13 Dec. 2025)

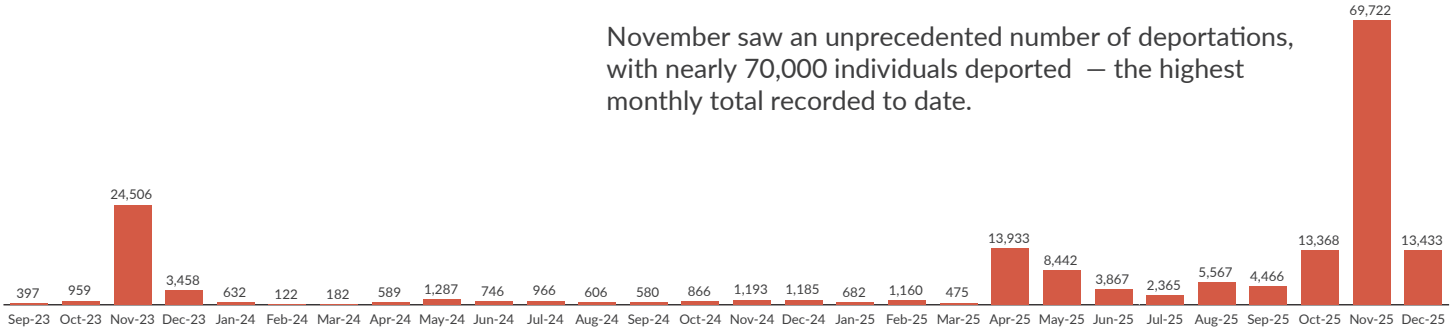


Overall returns by documentation (as of 13 December 2025)



Deportations since 15 September 2023 (as of 13 December 2025)

November saw an unprecedented number of deportations, with nearly 70,000 individuals deported — the highest monthly total recorded to date.



The UN in Afghanistan, including UNHCR, has adopted a harmonized approach to reporting returnee figures, using consolidated data and country-of-arrival figures. The change in UNHCR figures reflects this joint methodology, effective October 2025. Data cleaning efforts undertaken by the participating agencies may result in minor retroactive adjustments to previously reported data.

[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, excluding passport holders.*

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

Sources: UNHCR, IOM

Returns profiles

Out of the total returns from 1 April 2025,
49% are female, of which **28%** are girls.
57% are children.

- Hazara (2%)
- Pashtoon (92%)
- Tajik (4%)
- Uzbek (1%)
- Others (1%)

Education levels
refers to HoHs

- No education (65%)
- Primary school (Grades 1 - 6) (7%)
- Secondary school (Grades 7 - 14) (24%)
- University degree (2%)
- Madrasa (2%)

Occupational skills
refers to HoHs

- No skills (55%)
- Unskilled daily wage labour (12%)
- Shopkeeping (12%)
- Agriculture (15%)
- Livestock herders (6%)

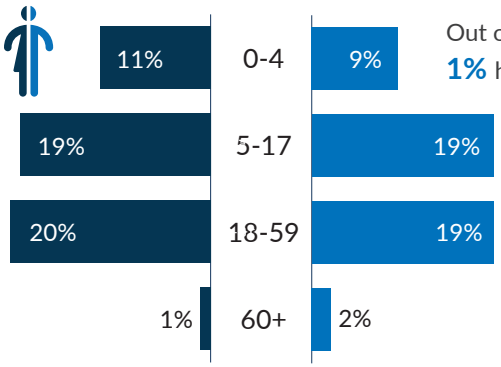
Returns assisted by UNHCR Afghanistan

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, over 586,800 individuals returning from Pakistan have been provided with cash assistance in Kabul, Kandahar and Jalalabad encashment centres. Over 467,300 have been assisted since 1 of April 2025.

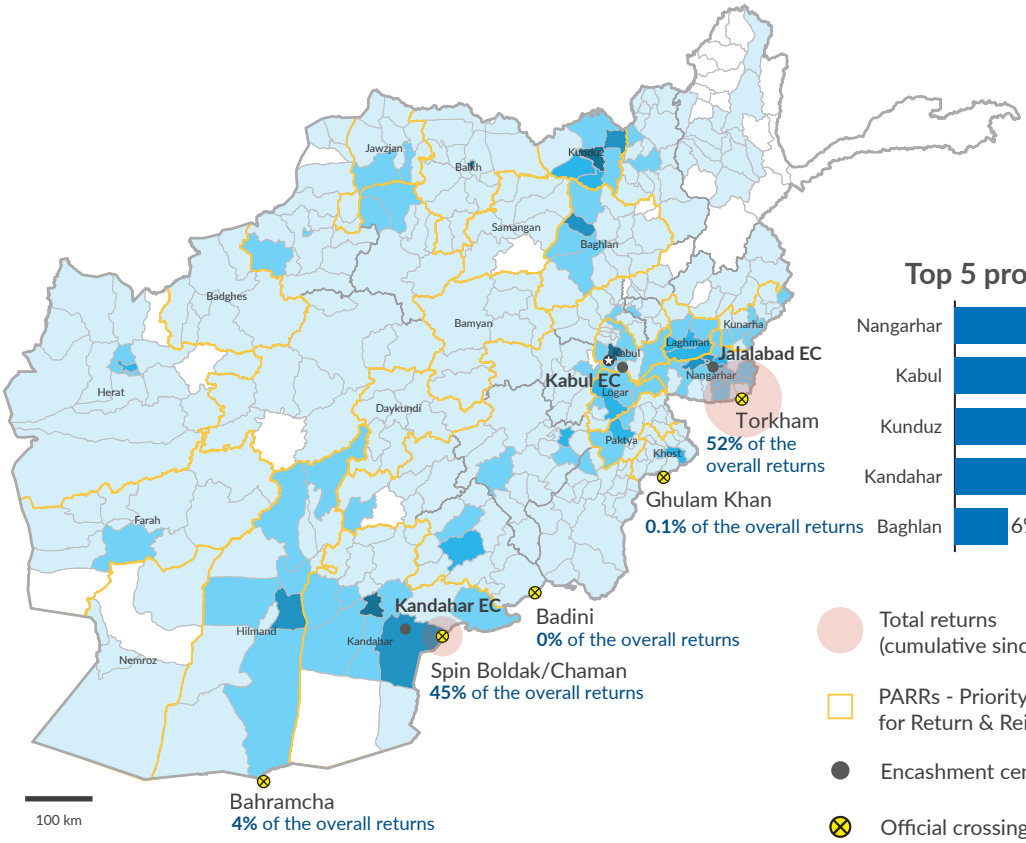
In November 2025 alone, UNHCR assisted over 115,000 returnees, while in December over 11,100 have been assisted so far.

79% of the assisted are **women & children**
30% are **Female headed households**

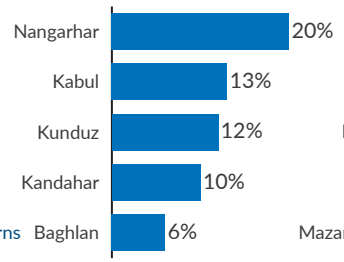


Out of those assisted
1% have disabilities

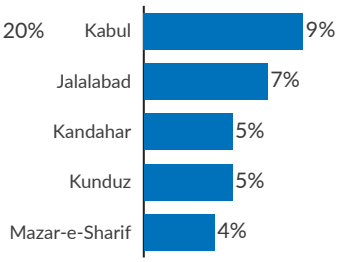
Afghanistan map - overall returns intended districts of destination



Top 5 provinces



Top 5 districts



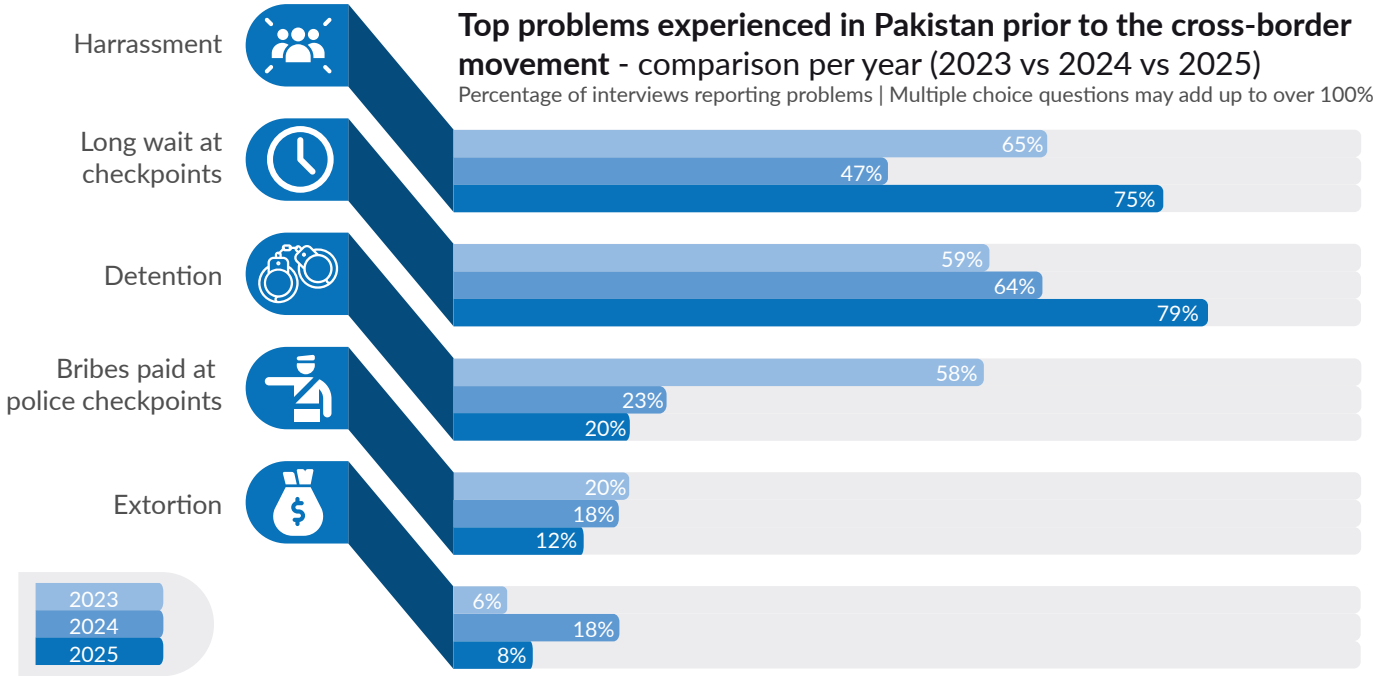
- Total returns (cumulative since 1 Jan 2025)
- PARRs - Priority Areas for Return & Reintegration
- Encashment centre (EC)
- Official crossing points

Intended returns per district:
- 0
- 1 - 1,000
- 1,001 - 5,000
- 5,001 - 10,000
- 10,001 - 30,000
- 40,001 - 90,000

Source: 2025 UNHCR Inflow Border Monitoring Interviews
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

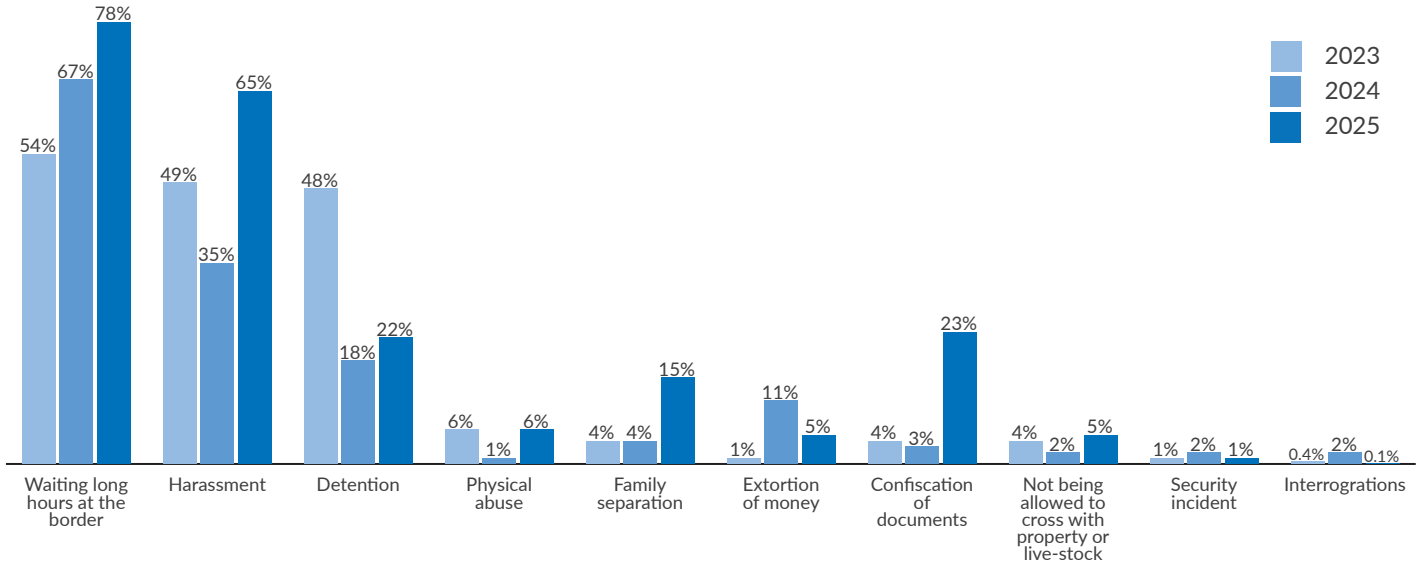
Border Protection Monitoring

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. Help desks have been set up to boost protection screening interviews, identification and referral of individuals to be assisted by UNHCR.



Problems experienced at the Pakistan border point

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



Top 3 Needs upon arrival

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

- **85%** Housing Accomodation
- **83%** Food
- **78%** Financial Support

Top 3 Protection services requested

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

- **92%** Documentation / Legal assistance
- **35%** Information on services and assistance
- **27%** Protection services for children