UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency | CORE

IRAN-AFGHANISTAN

Returns Emergency Response

as of 30 July 2025

Key figures

1,763,700
total returns[1]

1,048,100
deportations

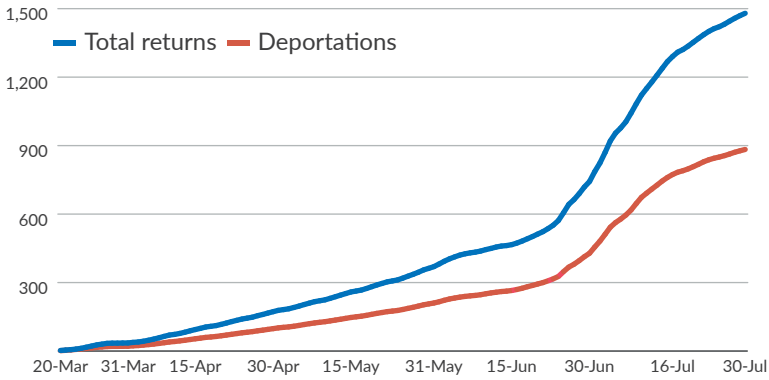
1,479,800
84%

59%
of total returns are **deportations**

The **blue figures** above correspond to the period 1 January 2025 to 30 July 2025. While the **navy figures** refer only to those who arrived from 20 March 2025 to 30 July 2025.

Total returns (cumulative since 20 March 2025)

Number of people in thousands



Context

Following headcount slip expiry on 20 March 2025, the Government of Iran launched a regularization/return scheme for the two million affected Afghans. Slip holders must undergo government assessments to determine whether they are allowed to remain.

Daily returns increased sharply after 13 June, with further spikes observed after 25 June. However, the trend has shown a decline over the past two weeks. **Between 24 and 30 July the average daily returns was 11,300 which is a 28% decrease from 15,700 in the previous week.** Despite this drop, the current level remains significantly higher than the first quarter of 2025, when the daily average stood at approximately 3,500.

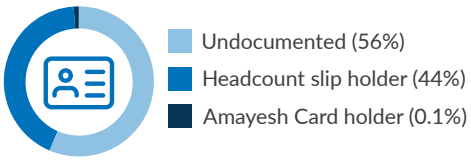
As of 30 July, some 1.48 million Afghans returned from Iran since 20 March 2025 and more than **1.76 million since the beginning of the year** bringing the total returns from both Iran and Pakistan to over 2.1 million in 2025.

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.

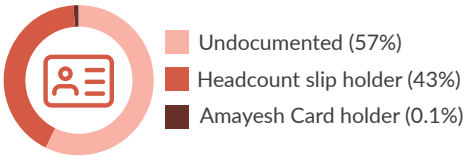
Returns by documentation status

From 24 to 30 July headcounted slip holders made up 58% of total returnees—confirming the increasing trend observed since 13 June. A similar trend was observed in deportations, with **59% of total deportees being headcounted slip holders** during the same reporting period. Looking at the broader period since 20 March 2025, approximately 44% of total returnees and 43% of total deportees are headcount slip holders.

Total returns



Deportations

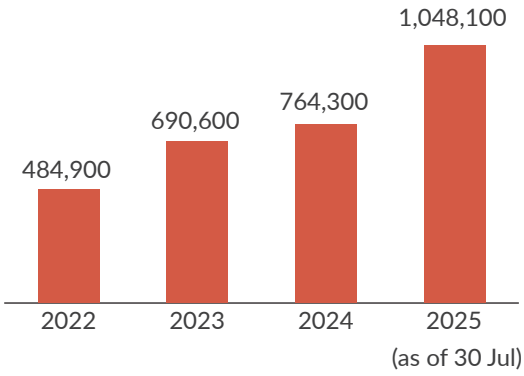


Deportations

In 2025, 1.05 million returns — or 59% of the total — were deportations. Of these, over 622,500 Afghans were deported after 13 June.

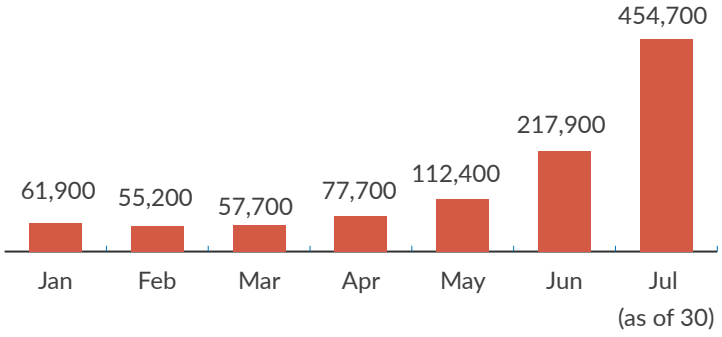
During the reporting period from 24 to 30 July, 45,200 individuals were deported, 82% of whom crossed through the Islam Qala border point and 18% through Zaranji. The proportion of deportees decreased to 57%, compared to 59% in the previous week and 64% in the first week of July.

Yearly deportations



Monthly deportations in 2025

In the first 30 days of July, 454,700 Afghans were deported — more than double compared to the entire month of June, which previously had the highest monthly deportation figures in the past three years.



[1] Includes deportations, assisted VolRep and other returns of Afghans of all statuses such as Amayesh cardholders and the undocumented, excluding passport holders.

Sources: UNHCR, DoRR

Returns profiles (since 20 March 2025)

Since the beginning of 2025, there have been **significant shifts in the proportion of returnees traveling as families rather than individuals.** The percentage of family returns rose substantially from 11% in Q1 to 40% between April and 12 June. During the conflict period from 13 to 24 June, family returns increased sharply to 67%, **continuing to rise to 82% after the ceasefire** on 25 June. In the reporting period, 24 to 30 July, 74% of returnees were travelling as families.

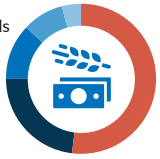
67% have returned as **families**

- Tajik (50%)
- Pashtoon (23%)
- Hazara (13%)
- Uzbek (10%)
- Others (4%)

Education levels
refers to HoHs

- No education (66%)
- Primary school (Grades 1 - 6) (11%)
- Secondary school (Grades 7 - 14) (20%)
- University degree (2%)
- Madrasa (1%)

Occupational skills
refers to HoHs



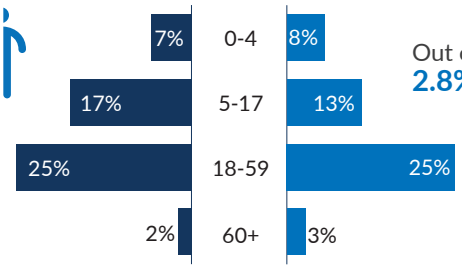
- No skills (53%)
- Unskilled daily wage labour (22%)
- Masonry (12%)
- Agriculture (9%)
- Tailoring (4%)

Returns assisted by UNHCR Afghanistan

UNHCR Afghanistan has scaled up its response capacity at the Islam Qala and Zaranj border crossings. First line protection and humanitarian response delivered by UNHCR teams include protection assistance, referrals to specialized services, transportation, and core relief items. Cash assistance is also provided by UNHCR's supplier HesabPay, ensuring that returnees can access emergency cash assistance immediately on arrival, and avoiding the need to travel to nearest UNHCR Encashment Centers. As of the reporting week, UNHCR and its partners have constructed four shade structures in Zaranji and are repairing a water reservoir to better protect returnees against heat-related risks in high summer temperatures.

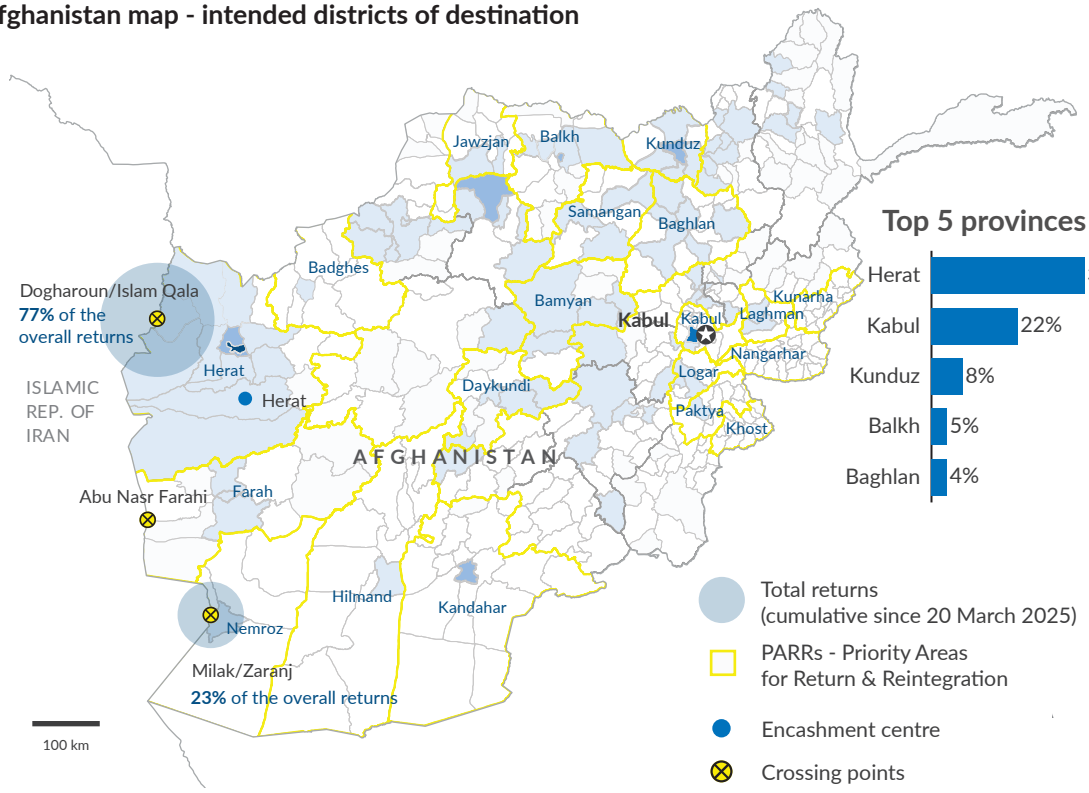
In addition to the cash assistance , UNHCR supports the returnees with emergency relief items including blankets, plastic sheet, kitchen set, jerry cans, hygiene kits and hot meals in Islam Qala. **From 27 June to 30 July, 23,500 returning households covering 164,500 Afghan returnees were supported with Core Relief Items (CRIs) and 85,700 received hot meals. Over 19,600 returnees were assisted with transportation from Islam Qala and Zaranj to main provinces of return.**

72% of assisted are **women & children**
35% are **Female headed households**

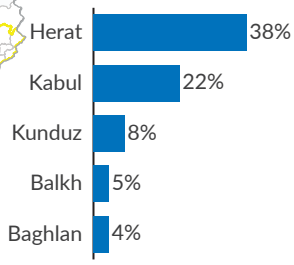


Out of those assisted **2.8%** have disabilities

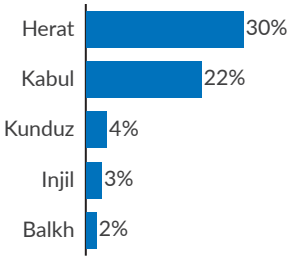
Afghanistan map - intended districts of destination



Top 5 provinces



Top 5 districts



- Total returns (cumulative since 20 March 2025)
- PARRs - Priority Areas for Return & Reintegration
- Encashment centre
- Crossing points

Intended returns per district
- 0
- 0.1 - 2%
- 2 - 5%
- 5 - 25%
- 25 - 30%

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

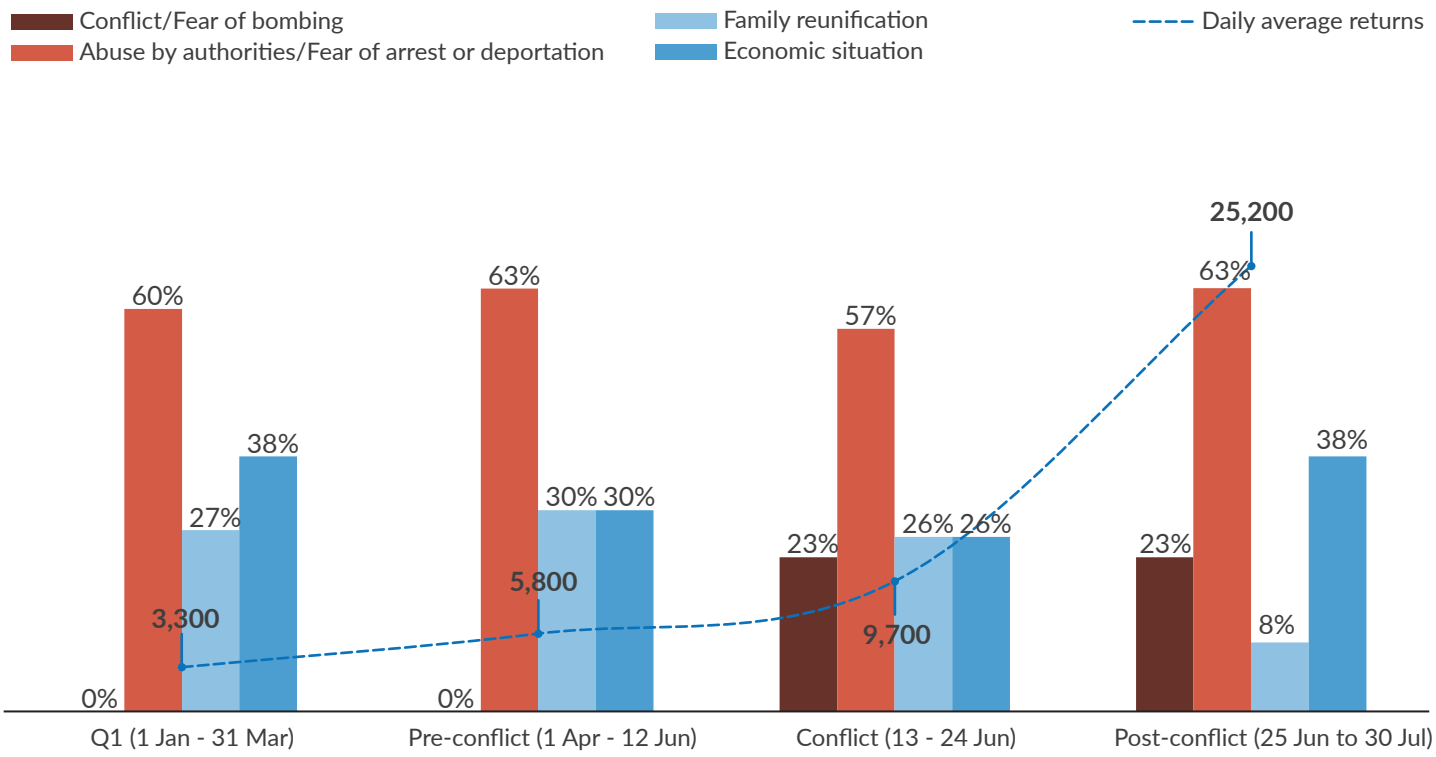
Border Protection Monitoring

UNHCR and its border partners WADAN and CHA in Afghanistan have scaled up protection activities at the border (Islam Qala, Zaranj and Abo Nasr Farahi) with Iran. Daily presence consists of Border Protection Monitoring through interviews with returnees and 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 at the border and in the Encashment Centers. Since 13 June, deportations from Iran increased, also coinciding with a Government-announced 6 July deadline for holders of expired Headcount slips to exit Iran.

Despite the significant decrease in the daily average number of returns compared to previous weeks, border protection monitoring in Afghanistan continues to highlight serious protection challenges faced in Iran by those Afghan returnees. Returnees contiue to report instances of discrimination and mistreatment, including instances of inflated prices for Afghan customers, increased harassment of Afghan children in local communities, and verbal abuse in detention centres. Employment discrimination also persists, with job advertisements offering different salary scales based on nationality.

Reasons for leaving Iran

Percentage of interviews reporting reasons | 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%

- **88%** Food
- **80%** Housing/Accommodation
- **78%** Financial support

Top 3 Protection services requested in Afghanistan

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

- **66%** Documentation / Legal assistance
- **37%** Support with family reunification
- **18%** Information on services and assistance