

378

individuals repatriated

Since 2002, UNHCR Iran has supported nearly 1 million refugees to voluntary repatriate in safety and dignity to Afghanistan and Iraq, taking into account the UNHCR Non-Return Advisory¹ and UNHCR Global Guidance Note on the International Protection Needs of People Fleeing Afghanistan². However, as the situation in Afghanistan remains fragile, only a small number of Afghan refugees in Iran have shown willingness to return to their home country. Repatriation of Afghan students to obtain visas to continue their studies in Iran has significantly declined from 59% of the repatriates in January 2022 to 25% of the repatriates in December 2022. UNHCR supports the Iranian Government in providing Afghans with health, education and livelihoods opportunities. Individuals who are healthy, educated and have marketable-skills are typically more likely to return and feel capable of rebuilding their lives. Nonetheless, ultimately, a longer-term, political solution for Afghanistan's protracted crisis is the only way to ensure safe, sustainable and voluntarily return of refugees.

63 / 17%

total students



UNHCR facilitates the return of Afghan students from Iran to Afghanistan to obtain student visas to pursue their studies back in their country of asylum.

36

persons with specific needs



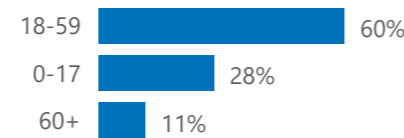
UNHCR helps returnees with specific needs including unaccompanied or separated children and elderly persons.

58%

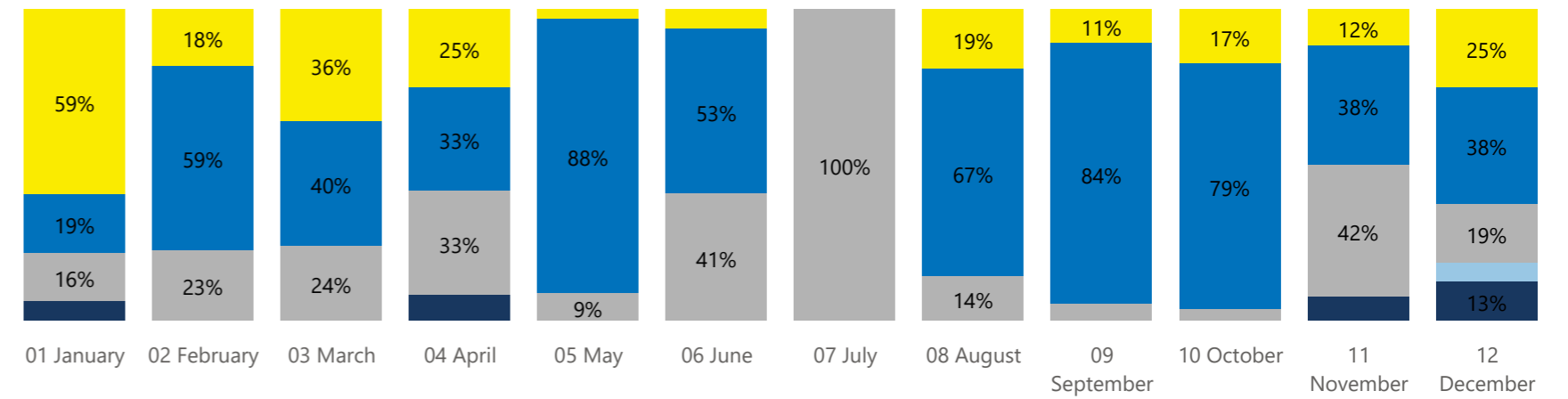
females



Students excluded, the age distribution for men and women combined:

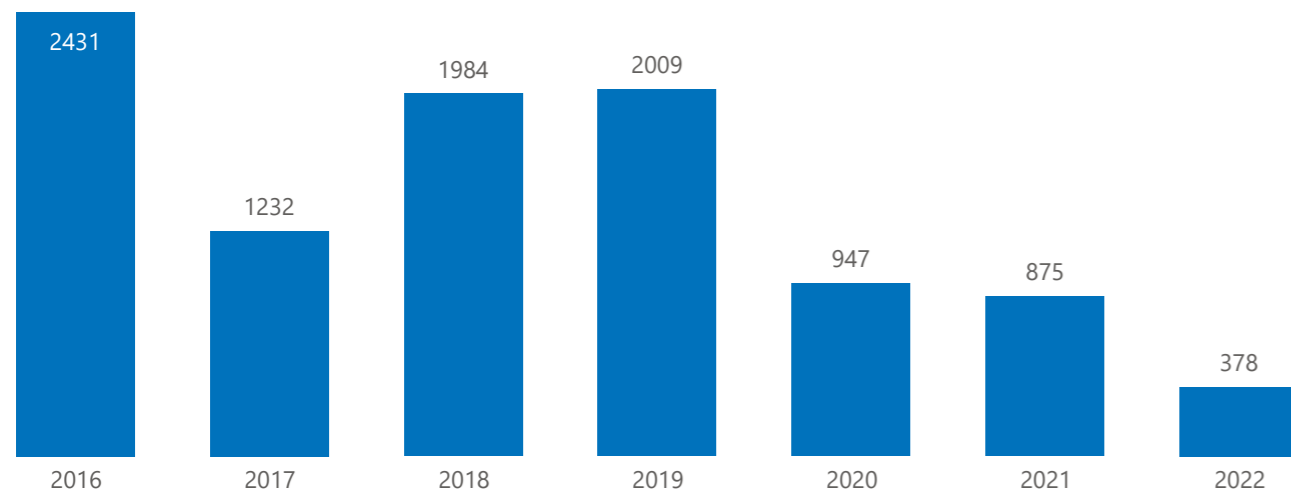


Reason of return to Afghanistan (# of individuals)



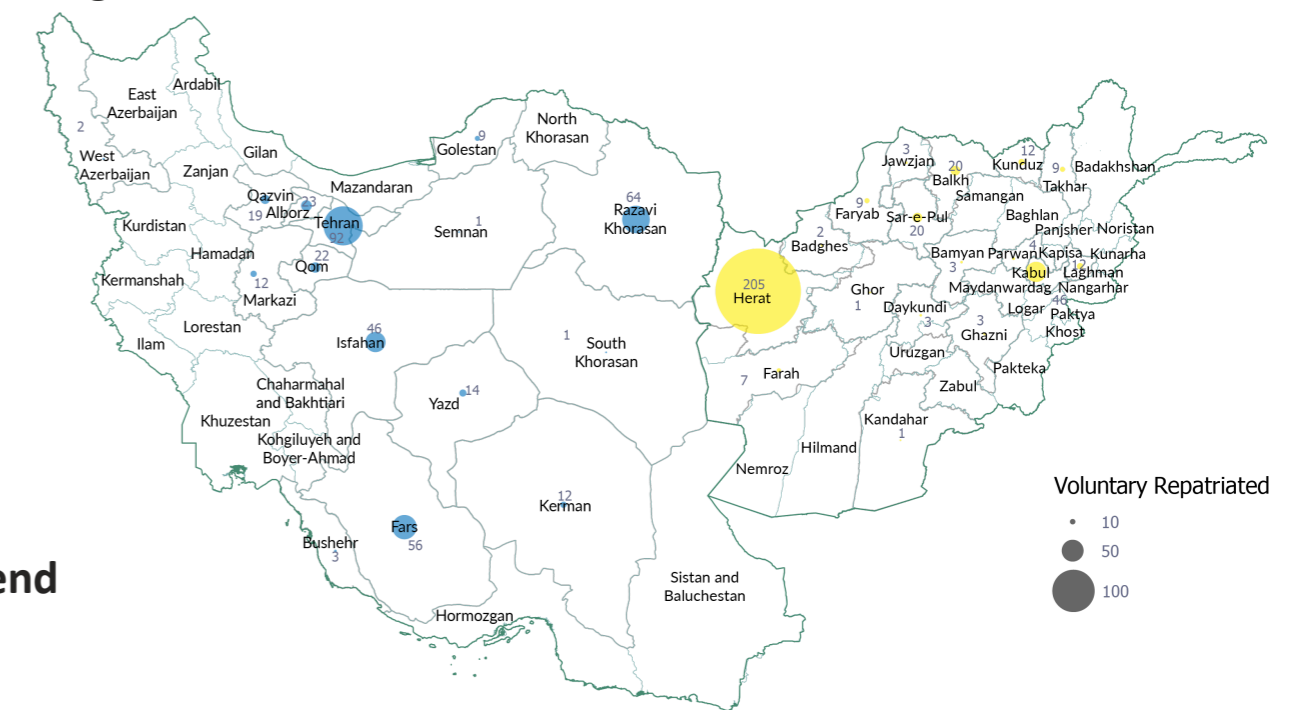
*Due to a data collection glitch, the Reasons of Return data for the month of July 2022 was not comprehensively captured.

Trend over the years (2016-2022)

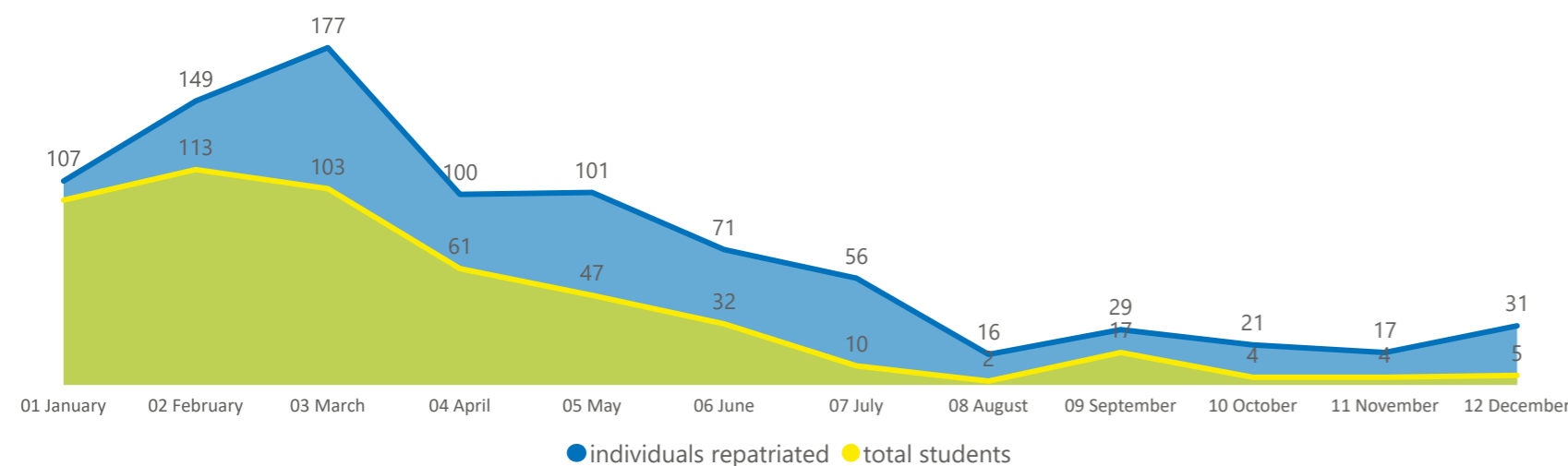


In 2022, UNHCR facilitated the repatriation of 376 returnees to Afghanistan (15 in December) and 2 returnees to Iraq (1 in December). This represents a substantial decrease compared to the 875 returns facilitated in the same period in 2021. Voluntary repatriation declined by 57% compared to 2021. This decrease is due to the instability and deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.

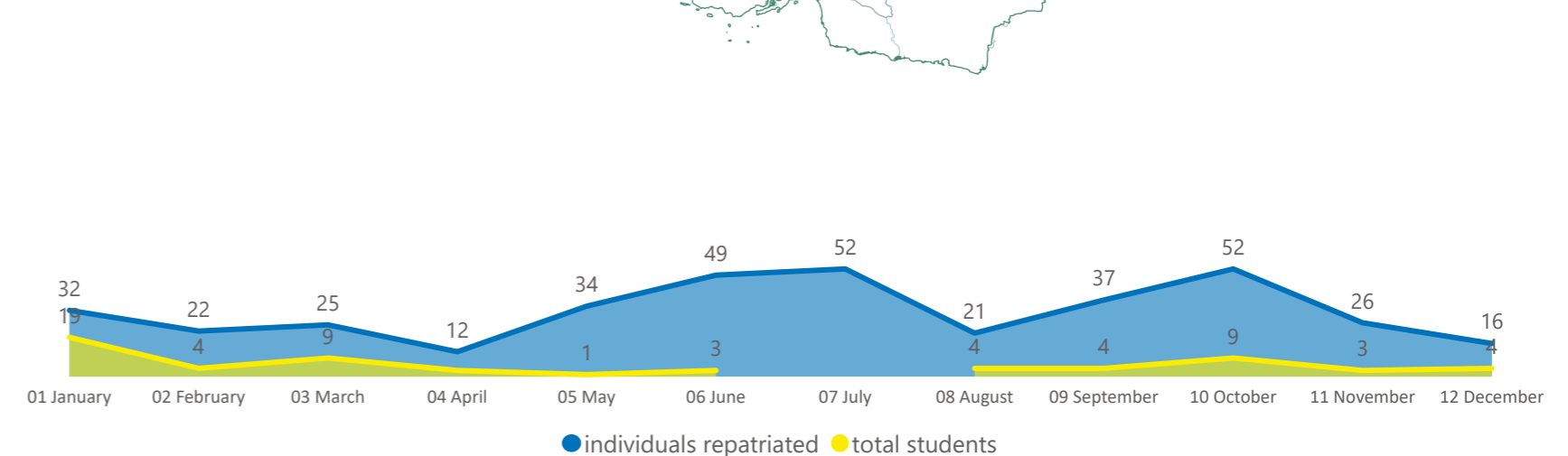
Voluntary repatriation by province in Iran & intended area of return in Afghanistan



2021 monthly trend



2022 monthly trend



[1] UNHCR, *UNHCR Position on Returns to Afghanistan*, August 2021, available at: www.refworld.org/docid/611a4c5c4.html;

[2] UNHCR, *UNHCR Guidance Note on the International Protection Needs of People Fleeing Afghanistan*, February 2022, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/61d851cd4.html>