

Flooding has temporarily closed Islam Qala border with Iran.
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Highlights

321 undocumented Afghans returned from Pakistan

2,578 undocumented Afghans returned from Iran

9,607 total returns from Pakistan since 1 January 2017

44,425 total returns from Iran since 1 January 2017

8% of returnees from Pakistan (26 individuals) assisted

11% of returnees from Iran (285 individuals) assisted

Returns from Pakistan

From 19-25 February 2017, a total of **321** undocumented Afghans spontaneously returned or were deported from Pakistan through Torkham border (Nangarhar province) and Spin Boldak border (Kandahar province), according to the Border Monitoring Team of the Directorate of Refugees and Repatriation (DoRR). This is a **67% decrease** in returns from the previous week. All of the returnees were deported individuals. This brings the total number of undocumented Afghan returnees from Pakistan to **9,607** since 1 January 2017.

During the reporting period, IOM assisted **26 (8%)** undocumented Afghan returnees from Pakistan, all of them special cases. The support provided includes meals and accommodation at IOM's Transit Centers near the border, household supplies and other Non-Food Items (NFIs) for families, special assistance to Persons with Specific Needs (PSNs), and other assistance from partners.

Border Closures

Torkham and Spin Boldak borders have been closed since 17 February due to recent security incidents in Pakistan. The borders remain closed as of 25 February.

Islam Qala border with Iran was temporarily closed during the reporting period because of flash floods in the vicinity of the border. Heavy mud (10-15 cm) and water levels have affected border infrastructure. It is anticipated that the border crossing will remain closed for at least one week.

Situation Overview

IOM is responding to a substantial increase in the return of undocumented Afghans from Pakistan and Iran. Since 1 January 2016, over 746,000 undocumented Afghans have returned due to diverse push factors, including deteriorating protection space in Pakistan. Many of those returning have lived outside of Afghanistan for decades, and will need support from the government and humanitarian actors both on arrival and as they seek to reintegrate into a country already struggling with widespread conflict and displacement.

While returns have declined in line with seasonal trends during winter, previous surges in returns have been unpredictable and an estimated 1 million undocumented Afghans still remain in Pakistan. IOM is prepared to respond to increased needs and is appealing for additional funding to continue its emergency response programming.

CONTACT US

IOM Kabul

✉ iomkabul@iom.int

🌐 <http://afghanistan.iom.int>

[facebook.com/iomafghanistan](https://www.facebook.com/iomafghanistan)

twitter.com/iomafghanistan

Returns from Iran

A total of **2,578** undocumented Afghans spontaneously returned or were deported from Iran through Islam Qala (Herat) and Milak (Nimroz) border crossings from 19–25 February, a **4% decrease** compared with the previous week. Out of the total, 998 were spontaneous returnees and 1,580 were deportees. This brings the total number of undocumented returnees from Iran since 1 January 2017 to **44,425**.

IOM provided post-arrival humanitarian assistance to **285 (11%)** undocumented Afghans arriving from Iran at its Transit Centers in Herat and Nimroz. The bodies of nine Afghans killed in a car crash in Yazd, Iran were repatriated to their home province of Faryab.



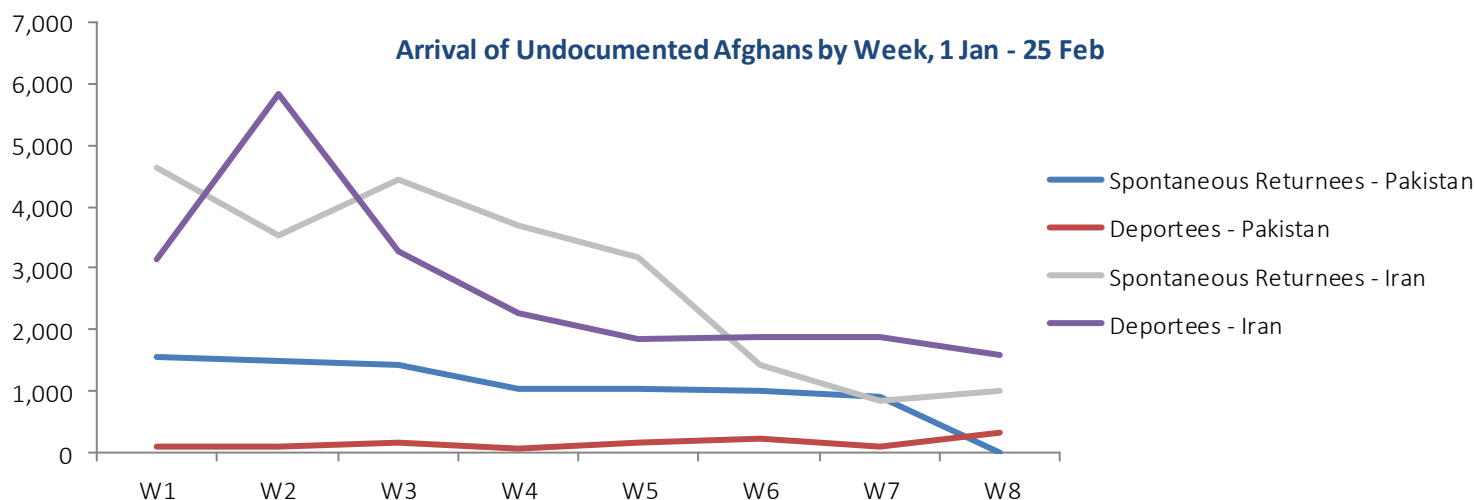
The empty road to the closed Torkham border with Pakistan. © IOM 2017

Number of Undocumented Returnees in 2017 (Torkham, Spin Boldak, Islam Qala and Milak)

Date	Spontaneous Returnees				Deportees				Total Pakistan	Total Iran	Grand Total
	Torkham	Spin Boldak	Herat	Nimroz	Torkham	Spin Boldak	Herat	Nimroz			
Jan 17	3,605	2,294	15,918	2,555	273	226	9,986	5,599	6,398	34,058	40,456
1-4 Feb	454	203	600	408	31	-	142	625	688	1,775	2,463
5-11 Feb	811	196	543	888	76	131	114	1,773	1,214	3,318	4,532
12-18 Feb	696	196	2	822	57	37	-	1,872	986	2,696	3,682
19-25 Feb	-	-	9	989	321	-	-	1,580	321	2,578	2,899
Total	5,566	2,889	17,072	5,662	758	394	10,242	11,449	9,607	44,425	54,032

IOM-Assisted Undocumented Afghans in 2017 (Torkham, Spin Boldak, Islam Qala and Milak)

Date	Spontaneous Returnees				Deportees				Total Pakistan	Total Iran	Grand Total
	Torkham	Spin Boldak	Herat	Nimroz	Torkham	Spin Boldak	Herat	Nimroz			
Jan 17	3,022	2,109	53	32	74	213	582	418	5,418	1,085	6,503
1-4 Feb	421	112	1	14	0	0	20	63	533	98	631
5-11 Feb	733	149	14	27	17	97	3	281	996	325	1,321
12-18 Feb	675	98	2	17	10	18	0	241	801	260	1,061
19-25 Feb	0	0	9	18	26	0	0	258	26	285	311
Total	4,851	2,468	79	108	127	328	605	1,261	7,774	2,053	9,827



IOM Afghanistan's Returnee Response is generously supported by:

