

MOHAJER APP BREAKDOWN OF REPORT

What our first report is about!



Our first - published in May 2019 - comes with the intention of providing advice on some of the most prominent issues and questions sent to the Mohajer App - particularly those which are not answered on the app's reporting section . The summary is also a tool to highlight stories and lived experiences of Afghans in Iran.

In our first year, we saw some concerning patterns in discrimination and racism against Afghans in Iran, as well as a lack of institutional support for the victims. However, the most prominent - and potentially solvable - issue we saw was a lack of clarity and understanding around which benefits, laws, and procedures apply to Afghans living as refugees, migrants or undocumented individuals in Iran.

Below is a short outline of our findings - the full summary (along with our advice in full) can be found on our website.

[Special Notice: Thank you to everyone that has made a report on our app. Many of you have sent us questions rather than reports. Our report section is only for documentation purposes at present and until we revamp our app in the next few months, we cannot reply to you through the app's reporting section. Many of your questions have been answered on the app's "Get Informed" section, and some of the trickier ones have been examined below. But if you really want us to respond to you directly, you can email us at: hello@mohajerapp.com]



Discrimination:

Racial/xenophobic abuse:

Racial/xenophobic abuse was perpetrated by a range of actors: from people in positions of power, including the **National Organization for Civil Registration in Tehran, to local school head teachers and sports teams**. None of our users reported the abuse to official authorities or police – some feel that there are no real process to follow in these situations or follow-up if they do report it.

Though our team provides advice in the full report and on our app, unless there is more institutional support and effective reporting mechanisms, most migrants and refugees will continue to distrust the support available.

Lack of trust:

On top of all the hardship our users have faced, some also felt frustrated and hopeless when reporting incidents, even to the extent that they did not even trust any group, including Mohajer App itself.

“They do not value human life and humanity is in darkness. You need to see the situation of refugees and migrants first-hand to see how difficult our living situation is...I don’t know how to write down all of our problems in this report - it feels impossible.” User Report

The aim for the app is building trust in its user community by consistently providing good info and expanding services. So far, the community we are building has been responding well during our initial pilot, but we hope we can build on this and also encourage more support and investment in the Afghan community to rebuild this trust.

Clarity on laws, pending legal changes, and available support:



Workers' Rights and Worker Exploitation:

We received numerous reports from workers and family members of workers who had been exploited. The most common issue has been that workers are not paid and are refused benefits.

"My boss wouldn't pay me, and instead swore at me and spat in my face." User Report

With the difficulties many migrants face in gaining contracts and work permits, the safety-net which might hold exploitative employers to account is out of reach.

We will continue to document these incidents and highlight the exploitation of Afghan workers. We hope to find legal avenues to hold exploitative employers to account, with avenues for workers (even if undocumented) to report employers that take advantage of vulnerable workers to the right authorities. You can read further in our full report.

Registration schemes and confusion:

One thing our users need to wait for is "regularisation" or registration. This through a scheme created to monitor and register the entry of Afghans in Iran, periodically, through the 'Amayesh (refugee registration) Scheme.' They provide Amayesh cards that enable them access to basic services and also facilitate the issuance of work permits.

Undocumented migrants (who are not registered) in Iran have no access to basic services such as health care and cannot work with a permit. For undocumented Afghans there are regularization schemes conducted by the Government. We had reports from users (including one from a 30-year-old born in Iran who had yet to succeed in the scheme) wondering what they have to do until the new scheme commences or if they are not successful in the scheme.

Our research and communication with government departments showed that there is currently no information regarding whether the Government will issue regularisation/registration for the Afghans who applied last year or when the next round will occur. In these cases, we direct them to local groups and NGOs and international groups such as the UNHCR for emergency assistance in the meantime. You can learn more about this in our full report.

University Admittance or Staying in the Country?

Our users reported confusion and difficulty in navigating university admittance in Iran without losing their Amayesh cards (that provides conditions for their support such as access to full public health facilities, work permit or legal residence after university). Usually to register in university, you must enter with an Afghan passport and a student visa, rendering their Amayesh card and residency in Iran after graduation void. Many have to forego higher education and achieving their dreams and full potential - even if they have spent most of their lives in Iran - so they do not lose these benefits and their livelihood in Iran.



Our team contacted universities to find out how migrants can navigate this - there are limited options, but some universities do allow admission without asking students to forego their Amayesh cards until graduation where they must get it via a student visa. You can learn more about this in our full report.

Being born to Iranian mothers and issues of citizenship:

Ambiguity around children born to Iranian mothers and Afghan fathers remains. In Iran, currently, children born of Iranian mother and non-Iranian fathers, cannot obtain citizenship. This issue is still being debated in parliament, but the likelihood is that soon, children born to Iranian mothers can gain citizenship. At present, children with an Iranian father would be free to stay in Iran with full citizenship and rights, those with an Iranian mother and an Afghan father face uncertainty. The current laws have meant that at least one of our users, an Iranian citizen, had to leave Iran for Afghanistan as she was separated from her child.

"I am an Iranian and my son is Afghan, despite the fact that I am a government worker, I can't get insurance for my son and they [the government] won't grant him an ID card or permission for a passport. He was not granted a visa to Iran, so I have to leave this country. I'm an Iranian and I am tired of racism and discrimination in Iran." User Report

In our full report we have tried to describe what parents can do, what rights they have and how to avoid these separations.

Information about available support:

Since our launch, we have received many questions about available support. Unfortunately, information about available support has not always been clearly set out for migrants and refugees online by public institutions. This is key: what is the use of support if those whom it benefits do not know how to access it? We use our app to highlight the support available, including from government organs and links to local groups. Some issues remain ambiguous due to a lack of available information. For example, we outlined who are the people that get admitted to the "vulnerable list" for this UNHCR Insurance Scheme - through our research we managed to outline the categories. More specifically we also clarified one user's question about transplants in Iran - the difference for citizens and non-citizens.

Although the majority of our reports were about unavailability of support or confusion around where to get it, we also received many messages from medical professionals and other experts that wanted to provide their support. We are extremely grateful to them and have listed their details on the app!



Who are we?

Mohajer is an App dedicated to Afghan refugees, migrants and immigrants in Iran, providing information and resources on issues like immigration rights, education rights, employment rights, health, support groups, racist violence, domestic violence, and more. You can support our documentation and make anonymous reports about domestic, institutional (e.g. police brutality) or racist violence, worker abuse, or other incidents related to your experience as an Afghan in Iran.

Please do contact us if you can support us in getting legal and practical advice to migrants and refugees, or if you provide support services and want to help make the lives of Afghans living in Iran better!

If you have any specific information, updates, or questions, please reach out and get in contact with us at: hello@mohajerapp.com.

And download the app at: <https://www.mohajerapp.com>