

Regional Flash Update #24

Syria situation crisis

25 April 2025



In Zaraa, rural Al Qusayr (Homs), many refugee returnee families are currently living in severely worn tents previously used during displacement in Aarsal, Lebanon. UNHCR has assisted with non-food items (NFIs) and shelter support. © UNHCR Syria

Key Highlights

- As of 24 April 2025, UNHCR estimates that **some 443,227 Syrians** have crossed back to Syria via neighboring countries since 8 December 2024. This brings up the total of **over 800,000 Syrian individuals** that have crossed back into Syria since the beginning of 2024. This figure is calculated based on a triangulation of data from Syria, Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt and beyond.
- As of 10 April, **1.05 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned to their homes**, including **188,121 returning from IDP sites** since early December 2024, according to the [latest data](#) of the IDP Task Force.
- **UNHCR continues to provide life-saving assistance** to those refugees returning to Syria from neighbouring countries, as well as to IDPs, IDP returnees and the host communities inside the country and beyond.
- On 23 April, **UNHCR supported a group of some 178 IDPs departing Areesha Camp, also known as al-Sadd Camp, in the southern countryside of Al-Hasaka, returning to their original homes in Deir ez-Zor and its surrounding countryside.** This is the second voluntary return convoy conducted under UNHCR's auspices as part of broader efforts to enable forcibly displaced people to go back home in a dignified and safe manner.

Country updates

Syria

As of 24 April 2025, UNHCR estimates that **443,227 Syrians** have crossed back into Syria from neighboring countries since 8 December 2024. This brings up the total of **over 800,000 Syrian individuals** that have crossed back into Syria since the beginning of 2024.

As of 17 April, **1.05 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned to their homes**, including 188,121 returning from IDP sites since early December 2024, according to the latest data of the IDP Task Force.

At border crossings points, **UNHCR maintained a presence at Joussieh, Jdaidet Yabous, Nassib, Bab Al-Hawa, and Bab Al-Salama**, monitoring return trends and providing information, water, and Internet access. Daboussieh, Jesr Kamar, and Matraha border crossings are still closed due to extensive damage, with efforts underway for rehabilitation.

As per the response to return movements, **UNHCR continued to provide life-saving assistance through the week in all 14 governorates**. In Aleppo only, child protection activities were conducted for 1,887 children and caregivers, including over 1,100 returnees and IDPs. In the coastal areas, 463 households in Al Kosour neighborhood, Baniyas city – one of the areas most impacted by the recent violence – have received NFI kits this week. To date, a total of 4,293 households have been assisted through UNHCR's NFI distributions in Tartous and Latakia. In Homs and Hama, UNHCR distributed core relief items (CRIs), solar devices and winter kits to 1,063 newly returned families in Homs city and in the northeast of Hama.

On 15, 16, 17, 22 and 23 April, **convoys were organized by UNHCR in Jordan and received by the team in Syria**. The convoys transported some 300 returnees from Amman, Azraq camp, and Irbid to Damascus, Dar'a, Idleb, Rural Damascus, Ar-Raqqa, and Homs.

Furthermore, on 23 April, **UNHCR supported a group of some 178 IDPs departing Areesha camp**, also known as al-Sadd camp, in the southern countryside of Al-Hasaka, returning to their original homes in Deir ez-Zor and its surrounding countryside. This is the second return mission conducted under UNHCR's auspices as part of a broader efforts to enable forcibly displaced people to go back home in a dignified and safe manner.

Türkiye

On the **12th anniversary of the Presidency of Migration Management**, Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya noted that voluntary, safe, and dignified return of Syrians has become a key priority, with a transparent process monitored by the UNHCR. He mentioned go-and-see visits, increased border capacity and appointment systems for orderly returns. According to his [announcement](#) on 21 April, **175,512 Syrians (33,730 families)** have voluntarily returned to their country. He stated that, from 2017 to 2025, the total number of Syrians who returned voluntarily, safely, and with dignity reached 915,515.

Also on 21 April, in a [letter sent by the Ministry of Trade to all customs in Türkiye](#), it was announced that (i) customs services be provided for passengers entering and exiting Syria, (ii) permission be granted for the passage of vehicles intended for personal use and commercial vehicles of passengers departing from Türkiye to Syria, and (iii) in the customs procedures for the entry into the country of vehicles intended for personal use and commercial vehicles from Syria, the process be completed provided that insurance is obtained for the period allowed for the vehicle to remain in our country and that all other legal obligations are fulfilled per the relevant legislation.

The **processing of voluntary returns** continues in provinces and at five border crossings: Cilvegözü / Bab al Hawa, Yayladağı / Keseb, Öncüpınar / Bab al Salama, Karkamış / Jarablus and Akçakale / Tel Abyad. As of 24 April, Çobanbey / Al Rai and Zeytindalı / Jinderes are open for processing go-and-see visits.

Currently, UNHCR monitors returns in 14 provinces and at the Cilvegözü/Bab al-Hawa, Yayladağı/Keseb, Öncüpınar/Bab al-Salama, and Karkamış/Jarablus border crossings in the southeast, as well as at Istanbul Airport. This week, **Eskişehir has been added to the regular monitoring locations**, as well as Sabiha Gökçen Airport in İstanbul and Esenboğa Airport in Ankara.

UNHCR's observations on returns remain largely consistent with previous weeks:

- Many returnees travel alone, including women, often to assess conditions before reuniting with family. Returns are primarily driven by political and security developments, as well as family reunification.
- While many returnees report owning property or having access to family-owned housing, property damage and lack of documentation remain challenges. A considerable number lack civil documentation, which can affect their access to rights and services.
- Livelihood prospects are limited. Many returnees previously relied on informal employment or humanitarian aid in Türkiye and expect to continue seeking work or relying on community support in Syria. Access to basic services in areas of return is inconsistent, underlining the continued need for international support and coordination to ensure returns are safe, voluntary, and sustainable.

UNHCR teams in Türkiye and Syria are actively working to strengthen the exchange of information on the situation of returnees in areas of return. This ongoing collaboration aims to inform **more effective community engagement and pre-departure planning**, while also supporting the timely provision of post-return assistance based on identified needs.

Lebanon

As of 22 April, the hostilities in the Tartous, Latakia, Homs, and Hama governorates of Syria in early March continue to displace people into the North and Akkar governorates of north Lebanon now reaching **36,184 people**. Between 17 and 21 April, an estimated 4,915 individuals re-entered or newly arrived in Lebanon through the northern border, maintaining a similar level to the previous week.

The Baalbek Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in the Bekaa is reporting approximately **85,390 arrivals from Syria** since 8 December and as of 22 April (a decrease of 2,063 displaced individuals since 15 April), including approximately 28,346 arrivals in Baalbek governorate, North Bekaa, residing in 188 informal collective shelters (CS), and approximately 56,981 residing in the community.

Jordan

UNHCR continues regularly monitoring of the Jaber border. On 17 April, a noticeable uptick was observed in the movement of passengers and commercial transportation. As of 19 April, **approximately 58,000 refugees registered with UNHCR have returned** from Jordan to Syria since 8 December 2024. The average daily number of refugee returnees continues to grow since the end of Ramadan. From 13 to 19 April, an average of 420 refugees crossed the border daily, compared to 370 in the preceding week.

Demographics of returnees remained largely unchanged from previous weeks, with women and girls representing around 46 per cent of the total refugee returnees, which is a slight increase compared to 45 per cent last week. Children accounted for around 41 per cent, and men of military age (18-40 years old) made up around 23 per cent of overall returns. The vast majority of refugees continue to return from host communities, primarily from Amman and Irbid. More details about the numbers and profile of returnees are available on [UNHCR Jordan's returns dashboard](#).

On 22-23 April, UNHCR facilitated transportation for nearly 100 refugees from Amman and Azraq camp. Overall, since the start of the transportation pilot project on 20 January 2025, **UNHCR has supported more than 1,700 refugees to return to Syria**. Before departure, in-person interviews are conducted to ensure that returns are voluntary and well-informed, with counselling and information provided on available services inside Syria. The return process is closely coordinated with the UNHCR operation in Syria to support refugees upon arrival at their final destination.

During recent information sessions, focus group discussions and meetings, refugees expressed ongoing **concerns about reductions in humanitarian assistance, continuity of their access to basic services in Jordan, and the security situation in Syria**. Some refugees noted that for them "safety" means more than just the absence of violence, but it includes freedom of movement, consistent law enforcement, and access to basic services and employment opportunities. While some refugees reported receiving positive feedback about security conditions from their relatives who had recently returned to Ar-Raqqa, still many of them said that the experiences shared by family and friends in Syria were negative due to **gaps in services and high unemployment**.

Participants in focus group discussions noted that decision-making on return is generally collective within families, though in case of disagreement, the men will often have the final say. Other participants noted that disagreements within families often lead to **men returning first to assess the situation**, while women and children remain in Jordan. In some cases, there are differences in return intentions across generations, when parents are more open to returning, while young people are more hesitant, especially those who have grown up in Jordan, as they perceive conditions in Syria as unfamiliar and unsafe. Those who are returning provided various reasons for their decision. Some cited a desire to no longer be refugees, to reunite with their families and restart their lives at home, while others mentioned hopes for better educational opportunities and medical services in Syria.

Refugees reiterated their request to UNHCR and other humanitarian actors to provide support for return, including transportation and financial aid. They also asked for additional information sessions to be held regularly and in more locations, recommending a follow-up session in the coming months to provide updates on the situation in Syria and any new procedures or services available.

Iraq

Between 8 December 2024 and 17 April 2025, **nearly 14,000 Syrians returned from Iraq to Syria**, including some 1,300 refugees and asylum-seekers registered with UNHCR. This includes about 5,900 Syrians who have returned through Peshkhabour border crossing point and some 8,000 through Al-Qaim border crossing.

Over the past week, about 100 registered Syrian refugees returned from Iraq through Al-Qaim and Peshkhabour border crossing points. **Most of the registered Syrians returned to Al-Hasakeh, followed by Aleppo and Ar-Raqqa.** The improved security situation in Syria, reuniting with family, avoiding overstay fines in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and lack of livelihood opportunities are the most common reasons Syrians report for their return.

During the reporting period, **UNHCR continued to observe arrivals from Syria to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, mainly from Al-Hasakeh and Aleppo.** Between 13 and 17 April, 530 individuals arrived through Peshkhabour border crossing point. Family visits, returning from visits to Syria, family reunification, or transiting through the Kurdistan Region to other destinations were indicated as the main reasons for arrivals, with most expressing their intentions to return to Syria following their visit. Only five of the 41 households interviewed by UNHCR's partner, Harikar, on arrival to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq through Peshkhabour border crossing, expressed their intention to register with UNHCR in Iraq.

Egypt

As of 17 April 2025, **approximately 137,250 Syrian refugees are registered in Egypt**, around 330 fewer than the previous week. Syrian refugees now account for approximately 14.4% of the total refugee population in the country.

Since the regime change in Syria, there has been a significant increase in Syrians approaching UNHCR in Cairo and Alexandria to request the closure of their asylum cases. As of 21 April 2025, **almost 8,388 closure requests involving over 17,062 individuals** were submitted since 8 December 2024, averaging 91 requests per day – compared to just seven per day in November 2024. In addition, 10,833 individuals have been closed as spontaneous departures, reflecting a growing perception among many Syrians that return may now be viable.

On 15 April, **UNHCR Egypt officially launched its new [WhatsApp Channel](#), aimed at providing refugees and asylum seekers with timely, accurate, and accessible information in Arabic.** This one-way communication tool complements UNHCR's existing digital platforms, such as its Facebook pages and Help website, by delivering real-time updates, including service announcements, health advisories, and operational changes, directly to users in a secure and anonymous format. The channel supports multimedia content such as images, videos, and voice notes, making it especially useful for individuals with varying literacy levels. Given the widespread use of WhatsApp among refugee communities, the platform ensures broad reach and trust, while also enhancing cost-efficiency by reducing the need for printed materials. Users remain anonymous, and neither UNHCR nor other subscribers can view personal information. UNHCR plans to expand its presence on WhatsApp by launching additional channels in other languages in the coming period to better serve Egypt's diverse refugee communities. **The channel reached 9,000 followers in the initial hours after launching.**

During a **donor briefing on the 2025 Regional Strategic Overview of the 3RP** on 15 April, co-organized by UNHCR and UNDP, Egypt's Syria Al-Gad organization offered a critical intervention highlighting the realities faced by Syrian refugees and host communities on the ground. Representing Syria Al-Gad, the Head of the Program and Projects shared firsthand insights into the organization's field interventions, highlighting the **impact of funding cuts on essential sectors such as health, education, and livelihoods.** The speaker stressed the need for a holistic approach, where education, livelihoods, and health are addressed in tandem, to support sustainable returns to Syria. Syria Al-Gad echoed broader calls for collective action to improve access to services and development opportunities for returnees, while also highlighting the pressing challenges refugees continue to face in host countries. The event's central message was that the **international response to the Syria crisis must remain comprehensive, balancing the needs of those who wish to return with continued support to host communities that have borne the burden for over a decade.**

Useful links

- [Regional Flash Update #23, Syria Situation Crisis](#)
- [UNHCR Operational Framework for Voluntary Return of Syrian Refugees and IDPs](#)
- [January 2025 Refugee Perceptions and Intentions Survey \(RPIS\)](#)
- [UNHCR Position on Returns to the Syrian Arab Republic \(16 December\)](#)
- [Syria Situation Data Portal](#)
- [UNHCR Help Site](#)

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is grateful for the support of donors who contributed to its operations in the Middle East in 2025, including:

Australia | Austria | Belgium | Canada | Denmark | European Union | Germany | Iceland | Ireland | Luxembourg | Monaco | Netherlands (Kingdom of the) | Norway | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Central Emergency Response Fund | Islamic Development Bank

CONTACTS

UNHCR Syria

SYRIAreporting@unhcr.org

For more information, please visit:

[UNHCR Global Focus – Syria Situation](#)