

Regional Flash Update #34

Syria situation crisis

4 July 2025



Syrian returnee Khaled Al-Alewi and his daughter Alaa, pictured at the Bab Al-Hawa Border Crossing Point, on the Syrian-Turkish border. Khaled and his wife Asia Ajo have been living as refugees in Malatya (Türkiye) for 13 years and expressed enormous happiness to come back to their homes. ©UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

Key Highlights

- As of 3 July, UNHCR estimates that **641,501** Syrians have crossed back to Syria via neighboring countries since 8 December 2024, bringing the total of **over 1 million refugee returnees – 1,002,341** Syrian individuals – who have returned to the country since the beginning of 2024.
- As of 3 July, **1,515,110 IDPs** have returned to their homes in Syria since early December 2024, according to the latest data of the IDP Task Force.
- On 1 July, UNHCR Lebanon officially launched the **UNHCR-supported Self-Organized Voluntary Return Programme**; and on 2 July, UNHCR updated its [UNHCR HELP Lebanon – Voluntary Return page](#) and disseminated information on the voluntary return programme through its social media and outreach networks.
- Between 25 June and 1 July, UNHCR provided **transportation assistance** to 276 families (815 individuals) returning to Syria through key border crossing points including Bab Al-Hawa, Bab Al-Salama and Joussieh.

- UNHCR and partners provided **Core Relief Item (CRI) kits** to 6,805 families (25,775 individuals) inside Syria, the vast majority of whom—22,510 individuals—were newly arrived IDP and refugee returnees.
- Furthermore, as of today, 1,820 returnee families (7,493 individuals) have been supported upon return thanks to UNHCR's **return and reintegration cash assistance**.

Country updates

Syria

On 30 June, **the Trump administration issued an executive order lifting US sanctions on Syria**, calling it an historic shift that could pave the way for national recovery and reintegration into the international community. The announcement was welcomed by Syrian interim Government, as well as by various global actors, including the UN.

As of 3 July, UNHCR estimates that some **641,501** Syrians have crossed back to Syria via neighboring countries since 8 December 2024. This brings the total to **over 1 million – 1,002,341** – Syrians who have returned since the beginning of 2024. This figure is calculated based on a triangulation of data from Syria, Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt and beyond.

In terms of internal displacement, **1,515,110 IDPs** have returned to their homes since early December 2024, according to the latest data of the IDP Task Force, as of 3 July.

Between 25 June and 1 July, UNHCR continued to facilitate the **voluntary, safe, and dignified return** of Syrian nationals to their areas of origin by providing transportation assistance at key border crossing points, including Bab Al-Hawa, Bab Al-Salama, and Joussieh. During this period, 276 families—comprising 815 individuals—benefited from this support. UNHCR ensured robust coordination at border crossings, systematically monitored return movements, and collected critical data to inform prompt and targeted community-level interventions, including gender-based violence (GBV) prevention, response and case management services, Child Protection, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), Legal Assistance, Shelter Repairs and Livelihoods support.

Furthermore, UNHCR continued its cash assistance programme for returnees. This week alone, 121 families (377 individuals) received **return and reintegration cash assistance**, bringing the cumulative total to 1,820 families (7,493 individuals) as of 1 July.

As parts of its efforts to support returning families, UNHCR and its partners distributed Core Relief Item (CRI) kits to **6,805 families (25,775 individuals)** during the reporting period, the vast majority of whom—22,510 individuals—were newly arrived IDP and refugee returnees.

The [Syria is Home](#) platform continued to attract attention this week, recording 1,300 visitors—43.9% female and 56.1% male. The highest number of users were from Lebanon, followed by Syria, Türkiye, Jordan and Bulgaria.

Türkiye

On 2 July, Turkish Vice President Cevdet Yılmaz [stated](#) that **316,000 Syrians** have voluntarily returned to Syria since 8 December 2024.

The [Presidency of Migration Management](#) in Türkiye has introduced streamlined procedures for Syrian nationals crossing through land border gates with Syria, effective from 1 July. Syrian-Turkish

dual nationals may now enter and exit using their passports, and those employed in public institutions in Syria but residing in Türkiye's border provinces are permitted daily crossings with ID cards, provided they also present their passports. Applications at the border must include an ID card, passport, and family registry record. Syrian nationals married to Turkish citizens can cross using their ID cards if the marriage is officially documented, while the Turkish spouse must accompany them with a passport. If children are traveling with the Syrian spouse, written consent from the Turkish spouse is required. These applications are processed directly at the border. Additionally, individuals crossing with passports through land border gates outside Şanlıurfa province may be allowed to bring vehicles, subject to customs procedures.

Processing of voluntary returns continues in provinces and at seven border crossings: Cilvegözü / Bab al Hawa, Yayladağı / Keseb, Öncüpınar / Bab al Salama, Karkamış / Jarablus and Akçakale / Tel Abyad as well as Zeytindali / Jinderes where processing of voluntary returns has restarted.

UNHCR currently monitors voluntary returns at 21 Provincial Directorates of Migration Management (PDMM) across 21 provinces, as well as at five border crossings in southeastern Türkiye, with **Mardin and Zeytindali / Jinderes newly added to the list this week**. In addition to ongoing monitoring at Istanbul Airport, UNHCR has expanded its presence to Sabiha Gökçen Airport following the launch of direct flights. Preparations are also in place to begin monitoring at Ankara Esenboğa Airport once the announced flights commence.

During the reporting period, UNHCR observed an uptick in the number of families with school-aged children, following the end of the school year on 20 June. Return motivations continue to reflect a mix of factors, including changes in the political and security landscape, the desire for family reunification, and personal or economic considerations. Some returnees cite reasons such as nostalgia, challenges in accessing housing, property claims, or limited livelihood opportunities in Türkiye. Aleppo remains the most common return destination, followed by other provinces such as Idleb, Damascus, and Hama. The vast majority of returnees express a preference to return to their provinces of origin, primarily driven by family presence and conditions related to their homes or property, while others opt for different locations due to displacement, destruction of property, or security concerns.

Housing conditions upon return vary significantly, with some returnees reporting that their properties are intact, while others find them partially damaged or destroyed. Access to documentation, both for property ownership and civil status, continues to pose challenges for many returnees, affecting their ability to re-establish their lives upon return. Economic reintegration remains challenging. Many returnees rely on informal work or family support to sustain themselves, while others anticipate seeking employment after their return due to a lack of stable income sources.

Access to basic services in areas of return also remains inconsistent. While some returnees report adequate access to essential services, others face partial or no access, or lack information regarding service availability in their areas of return. This underlines the continued need for support to strengthen infrastructure and service delivery in return areas, ensuring safe and dignified reintegration for those choosing to return.

Lebanon

UNHCR officially launched the **UNHCR-supported Self-Organized Voluntary Return Programme** on 1 July 2025. This follows an Exchange of Letters between UNHCR and the Inter-Ministerial Committee, outlining the roles and responsibilities as well as the operational process for the return programme.

The General Security Office (GSO) also issued on 1 July a [circular on administrative facilitation measures](#) to waive all overstay fines and fees; as well as a waiver of re-entry ban stamps for Syrians and Palestine refugees from Syria (PRS), for the period between 1 July and 30 September 2025.

On 2 July, UNHCR updated its [UNHCR HELP Lebanon – Voluntary Return page](#) and disseminated information on the voluntary return programme through its social media and outreach networks. Since March 2025, over 6,000 queries have been received by UNHCR's National Call Center related to returns. Over 3,000 families, composed of an estimated 12,000 individuals, have also expressed interest in the self-organized voluntary return programme.

UNHCR is **upscaling its response to facilitate return for Syrians** known to UNHCR who are ready to return home, including with the provision of counselling and conducting of voluntariness assessments. The first few families have been provided Repatriation Forms and will receive their one-time return cash grant this week, and will be able to safely cross through official crossing points from next week.

As of 26 June, the number of people displaced into the North and Akkar Governorates of North Lebanon is **29,465**, following movements that began in early March from the Tartous, Latakia, Homs, and Hama Governorates of Syria. Recent revisions to the figures for new arrivals still residing in the North are based on the latest round of distributions. This lower number is for assistance planning purposes and agreed as the current baseline. This is to manage the very fluid population and frequent movements between locations, new arrivals continuing to come in handfuls and onward internal movements to other parts of Lebanon.

As of end of June, the Baalbek Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in the Bekaa is reporting 72,715 new arrivals since December 2024, including approximately 18,469 arrivals in Baalbek Governorate, North Bekaa, residing in 145 informal collective shelters, and approximately 56,981 residing in the community.

Jordan

On 1 July, the Emirati-Jordanian camp (EJC) closed following a five-week operation coordinated by UNHCR to support refugees with relocating to Azraq camp or voluntarily returning to Syria. Out of more than 6,000 refugees residing in EJC, some 1,100 were relocated to Azraq and **nearly 5,000 chose to return to Syria**, including through facilitated and spontaneous returns. The closure was carried out in coordination with the Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate, the Emirates Red Crescent, UNICEF, WFP, and other partners.

In June, **more than 26,000 refugees returned from Jordan to Syria**. The average daily number of refugee returnees during the reporting period slightly decreased this week to around 890 compared to some 960 last week. Overall, from 1 January to 28 June, approximately **99,000 refugees registered with UNHCR returned to Syria**. The pace of refugee returns fluctuated throughout this period. After more than 22,000 returns in January, the number of returnees declined in February to some 18,500 and then dropped sharply in March, reaching a low of just 6,500. This decrease is attributed to refugees' intention to return after Ramadan or in the summer, after the end of the school year. Another factor which influenced refugees' decision to postpone their return was the security situation in Syria with outbreaks of violence in coastal areas in March. From April, the pace of returns steadily accelerated, rising from 10,500 to approximately 15,000 in May, and reaching 26,000 in June, the highest monthly total so far this year. This surge can be linked to the conclusion of school exams.

From 8 December 2024 to the present, 56 per cent of returnees moved to Syria as complete families, the rest are partial returns with one or some family members returning while others remain in Jordan. This reflects a cautious, phased approach to returns, driven by refugees' preference to send some family members to Syria first to assess conditions on the ground. The proportion of refugees returning from camps remained stable at around 18 per cent for most of the year, but in June it rose to nearly 23 per cent, mainly due to returns from the EJC. The majority of refugees continue to return from host communities, primarily from Amman and Irbid. Demographics of returnees remained unchanged from previous weeks, with women and girls representing around 47 per cent of the total refugee returnees. Children accounted for around 42 per cent, and men of military age (18-40 years old) made up around 21 per cent of overall returns. More details about the numbers and profile of returnees are available on [UNHCR Jordan's returns dashboard](#).

From 1 to 3 July, **UNHCR facilitated transportation** for more than 380 refugees returning from Amman, Irbid and Azraq camp to Syria. Overall, since the start of the transportation process on 20 January 2025, UNHCR has been able to support only about 4,500 refugees to return to Syria, despite many more requesting assistance, due to lack of sufficient funding. 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.

Iraq

Between 8 December 2024 and 30 June 2025, **over 2,700 refugees and asylum-seekers registered with UNHCR have returned from Iraq to Syria**. From among the registered refugees and asylum-seekers, 2,581 returned through Peshkhabour border crossing point and were processed by UNHCR and local authorities at the Derabon return centre in Zakho Administration. Another 126 registered refugees and asylum-seekers returned to Syria via Erbil airport, with border authorities sharing a copy of their registration certificate with UNHCR. Furthermore, according to Al-Qaim border authorities, 221 Syrians, who verbally declared having registered with UNHCR, also crossed the border to Syria during the reporting period.

Over the last week, UNHCR observed an increase in the number of Syrian refugees and asylum-seekers returning through Peshkhabour border crossing point, with 445 individuals returning compared to 279 the previous week. This increase is primarily attributed to the decision of the Kurdistan Regional Government to waive overstay fines for Syrians, including refugees and asylum-seekers, and facilitate their return. The directive grants a 60-day grace period, starting from 15 June, for Syrians with expired residence permits or those who entered the Kurdistan Region of Iraq irregularly to regularize their legal status.

Additionally, **more than 22,000 Syrians who had not sought asylum in Iraq have crossed the border to Syria** since 8 December 2024. From among this group, over 9,600 crossed to Syria from Peshkhabour border crossing point while some 12,500 through Al-Qaim border crossing point.

Egypt

As of 30 June 2025, approximately **130,000 Syrian refugees are registered in Egypt**, around 600 fewer than the previous week. Syrian refugees now account for approximately 13% of the total refugee population in the country.

Since the fall of the former Government of 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 30 June 2025, around **10,318 closure** requests involving around **22,764 individuals** were submitted since 8 December 2024, averaging 83 requests per day – compared to just seven per day in November 2024. In addition, **18,678 individuals** have been closed as spontaneous departures, reflecting a growing perception among many Syrians that return may now be viable.

Since May 2025, UNHCR instituted an **on-the-spot closure procedure**, which has improved responsiveness to the increase in requests. This new system allows for immediate processing when all family members are present at the UNHCR Registration-Reception Centre, eliminating the need for prior appointments. Since its rollout for the Syrian caseload, a total of 1,958 households – comprising 5,773 individuals – have been closed through these streamlined procedures.

On 24 June, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Emigration, and Egyptian Expatriates, in partnership with UNHCR and UNDP, **launched Egypt's first ERRRP 2025**, appealing for USD 339 million to address the growing needs of refugees and host communities, including 130,000 Syrian refugees. The launch convened representatives from the Government of Egypt (GoE), UN agencies, the diplomatic community, humanitarian and development partners, international financial institutions, and civil society. The plan aims to address the comprehensive needs of refugees and affected host communities in Egypt, while fostering strategic dialogue on resilience, social inclusion, and burden and responsibility-sharing, in alignment with the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). The ERRRP, developed through an interagency partnership involving 30 organizations, will serve as a strategic platform for coordinated planning, programming, advocacy, and resource mobilization to support and complement the GoE's efforts in providing protection, assistance, and sustainable solutions to refugees, asylum seekers, and host communities.

Useful links

- [Regional Flash Update #33, 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](#)

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