

Regional Flash Update #54

Syria situation

21 November 2025



This family was part of the ninth voluntary return convoy of Syrian refugees from Lebanon to Syria on 13 November. Up to 362 refugees crossed through Jdaidet Yabous, returning to governorates including Idlib, Homs, Hama, and Rural Damascus. ©UNHCR/Vivian Toumei

Key Highlights

- As of 20 November, UNHCR estimates that **1,246,037 individuals** have returned to Syria from other countries since 8 December 2024. As of 13 November, **1,944,762 internally displaced persons (IDPs)** are estimated to have returned to their areas of origin, of whom 1,062,229 departed from IDP sites in northwest and northeast Syria.
- An *IDP Movement Intentions Survey* carried out in Syria by the UNHCR-led CCCM Sector, in coordination with REACH and 15 NGO partners ([dashboard link](#)) between 7 and 26 September reveals that 27% of the households interviewed plan to return to their areas of origin/former habitual residence while 57% plan to stay in displacement sites. The main barriers to return cited include: lack of basic housing and/or concerns over property/housing; lack of basic services such as electricity, water and health services; lack of employment and no financial means to return.
- As part of its self-reliance and economic inclusion programmes, this year UNHCR Syria has so far supported 1,239 livelihood projects through the cash and in-kind modalities. The majority of recipients were refugee and IDP returnees across the 14 Syrian governorates.

- UNHCR provided 660 refugee returnees with logistical and transportation support from Jousseh (Syria-Lebanon) border crossing point and at Sarmada and Sejjo bus stations after Bab Al-Hawa and Al-Salama (Syria-Turkiye) crossing points to various destinations.
- To support the reintegration of returnees, including IDP returnees from Al Hol camp, UNHCR and its partners continue to offer relevant support in areas of return, including legal assistance and referral to relevant medical services.
- On 17 November, Türkiye's Minister of Interior Ali Yerlikaya stated that voluntary, safe, dignified and orderly returns of Syrians have continued to gain momentum, noting that [557,702 Syrians returned to Syria between 9 December 2024 and 12 November 2025](#).
- With the Presidential decision published in the Official Journal on 19 November, [Deputy Foreign Minister Nuh Yılmaz has officially been appointed](#) as Türkiye's new ambassador to Syria.

Country Updates

Syria

IDP Movement Intentions Survey: The UNHCR-led CCCM Sector, in coordination with REACH and 15 NGO partners, has published the latest IDP Movement Intentions Survey report ([dashboard link](#)). Carried out between 7 and 26 September among 4,663 households in 468 IDP sites across the country, the survey reveals that:

- 27% of the households interviewed plan to return to their areas of origin/former habitual residence. Of these, 50% plan to return within 12 months, 15% within six months and 11% within three months while 24% are uncertain of the timeline.
- The main pull factors for return include emotional desire to return (66%); better access to employment/living opportunities (43%); family reasons (39%) and better access to housing (36%).
- 74% of the households have visited their area of origin/intended destination to assess the situation.
- The highest return projections are to Kafr Nobol in Idlib governorate (17.6%); Madiq Castle in Hama (7.4%); Maarrat An Numan sub-district in Idlib (6.7%).
- Overall, 57% of the households interviewed plan to stay in displacement sites, with the main barriers to return to areas of origin including: lack of basic housing and/or concerns over property/housing (74%); lack of basic services, e.g. electricity, water, health (63%); lack of employment (63%) and no financial means to return, including inability to afford transportation (44%).
- Since December 2024, the CCCM Sector and partners have monitored the first wave of the estimated 1 million IDP returns from sites, noting that the increased reluctance of the remaining population in camps, mostly individuals with protection considerations, housing, land and property access limitations, calls for particular attention and support to the most vulnerable individuals over the next 12 months.

UNHCR supported 660 refugee returnees with logistical and transportation support from Jousseh (Syria-Lebanon) border crossing point and at Sarmada and Sejjo bus stations after Bab Al-Hawa and Al-Salama (Syria-Turkiye) crossing points to various destinations. UNHCR and WFP distributed ready-to-eat food baskets and high-energy biscuits to 765 returnees at transit bus stations in Idlib and Aleppo, while UNFPA and UNHCR provided hygiene kits to over 150 women and girls returning home.

Furthermore, on 20 November, 186 refugees returned from Lebanon through the Al-Arida border crossing point under the joint programme coordinated by UNHCR Syria, UNHCR and IOM Lebanon, and Syria's General Authority for Land and Sea Ports. Humanitarian assistance was provided at the crossing point to address immediate needs, including transportation, relief items, psychosocial support, and legal aid. Since the year began, over 25,000 refugee returnees have received assistance at the key border crossing points with Türkiye and Lebanon.

Shelter rehabilitation activities progressed significantly during the week. In Lattakia governorate, 50 rehabilitated houses have been handed over to the beneficiaries while in Qastal Maaf, of the 100 partially damaged houses under rehabilitation, 87 have been completed and handed over to their owners. In southern Syria, UNHCR and partners have finalized the rehabilitation of 50 partially damaged apartments in Dar'aa while that of 59 partially damaged apartments in Hrak is almost complete.

As winter sets in, the provision of winterization support progresses, including the distribution of winter clothing and shelter materials. In Aleppo, UNHCR and its partners supported 1,766 IDP and refugee returnee households across Fafin in the northeast, and villages in the southern and western rural of Aleppo with winter kits.

The distribution of return and reintegration grants to refugee returnees, aimed at supporting them meet immediate needs on return back home, has continued, with each eligible household receiving USD 600. The cumulative number of beneficiaries currently stands at 36,102 households (116,101 individuals).

As part of its self-reliance and economic inclusion programmes, UNHCR has so far supported 1,239 livelihood projects through the cash and in-kind modalities. The majority of recipients were refugee and IDP returnees across the 14 Syrian governorates. The distribution of cash for livelihoods is ongoing for an additional 407 individuals in Hassakeh, Ar-Raqqa, Lattakia, Rural Damascus and Aleppo.

The rehabilitation of Al Khalil Vocational Training School in Bab Al-Nayrab, Aleppo, which was damaged during the conflict, has been completed. The school is expected to serve an estimated 500 youth from different neighborhoods in Aleppo city per year, equipping them with market-relevant skills to enable them access employment or start their own businesses.

Following months of closure since the outbreak of violence in July, the Cadastral Office in Sweida has resumed its functions with the issuance of documents such as real estate statements, placing claim notices as well as other real estate-related services.

On 17 November, UNHCR launched the *ARRIVE Call Center*, designed to assist refugee returnees by providing them with accurate information and support. During the initial phase, the service will focus on addressing inquiries related to return and reintegration cash assistance. This initiative aims to reduce the need for refugee returnees to visit community centers for updates on assistance status, phone number changes, and similar requests, improving accessibility and efficiency.

During the reporting period, the [Syria is Home](#) platform received 3,000 visitors, illustrating an ever-increasing interest in information on the country, processes and services available to support Syrians' return journey home, and available services. The highest number of visitors were from Syria followed by Lebanon, Jordan, Türkiye, and Germany.

During the reporting period, UNHCR and its partners reached out to 289 households, bringing the total to 34,012 households (mainly IDP returnees and refugee returnees) who have participated in the protection monitoring exercise this year.

UNHCR response in Al Hol and Roj camps

The registration process by the camp authorities for the 31st Iraqi repatriation trip is underway, with the tentative departure date set for 1 December.

Under the ongoing Care and Maintenance Program for Al Hol camp, and in support of the consolidation plan and site reorganization, several UNHCR projects are in progress, including road rehabilitation and improvement of the reception area. To facilitate the relocation of families as part of the camp consolidation plan, UNHCR and its partner St. Ephrem Patriarchal Development Committee (EPDC), and in coordination with the Camp Management, has distributed 166 tents, with distribution still ongoing. In preparation for the winter season, UNHCR and its partners conducted a joint assessment across all phases and annexes of Al Hol and Roj camps. Consequently, the tent replacement process, supported by Camp Management, has started in the Annexes, with 1,030 tents replaced to date and work continuing. In parallel, the verification process for both Syrian and Iraqi families in Al Hol camp, as well as in Roj camp, has been finalized and the tent replacement scheduled to commence soon.

Through the tent repair project in Al Hol camp, UNHCR, in partnership with the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East (GOPA), has launched a new initiative to adjust canvas sheets/rolls to fit modified tents. The workshop has expanded its capacity to engage more camp residents through cash-for-work opportunities, providing them with jobs in the adjustment of rolls. It now produces up to 50 canvas units per day, which UNHCR will distribute to families in Al Hol camp that have modified their tents.

Reintegration support for returnees from Al Hol: To support the reintegration of returnees, including IDP returnees from Al Hol camp, UNHCR offices in areas of return continue to offer relevant support to the households. In Aleppo, one of the main governorates of return for Syrians from Al Hol, UNHCR and its partner SARC are supporting returnees from Al Hol through legal counseling and court interventions, in coordination with the relevant authorities. The SARC legal team conducted four court interventions for the returnees during the reporting period, focused on addressing and resolving issues concerning marriage and parentage. Furthermore, UNHCR, in partnership with UNDP, is facilitating access to medical services, including through arranging referral for identified individuals with cancer to the Cancer Hospital in Aleppo. UNHCR has referred two female-headed households to UNDP, which is providing small business grants, for inclusion in the programme. The office will continue monitoring the cases to ensure appropriate support.

Türkiye

The 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 Zeytindalı / Jinderes and Çobanbey / Al Rai, which have been reopened for VolRep.

Since 8 December 2024, UNHCR has monitored the voluntary repatriation of nearly 410,000 Syrians. Currently, UNHCR monitors returns at 25 Provincial Directorate of Migration Management (PDMM) offices, in 22 provinces and at six border crossings in the south-east. UNHCR is also present at İstanbul and Sabiha Gökçen Airports in İstanbul and at Esenboğa Airport in Ankara. Ad

hoc monitoring of voluntary returns from Adana Sarıçam and İstanbul Arnavutköy Temporary Accommodation Centres (TAC) continues.

Most interviews were conducted in certain border and metropolitan provinces, which were also among the key places of residence for returnees prior to departure. A small number of individuals were interviewed in TACs and at the airports.

The main reasons for return have remained unchanged over time, with political developments, improved security, and family reunification or the need to attend family events being the most frequently mentioned. Other reasons include nostalgia or homesickness, the wish to reclaim property and the need to work. A smaller portion also cited economic difficulties and challenges in accessing housing in country of asylum.

The majority of returnees were heading to provinces in northern Syria, with Aleppo, Idlib, Damascus, and Hama among the most common destinations. Regarding accommodation, some returnees owned their homes or had property belonging to close relatives. While many reported that their houses were in good condition, others indicated partial damage or destruction. A significant portion confirmed they had valid documentation proving ownership.

A small portion of returnees lacked any Syrian-issued papers. Among those who did have documents, national identity cards, family booklets, and passports were the most common. Births and deaths in Türkiye were generally well-documented, but documentation rates for marriages and divorces were lower.

The demographic profile reflects a balanced gender distribution, with a significant share of children, nearly half being adults of working age, and only a small fraction aged 60 and above.

Before leaving Türkiye, many returnees were unemployed, while others worked in skilled trades, construction, agriculture, or trade. In Syria, a considerable number were expected to be without income initially and planned to look for work, including informal daily labour. Other anticipated sources of income included family or community support, assistance from spouses, or self-employment. Finally, almost one-third of returnees reported that at least one family member had attended school in Türkiye, with most obtaining official proof of the education received.

Jordan

During the last week, over 2,500 refugees registered with UNHCR returned to Syria, representing an 11 per cent decrease compared to the week before when some 2,800 refugees returned. Overall, as of 15 November, over 170,000 refugees registered with UNHCR have returned from Jordan to Syria since 8 December 2024. Demographics of returnees remained similar to previous weeks, with women and girls representing around 49 per cent of the total refugee returnees. Children accounted for around 43 per cent, and men 18-40 years old made up around 19 per cent of overall returns. The majority of refugees continue to return from host communities, primarily from Amman and Irbid. More details about the numbers and profile of returnees, including a section with insights on the skills level, are available on [UNHCR Jordan's returns dashboard](#).

UNHCR's transportation initiative continues to help refugees to return safely. Since 20 January 2025, more than 10,000 individuals have benefited from organized transport from Jordan to Syria, including 45 refugees assisted this week.

Alongside transportation, UNHCR provides cash assistance for voluntary return as part of the pilot initiative. As of 18 November, nearly 2,450 refugees have been approved for or received cash assistance. Refugees have two weeks to return to Syria after having received the assistance. Refugees who received cash assistance for voluntary return reported that their spending priorities mainly include transportation, debt repayment, and basic items like clothing and food. The return

process is closely coordinated with the UNHCR Operation in Syria to support refugees upon arrival at their final destination.

Lebanon

Since 8 December 2024, up to 30,487 Syrians have been monitored as post-December 2024 arrivals from Syria currently residing in Akkar and the North, and 67,098 currently residing in Bekaa and Baalbek-El Hermel, including an increase of 1,083 individuals and seven additional collective sites. According to the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) unit, this increase is partly attributable to the return of individuals who had temporarily left for seasonal agricultural work, as well as the inclusion of privately owned buildings collectively inhabited by post-December arrivals.

On 13 November, UNHCR, IOM, and the General Security Office (GSO) facilitated the ninth organized return of 362 individuals from Beirut via Masnaa to Idlib, Hama, Homs, and Rural Damascus. While five more movements are planned for 2025, a noticeable decrease in interest is observed.

Since 8 December 2024, UNHCR estimates some 383,326 Syrians have returned from or via Lebanon. Returns are taking place through official and unofficial border crossing points, which complicates tracking. Since January 2025, 335,749 Syrians known to UNHCR have been inactivated by either confirmation or presumed return to Syria.

Iraq

Between 8 December 2024 and 13 November 2025, over 6,600 refugees and asylum-seekers registered with UNHCR have returned from Iraq to Syria. Men represent 37% of the total of returnees, followed by women (24%), boys (20%) and girls (19%). Among them, over 6,400 returned through Peshkhabour border crossing point and were processed by UNHCR and local authorities at the Derabon return centre in Zakho Administration. Another 265 registered refugees and asylum-seekers returned to Syria via Erbil airport, with border authorities sharing a copy of their registration certificate with UNHCR. Most registered refugees and asylum-seekers returned to Aleppo, followed by Al-Hasakeh and Damascus.

Over the past week, the return of registered Syrian refugees through Peshkhabour border crossing point slightly increased compared to previous weeks with only 49 individuals returning to Syria. Most registered refugees and asylum-seekers returned to Aleppo, followed by Al-Hasakeh and Damascus. Registered refugees mentioned family reunification and improved security situation in their areas of origin as main reasons to return to Syria.

Egypt

As of 17 November 2025, approximately **119,837** Syrian refugees were registered in Egypt. Syrian refugees now account for approximately 11% of the total refugee population in the country.

Since the fall of the former Government of Syria, Syrians started approaching UNHCR in greater numbers to request the closure of their asylum cases. Between 8 December 2024 and 17 November 2025, 12,088 closure requests involving around 26,988 individuals were submitted, including on-the-spot closures. Among applicants who closed their files, 62% were male. In terms of origin, 40%

came from Damascus, 27% from Rural Damascus, 13% from Homs, 8% from Aleppo, and 12% from other Syrian locations.

Useful Links

- [Regional Flash Update #53, Syria Situation](#)
- [UNHCR Operational Framework for Voluntary Return of Syrian Refugees and IDPs](#)
- [Enhanced Refugee Perceptions and Intentions Survey \(eRPIS\)](#)
- [UNHCR Position on Returns to the Syrian Arab Republic \(16 December\)](#)
- [Syria Situation Data Portal](#)
- [Syria is Home Platform](#)
- [UNHCR Help Site](#)
- [UNHCR HELP Lebanon – Voluntary Return page](#)
- [UNHCR HELP Türkiye – Voluntary Repatriation page](#)

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