

Regional Flash Update #57

Syria situation

12 December 2025



Mahmoud, a Syrian father, fled Daraya, Rural Damascus, in 2013, and spent five years in Egypt. He and his family returned to Syria a few months ago and are trying to rebuild their lives. They were among the families that recently received winter relief items including blankets, winter jackets, plastic sheeting as well as woollen clothes and socks. ©UNHCR/Vivian Tou'meh

Key Highlights

- As of 11 December, UNHCR estimates that **1,275,882 individuals** have returned to Syria since 8 December 2024. Similarly, **1,955,090 individuals** have returned from displacement, 1,073,353 of whom departed from IDP sites, mainly in northeast and northwest Syria.
- UNHCR Syria supported 605 refugee returnees with logistical and transportation support from Joussieh border crossing point and at Sarmada and Sejjo bus stations after Bab Al-Hawa and Al-Salama crossing points to various destinations in Syria.
- Shelter rehabilitation efforts by UNHCR and its partners in Syria have included the repair of 109 houses in Dar'a, 163 in Deir ez Zor, 100 in Qastal Maaf, Lattakia and that of 665 partially damaged houses in Rural Damascus.

- The rehabilitation of collective shelters hosting IDPs displaced by the conflict that broke out in July in As-Sweida is advancing across Sweida and Dar'a governorates, as well as the installation of solar streetlights to enhance residents' protection.
- During the last week, nearly 3,000 refugees registered with UNHCR returned to Syria from Jordan, representing a 27 per cent increase compared to the previous week when around 2,300 refugees returned. Since 8 December 2024, more than 174,000 refugees registered with UNHCR have returned from Jordan to Syria.

Country Updates

Syria

During the past week, 9,015 individuals returned to Syria, bringing the total to **1,275,882 individuals** who have returned to the country since 8 December 2024. Furthermore, 5,789 IDPs returned from displacement, the majority (5,000) from IDP sites. This brings the total number of IDP returnees to **1,955,090 individuals**, 1,073,353 of whom departed from IDP sites, mainly in northwest and northeast Syria.

UNHCR supported 605 refugee returnees with logistical and transportation support from Joussieh border crossing point and at Sarmada and Sejjo bus stations after Bab Al-Hawa and Al-Salama crossing points to various destinations including Homs, Hama, Idlib, Aleppo and Rural Damascus. UNHCR and WFP distributed ready-to-eat food baskets and high-energy biscuits to 755 returnees at transit bus stations in Idlib and Aleppo.

The provision of cash assistance for Syrian refugee returnees continues, with 36,350 households (116,675 individuals) having received return grants to enable them meet immediate needs.

A Protection Strategy Workshop conducted by the Protection Sub-National Working Group in Damascus and Rural Damascus on 3 December brought together Child Protection and GBV AORs, INGOs, and NGOs to jointly analyze protection risks, define response priorities, and agree on intervention modalities. The workshop resulted in agreement on community-based and outreach response modalities, focusing on strengthening the capacity of local actors, enhancing coordination among new and existing service providers, expanding legal and Housing, Land and Property assistance, strengthening referral pathways, and advocacy with local authorities.

UNHCR's Sub Office in Aleppo participated in the *First National Forum for Advancing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda*, organized by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MOSAL) and UN Women in Idlib city to highlight the importance of women's participation in recovery, peace, and security processes. Attendance included women from across the country, Hind Kabawat, the MOSAL minister, and Hilde Haraldstad, Ambassador of Norway to Syria. UNHCR reiterated its commitment to supporting efforts that empower and involve women in the rebuilding of the country.

The rehabilitation of houses damaged during the conflict to afford returnees and host communities safe and dignified housing progresses across various governorates, including Dar'a, where the rehabilitation of 109 damaged houses has been completed as well as 163 in Deir ez Zor, 100 in Qastal Maaf, Lattakia, and 300 in Aleppo. In Rural Damascus, the rehabilitation of 665 partially damaged houses in seven locations is almost complete, while works on 96 housing units in the Herjelleh collective shelter have reached 75% completion.

The installation of streetlights, aimed at enhancing communities' protection and access to services, is being undertaken by UNHCR and its partners, with that of 800 solar streetlight devices in various

locations across Deir Ez-Zor underway, and that of 400 solar streetlights across Lattakia city and Qadmous complete. The installation of 1,000 solar streetlight devices in Homs and Hama continues, with 25 devices allocated to the border point at Al Dabousieh. Across rural Aleppo, 1,539 solar streetlight devices are being set up in various locations.

The procurement of tools, goods, equipment and machinery to support 557 households initiate small start-up business projects (SSBP) aimed at strengthening their self-reliance and resilience, is ongoing in Homs, Hama, Aleppo, Rural Damascus, Tartous and Lattakia. Once distributed, 2,250 households would have been supported, 72% of them IDP and refugee returnees.

Legal services were provided through multiple channels to address the civil documentation and legal needs of refugee returnees. In Homs, three visits were made to the Civil Affairs Directorate as part of the civil statute response, during which legal needs were assessed, and consultations provided to 64 individuals seeking assistance. UNHCR's legal partner, SARC, conducted 20 awareness sessions in Al-Hassakeh and Raqqa, northeast Syria, covering the issuance of civil documents, marriage and child affiliation, and HLP-related topics. In addition, 21 individuals benefited from legal counseling in both governorates, and 18 interventions before administrative bodies conducted in Raqqa.

As the winter season progresses, UNHCR has been completing the distribution of winter assistance. A total of 1,235 households (5,108 individuals) in Al-Hassakeh governorate have received kits comprising blankets, plastic sheets, family winter clothes kits and winter jackets, as well as 1,213 households (6,816 individuals) in Tel Saman camp. In Dar'a, UNHCR, in coordination with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, distributed winterization kits to 9,316 households (44,629 individuals) as well as Core Relief Item (CRI) kits to 6,052 households (30,937 individuals).

In As-Sweida, the distribution of 568 indoor solar devices to IDP returnees and IDP families has been finalized, benefiting 2,080 individuals. An additional 34 households (112 individuals) in Mazra'a - Sijn, Rima Hazem, Walgha, and Thaala, As-Sweida governorate have received the solar devices, which support households' energy needs given the limited electricity supply in the country. In Deir ez Zor, the rehabilitation of 112 housing units and installation of electric cabling within has begun, enhancing the communities' access to safe housing, particularly this winter season.

During the reporting period, the **Syria is Home** platform, providing credible information on the situation in Syria and the voluntary return process, received **1,500** visitors (57.7% male and 42.3% female), with the highest number from Syria followed by Lebanon, Türkiye, Jordan, and Germany.

Protection monitoring: UNHCR reached out to 140 households, bringing the total to 34,960 households (mainly IDP returnees and refugee returnees) who have successfully completed the questionnaires as part of the protection monitoring exercise. Up to 2,039 key informant interviews have taken place nationwide in the exercise.

As-Sweida emergency response

The rehabilitation of collective shelters hosting IDPs displaced by the conflict that broke out in July is advancing across Sweida and Dar'a. In Sweida, rehabilitation of the Sports Club in Salkhad is completed; the Municipal Stadium in Shahba and both the Farmers Union facility in Sweida City and Al-Mahdi Shrine in Murdak are being rehabilitated, while that of five schools is complete. Furthermore, solar streetlights are being installed, with 50 emergency-response units completed in both Sweida and Dar'a.

A total of 5,065 IDP women and girls have received dignity kits since the onset of the Sweida situation, while over 1,938 displaced women have received GBV services, including case management, since the onset of the Sweida situation. Over 6,609 children have benefited from child

protection interventions to alleviate emotional stress caused by displacement since the start of the Sweida situation.

Türkiye

[Marking the first anniversary of the fall of the Assad regime](#), the [Minister of Interior](#) announced on 8 December that 578,000 Syrians have voluntarily, safely, dignifiedly and orderly returned from Türkiye to Syria since 8 December 2024, and that a total of 1,318,000 Syrians have returned voluntarily since 2016.

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 around 425,000 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, 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, nearly 3,000 refugees registered with UNHCR returned to Syria, representing a 27 per cent increase compared to the previous week when around 2,300 refugees returned. Since 8 December 2024, more than 174,000 refugees registered with UNHCR have returned from Jordan to Syria. Throughout the year, monthly return rates varied, with the peak of 28,000 returnees recorded in July.

Demographics of returnees remained stable throughout the year, with an almost equal distribution between women and men. Children accounted for around 43 per cent, and men 18-40 years old made up around 19 per cent of overall returns. Most refugees returned from host communities, primarily from Amman (40,000) and Irbid (39,000), with smaller number of returns from Zaatar camp (26,000) and Azraq camp (11,000). More details about the numbers and profile of returnees, including a section with insights on their skills levels, are available on [UNHCR Jordan's returns dashboard](#).

Throughout the year, UNHCR Jordan has assisted refugees with returns through counselling, information sharing, transportation and cash assistance. This includes around 3,000 refugees included the cash assistance for voluntary return pilot launched in September 2025, and more than 10,100 refugees who used UNHCR-provided buses to return to Syria since January 2025.

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

Lebanon

As of 30 November, a total of 112,089 Syrians have been monitored as post-December 2024 arrivals from Syria. Of these, 65,279 are currently residing in Bekaa and Baalbek-El Hermel, 31,072 in the Akkar and North governorates, and 15,738 in other regions.

Since 8 December 2024, UNHCR estimates some 437,586 Syrians have returned from or via Lebanon. Returns are taking place through official and unofficial border crossing points, which complicates tracking. Since January 2025, 379,103 Syrians known to UNHCR have been inactivated by either confirmation or presumed return to Syria.

On 4 December, UNHCR, IOM, and the General Security Office (GSO) organized the 12th voluntary return movement from Beirut, involving 185 individuals. By the end of November, a total of 45,195 Syrian individuals known to UNHCR underwent the facilitated Voluntary Return (VolRep) programme. 94% of those who were facilitated with VolRep self-organized their transport back to Syria, while 6% were provided organized transportation by IOM and UNHCR. One additional movement is planned for the remainder of 2025, scheduled for 17 December.

Iraq

Between 8 December 2024 and 4 December 2025, over 6,800 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 6,500 returned through Peshkhabour border crossing point and were processed by UNHCR and local authorities at the Derabon return centre in Zakho Administration. Another 303 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, only 50 registered Syrian refugees returned through Peshkhabour border crossing point. 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 9 December 2025, over 118,851 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 9 December 2025, 12,513 closure requests involving around 27,293 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 #56, 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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CONTACTS

UNHCR Syria

SYRIAreporting@unhcr.org

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