

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	2259
Land:	Syrien
Kilde:	UNHCR
Titel:	UNHCR Facilitated Return of Syrian Refugees – Lebanon, May 2026
Udgivet:	8. juni 2026
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	31. juli 2026

CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENTS



444,389

Syrians crossed from Lebanon into Syria (Syrian GABC)



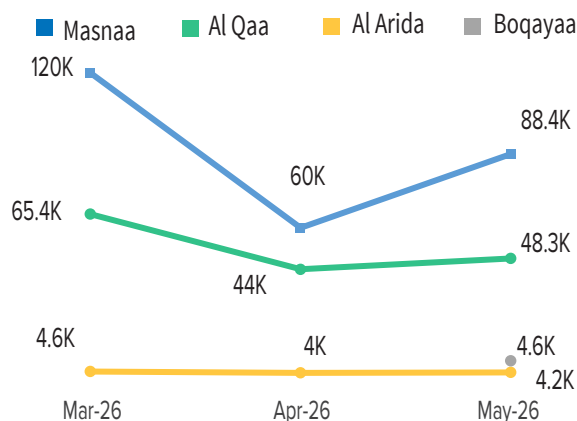
356,478

Syrians crossed from Lebanon into Syria (Lebanese GSO)

Since the escalation of hostilities on 2 March 2026, and until 31 May, the Syrian General Authority for Border and Customs (GABC) estimates that **444,389 Syrians crossed from Lebanon into Syria**, while the Lebanese General Security Office (GSO) estimates that **356,478 Syrians departed through Official Crossing Points (OCPs)** during the same reporting period.

In April 2026, movements of Syrians from Lebanon to Syria stabilized to an **average of 3,600 individuals per day** through the main official crossing points (OCPs) – Masnaa and Al Qaa; with fewer movements reported through the Arida and Boqayaa OCPs since their reopening for pedestrian-only crossing on 8 March and 4 May respectively. While some movements to Syria are driven by the escalating conflict in Lebanon, others reflect previously planned movements. Syrians crossing include people known, and not known to UNHCR, namely both refugees and Syrians who have stayed in Lebanon under various visa and sponsorship arrangements, or returning from temporary visits. A notable increase in movements was observed in the week leading up to the **Eid al-Adha holiday, with an average of 7,500 individuals crossing per day**, but this returned to pre-holiday figures by the end of the month.

Monthly Cross-Border Movements Reported by Syrian Authorities (2 March to 31 May)



Since March 2026, UNHCR has undertaken **50 missions** to OCPs, and conducted interviews with a **sample of 707 Syrians** both known (52%) and not known (48%) to UNHCR, as they were departing to Syria; 53% were conducted with adult men and 47% with adult women. Most Syrians (96%) were between 18 and 59 years old. Most Syrian families (50%) were observed traveling in complete male-headed families, while 48% were single adult males. Furthermore, while **55% of Syrians interviewed in March** indicated they were leaving Lebanon **due to the security situation**; this dropped to **only 7% citing the security situation as their main motivation in May** (a further reduction from 24% in April). The majority (52%) in May indicated they were leaving for family reasons. Among the Syrians interviewed, 20% indicated an intention to return to Damascus, 14% to (Rural) Damascus, 13% to Aleppo and 12% to Homs. These findings are based on a random sample and are not representative of the profiles and intentions of all returning Syrians, including those known to UNHCR.

RETURN HIGHLIGHTS (as of end-May 2026)

634,749

Syrians known to UNHCR returned to Syria since 1 Jan. 2025 (confirmed or presumed)

561,860

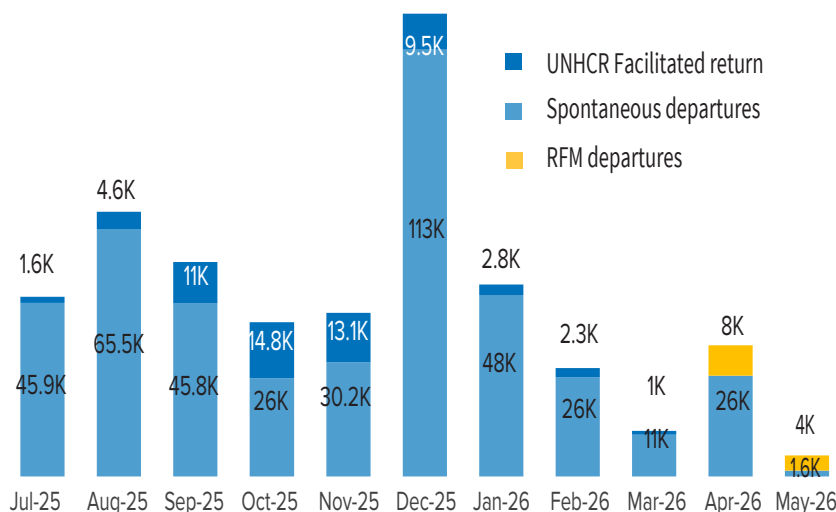
Syrians known to UNHCR spontaneously returned to Syria (confirmed or presumed)

72,889

Syrians directly supported by UNHCR with VolRep or RFM

Since January 2025, **634,749 Syrians known to UNHCR** have been confirmed or presumed to have returned to Syria, and consequently inactivated from UNHCR's records. Among these, **89% spontaneously returned** to Syria – including 12% who returned under duress in late 2024 and remained in Syria; 22% who were identified by GSO when passing through OCPs without Repatriation Forms; and 4% so far identified by GSO as having returned due to force majeure (RFM) (after 2 March 2026). Among the 634,749 Syrians who returned, **11% (72,889 individuals) were facilitated to return by UNHCR** – 60,793 under the voluntary return programme and **12,096 under the return due to force majeure programme** since 1 April 2026. Spontaneous departure figures reflected in the chart indicate date of inactivation from UNHCR's database and not date of departure, accounting for the large number of inactivation in December 2025 due to the completion of the presence verification exercise.

UNHCR - Facilitated Return vs Spontaneous Departure*



*An additional 120,000 individuals were also inactivated prior to 1 July 2025 before the launch of the facilitated voluntary return programme.

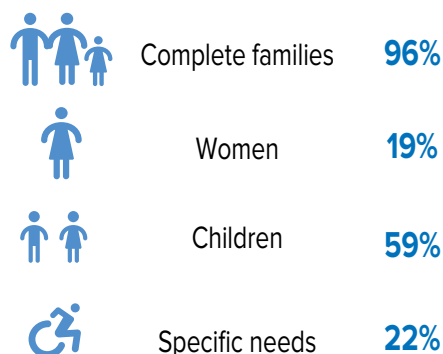
For more information on the UNHCR-supported voluntary programme, please visit [UNHCRHelp – Voluntary Return](#) page.

UNHCR-facilitated: Return due to force majeure

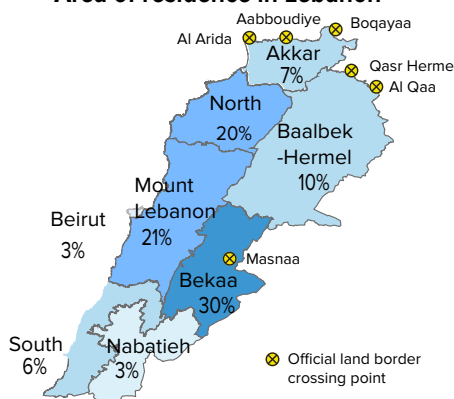
In response to the escalation of hostilities in Lebanon, UNHCR launched the return due to force majeure (RFM) programme on 1 April 2026, based on a humanitarian imperative to alleviate harm and support refugees who were left with no viable alternative other than to return to Syria. While returns in the current adverse conditions of hostilities in Lebanon is not considered voluntary, UNHCR provides this support as a harm-reduction measure, aiming to assist and support with transportation, food and other essential items during return to Syria under the current volatile conditions. Returning cases are shared with UNHCR in Syria for follow-up and assistance inside Syria. By the end of April, over **19,000 individuals (4,300 families)** contacted UNHCR and were provided **counselling** on RFM and information on services available in Syria. Among the Syrians counselled, **12,096 individuals (2,622 families)** made the decision to return to Syria and were provided with USD 100 cash grant per returning individual.

Returns: Demographic

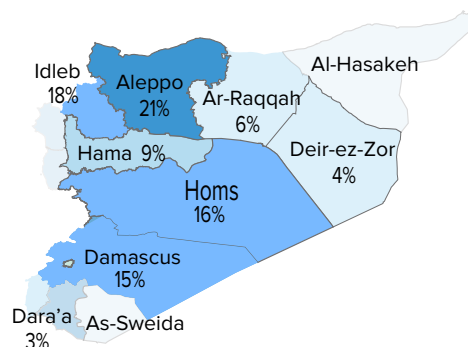
UNHCR - Facilitated Return: RFM



Area of residence in Lebanon



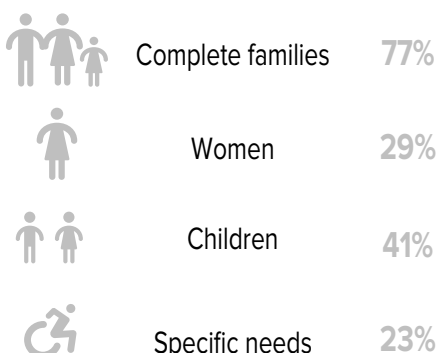
Intended area of return in Syria



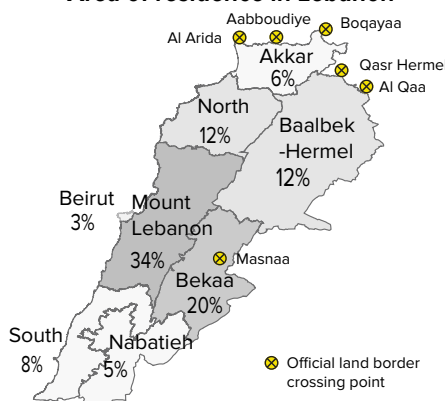
Among the 12,096 individuals assisted under the programme, 40% resided in Bekaa, Baalbek and Hermel, 27% in North and Akkar, 24% in Beirut and Mt. Lebanon, and 9% in South and Nabatieh. **15% were internally displaced within Lebanon prior to their return to Syria**, viewing return as their only viable alternative to safety. Only **71% of the households indicated that they planned to return to their areas of origin in Syria**, compared to 84% of families who previously returned under the voluntary return programme, suggesting an urgency to return due to the ongoing conflict. Among the RFM, 21% indicated planned return to Aleppo, 18% to Idlib, 16% to Homs and 15% to Rural Damascus.

19% of those assisted with RFM were women and 59% were children, making **78% of returnees women and children**. 22% of those who were assisted to return due to force majeure have a protection need, notably 10% with a serious medical condition and 4% having a disability. Importantly, **96% returned in complete families** – substantially higher than the 85% who returned in complete families under the voluntary return programme. Of the adults who returned due to force majeure, **61% cited poor living conditions in Lebanon** while **28% cited the insecurity and conflict in Lebanon** (down from 35% in April) as the main drivers for their return.

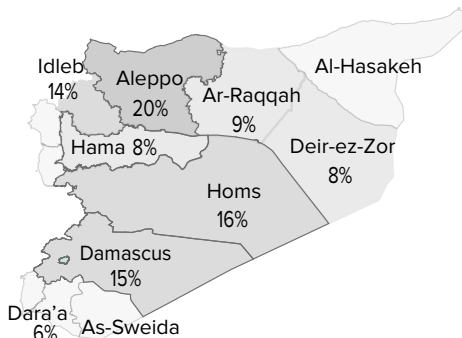
Spontaneous Departure



Area of residence in Lebanon



Presumed area of return in Syria



Among the 561,860 Syrian individuals who spontaneously returned, **fewer families (77%) returned in complete families** compared to the 85% returning in complete families of those facilitated with VolRep and 96% returning in complete families of those facilitated with RFM. Prior to spontaneous return, 37% resided in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, 32% in Bekaa, Baalbek and Hermel, 18% in North and Akkar, and 13% in South and Nabatieh. Those who returned spontaneously are presumed to have returned to their areas of origin – 20% to Aleppo, 16% to Homs, 15% to Damascus and Rural Damascus and 14% to Idlib. Furthermore, 29% of those who returned spontaneously are women and 41% are children – **70% of spontaneous returnees being women and children**. 23% of individuals who returned spontaneously have identified specific protection needs.

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is grateful for the support provided by donors who contributed to the Lebanon operation and specifically, the facilitated return programme.