

## Update: Durable Solutions for Syrian Refugees

The May/June update on durable solutions for Syrian refugees focuses on the Global Compact for Refugees, UNHCR’s Comprehensive Protection and Solutions Strategy for Syrian refugees, and Housing Land and Property in Syria.

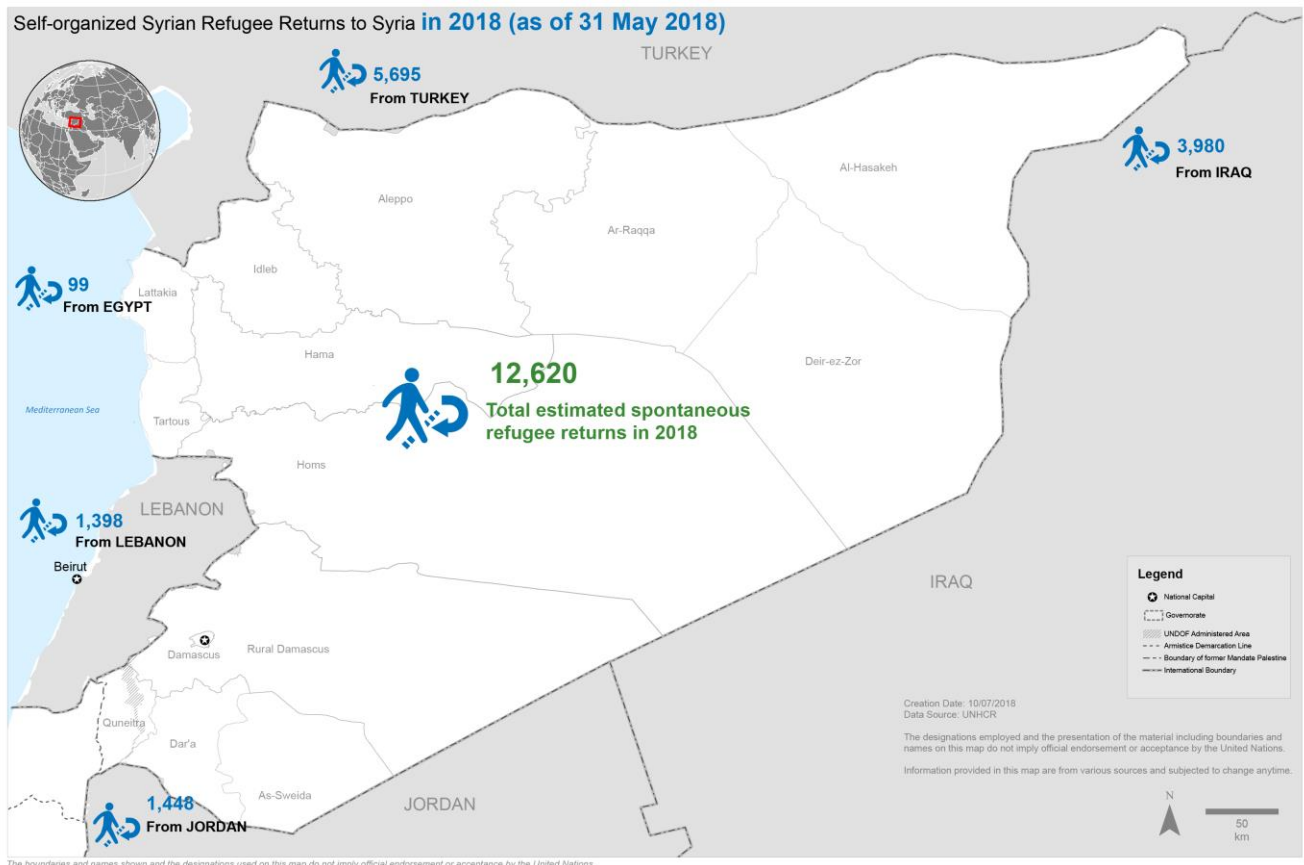
### Introduction and global developments

The conflict in Syria continues to drive the largest displacement crisis in the world. There are over 5.6 million refugees across the region and over six million people remain internally displaced. While the necessary safeguards and access required under international law for the UN to organise or encourage voluntary repatriation are not yet in place in Syria, UNHCR continues to work on identifying and removing the obstacles to refugee returns in safety and dignity and on supporting host countries to maintain a dignified protection space. Simultaneously, UNHCR is advocating for more resettlement places and other pathways to third countries for the many thousands of refugees in dire need of such a solution.

Global developments also illustrate the importance given to the search for and achievement of durable solutions for Syrian and other refugees. A key component of the ongoing formal consultations on the draft text of the Global Compact on Refugees<sup>1</sup> aims to ensure “a more equitable sharing of the burden and responsibility for hosting and supporting the world’s refugees” including through bringing greater predictability, and engaging a wider range of States and stakeholders, for the achievement of solutions. The sixth and final round of formal consultations will take place in the first week of July. Thereafter, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees will formally propose the Global Compact in his 2018 annual report to the General Assembly.

### Key Figures: Return and Resettlement

#### Self-Organized Syrian refugee returns in 2018



<sup>1</sup> For more information on the Global Compact and CRRF, see <http://www.unhcr.org/towards-a-global-compact-on-refugees.html>

## Resettlement needs, targets, and submissions

**10%** Of Syrian refugees are in need of and meet resettlement criteria.

**<0,7%** Of Syrian refugees will be submitted for resettlement

As of May 2018

|         | Target* | Cumulative Resettlement Submissions 2018- May 2018 |
|---------|---------|--|
| Lebanon | 9,500   | 3,832  |
| Turkey  | 14,500  | 5,073  |
| Jordan  | 8,908   | 2,467  |
| Iraq    | 1,350   | 265  |
| Egypt   | 2,500   | 719  |
| Total   | 36,758  | 12,356   |

\*“Targets” are based on 2018 resettlement quotas/places set by countries receiving resettled refugees. These are subject to change/increase, but remain well below needs.

## Comprehensive Protection and Solutions Strategy for Syrian Refugees

UNHCR’s overall approach toward Syrian refugees is anchored in a comprehensive protection and solutions strategy, and is aligned with the four pillars of the Global Compact for Refugees and Comprehensive Refugees Response Framework to: i) support host country resilience; ii) enable refugee self-reliance; iii) expand access to resettlement and other safe pathways to a third country, and; iv) plan for voluntary repatriation of refugees to Syria in safety and dignity.

As part of its series on *Comprehensive Protection and Solutions Strategy*, UNHCR recently issued a second strategic paper presenting *A Roadmap to Advance Resettlement and Complementary Pathways in The Syria Crisis*.

By enabling the transfer of refugees from an asylum country to another State that has agreed to admit and grant them permanent settlement, resettlement is arguably the most tangible and direct form of responsibility-sharing by the international community. It is a key intervention that provides an effective solution to refugee men, women, girls and boys who face particular vulnerabilities in the country of asylum. In parallel, it eases the burden on strained national and humanitarian systems, such as for healthcare or cash assistance. This in turn makes it more likely that asylum space will be maintained, and positive refugee policies on access to services and national systems will be applied.

However, despite earlier commitments by States and repeated calls by UNHCR and countries in the region to increase resettlement quotas, including in connection with the Brussels II Conference, these opportunities are diminishing. While one in ten Syrian refugees met resettlement criteria in 2017, only one in 200 benefited from this opportunity last year (37,179 individuals were submitted in 2017, less than 0.7% of the total population) and 2018 resettlement places might be even lower. This is likely to have a direct impact, not only on the lives and well-being of individuals in urgent need of resettlement, but also on the hospitality and willingness of the neighbouring countries to continue providing protection to very high numbers of Syrian refugees.

The *Roadmap* issued by UNHCR outlines strategic objectives to guide efforts to meet the needs of 10% of the refugee population in need of resettlement. It includes the following objectives: 1) Assist States to provide more resettlement and complementary pathway opportunities; 2) Enhance collaboration with partners to advocate for more places, while improving identification and referrals; and 3) Expand complementary pathways.

Complementary pathways offer migration avenues that may not necessarily focus on vulnerability but on other criteria that might qualify a refugee for entry into a third country. While some complementary pathways such as private

sponsorship and humanitarian visas may be based on protection and vulnerability criteria, other complementary pathways that support work, study and family reunification can facilitate refugees' acquisition and retention of skills, stability, family unity and self-reliance. These pathways can allow refugees to regain normalcy in life, integrate into their local communities and pursue secure and sustainable futures, including future return to Syria.

## Housing, Land and Property in Syria

In Syria, there are growing needs to address Housing, Land and Property (HLP) matters to ensure that spontaneously returning IDPs and refugees have access to their properties. From this Perspective, the United Nations (including UNHCR), under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator, is engaged with the Government of Syria on HLP issues to ensure that the housing, land and property rights and needs of Syrian refugees, IDPs, returnees and other populations are factored in the relevant legal framework. Through its legal aid program, UNHCR also provides legal services to Syrians in need, including counselling, representation before responsible authorities and courts and awareness-raising on civil status documentation and HLP-related documentation matters.

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