

Regional Flash Update #50

Syria situation

24 October 2025



In Za'atari Refugee Camp, home to around 57,000 Syrian refugees, 20-year-old artist Arwa Ali paints her dreams in vibrant colour. Deaf since childhood, Arwa transforms silence into art — a story of resilience and hope, as many families prepare to return home if conditions allow. © UNHCR/Shawkat Alharfoush

Key Highlights

- As of 23 October, **1,144,650 Syrian** individuals have crossed back to Syria from other countries since 8 December 2024.
- At the same time, **over 1.9 million internally displaced persons (IDPs)** have return to their places of origin or intended return inside Syria, including 1,018,290 departing from IDP sites in the north of the country.
- Since the year began, **7,510 returnee families (22,526 individuals)** have been supported at the key border crossing points with Türkiye and Lebanon.
- So far, **12,800 refugee returnee households (44,000 individuals)** have received UNHCR Return and Reintegration Financial Assistance, helping them start rebuilding their lives and reintegrate sustainably in Syria.

- Only this week, UNHCR distributed full **Core Relief Item (CRI) kits** to over 8,770 families (33,370 individuals), mostly from the IDP and refugee returnee communities (14,400 individuals), but also from the IDP community residing in camps in the north of the country (12,900 individuals).
- The [Syria is Home](#) platform is drawing increased attention. It recorded **4,700 visitors** from 16 to 22 October – representing a significant rise from 1,000 to 1,400 visitors in previous weeks.

Country Updates

Syria

As of 23 October, **1,144,650 Syrian** individuals have crossed back to Syria from other countries since 8 December 2024. At the same time, **over 1.9 million internally displaced persons (IDPs)** have return to their places of origin or intended return inside Syria, including 1,018,290 departing from IDP sites in the north of the country.

UNHCR continued supporting the voluntary return of Syrian refugees to their areas of origin. On 23 October, approximately 400 individuals returned from Lebanon through the Al-Arida border crossing point under a joint initiative coordinated by UNHCR Syria, UNHCR and IOM Lebanon, together with Syria's General Authority for Land and Sea Ports. Returnees benefited from transportation assistance, relief items, psychosocial support, and legal aid. UNHCR and its partners are closely monitoring their post-return conditions through follow-up visits and referrals to available services, including those offered at [UNHCR-supported community centres](#) in their home areas.

In parallel, UNHCR sustained efforts to assist the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from camps in north-east Syria. The third voluntary return movement from Mahmoudli camp, Ar-Raqqa Governorate, took place on 15 October, enabling 27 households (131 individuals) to go back to their communities in Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and Deir-ez-Zor Governorates. This process entails providing accurate information to ensure informed and voluntary decisions, registering those wishing to return, identifying vulnerable cases, coordinating with camp management and partners on pre-departure arrangements, and organizing transportation. Since the beginning of the year, UNHCR has [supported](#) the return of **703 families (3,522 individuals)** from Areesha and Mahmoudli camps. Additional movements are planned in the coming weeks.

At Joussieh border crossing point, 163 families (849 individuals) received **logistical support and transportation** to various destinations including Hama, Homs, Idlib, Aleppo and Rural Damascus. Furthermore, UNHCR and WFP distributed ready-to-eat food baskets and high-energy biscuits to 920 returnees at transit bus stations in Idleb and Aleppo, while UNFPA and UNHCR provided hygiene kits to over 376 women and girls returning to their homes. Since the year began, **7,510 returnee families (22,526 individuals)** have been supported at the key border crossing points with Türkiye and Lebanon.

UNHCR continues to provide **Return and Reintegration Financial Assistance** to Syrian refugee returnees. So far, 12,800 households (44,000 individuals) have received this vital support, helping them start rebuilding their lives and reintegrate sustainably.

Moreover, only this week, UNHCR distributed full **Core Relief Item (CRI) kits** to over 8,770 families (33,370 individuals), mostly from the IDP and refugee returnee communities (14,400 individuals), but also from the IDP community residing in camps in the north of the country (12,900 individuals).

During the reporting period and as part of its **protection monitoring** efforts, UNHCR reached 521 households, bringing the cumulative total to 32,337 households – primarily IDP returnees and refugee returnees – who have completed the protection questionnaire

Meanwhile, the [Syria is Home](#) platform is drawing increased attention. It recorded **4,700 visitors** from 16 to 22 October – representing a significant rise from 1,000 to 1,400 visitors in previous weeks – with a gender distribution of 54.2% male and 45.8% female. The majority of visitors accessed the platform from Syria, followed by Lebanon, Bulgaria, Jordan and Germany.

Through its extensive network of 71 community centres, 81 mobile units, and 1,438 community outreach volunteers (ORVs), UNHCR continued delivering essential protection services to communities across Syria. These included **Child Protection, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response, Mine Risk Education (MRE), Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), and Legal Aid.**

Across Homs and Hama, UNHCR-supported community centres in Al-Bayada, Al-Qusayr, Al-Hosn, Dier Baalbeh, Masha'a Al-Tayyar, Karnaz, Mork, and Harbafsa conducted 42 child protection awareness sessions, benefiting over 750 individuals, including returnee and internally displaced children and caregivers. These sessions focused on school reintegration, child rights, and positive parenting, addressing the challenges faced by returnee children adapting to the Syrian curriculum after years abroad. Participants also discussed school-related violence and bullying, family communication, the psychological impact of displacement and return, and the risks associated with explosive remnants of war (ERW).

In Aleppo and Idleb, UNHCR and partners delivered GBV awareness sessions to 1,505 individuals, alongside individual case management services through community centres in Al-Midan, Al-Qaterji, Salah Al-Deen, Al-Shaar, and Al-Sukkari. Additionally, around 6,590 PSEA key messages were disseminated to enhance awareness of available reporting channels and promote accountability and protection.

In addition, in Abu Kamal, Deir ez-Zor, the *Life Skills* curriculum, designed with and for returnee women and aimed at building psychosocial resilience and equipping participants with essential skills in communication, decision-making, and assertiveness, has been finalized.

Finally, on 21 October, UNHCR hosted the [visit](#) of the Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, Ms. Liesje Schreinemacher-de Vries, in Damascus. The Minister visited one of UNHCR-supported community centres, where she interacted with refugee returnees and witnessed ongoing protection and community-based activities. On 23 October, UNHCR Deputy Representative delivered a presentation regarding the current situation of refugee and IDP returns to Syria on behalf of the Syria UNCT at the **first Strategic Dialogue Platform** meeting with donors (formerly Regional Dialogue Mechanism held in Beirut/Amman) that was co-chaired by the Director for International Cooperation in Syria. UNHCR updated on recent return statistics and trends, highlighting the different types of interventions being undertaken by the UNCT in support of returns – activities specifically targeting returnees; regular UN programming that includes returnees; and efforts to support systems that benefit all population groups, including returnees.

Türkiye

Processing of voluntary returns continues in provinces and at seven border crossings: Cilvegözü / Bab al Hawa, Yayladağı / Kesen, 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 over 385,000 Syrians.** Currently, UNHCR monitors returns at 23 Provincial Directorates 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.

Voluntary returns from Adana Sarıçam Temporary Accommodation Centre (TAC) are also being monitored on an ad hoc basis.

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, challenges in accessing housing, economic difficulties, reclaiming property and the need to work.

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

As of 18 October, nearly **165,000 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. With slight variations, demographic patterns have remained relatively stable throughout the year. At the beginning of the year, women and girls made up 45 per cent of returnees, children 44 per cent, and men of 18-40 years accounted for 23 per cent. The majority of refugees continue to return from host communities, primarily from Amman and Irbid.

Analysis of return data available to UNHCR indicates that refugee return movements are highly seasonal and shaped by practical considerations such as security dynamics in Syria, school calendars, weather conditions, and major holidays. Return patterns in both camp and urban areas follow similar trends – peaking in July and gradually declining through August and September.

Many refugees report plans to postpone their return until after winter, citing **concerns about damaged or inadequate housing** and the challenges of moving during cold weather. Returns also tend to decrease during Ramadan, as many refugees prefer to observe the fasting month in Jordan before organizing their return. With Ramadan expected to fall in the winter months of 2026, similar trends are anticipated, with many families likely to delay their return until after Eid in spring 2026.

Family return data since December 2024 shows that approximately 57 per cent of refugee families have returned to Syria with all members, while about 43 per cent of households have experienced partial returns, with some members remaining in Jordan. Feedback from refugees suggests that families adopt different strategies on return, depending on their circumstances. Among those returning in a phased manner, approximately half involved wives returning first to Syria while husbands remained in Jordan, primarily for work. The other half saw husbands return first, often to re-establish themselves, secure housing, and prepare for the rest of the family to follow.

As most returns are spontaneous, UNHCR does not have definitive data on the intended destination of return. However, based on intention surveys, most refugees intend to return to their governorate of origin. The governorate of origin of returnees from Jordan has remained stable throughout the year: 41 per cent originate from Dar'a, 20 per cent from Homs, and 11 per cent from rural Damascus. 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](#).

The cash assistance for voluntary return initiative is progressing. This week UNHCR rolled out the new expanded eligibility criteria for cash assistance for return, including family unity for households in which some members already returned to Syria and large families with seven or more members. This is addition to the other original criteria which include: families with a person with disability, families with a member who has a chronic or serious disease, female-headed households, families with a member over 60 years old.

As of 20 October, **around 1,650 refugees have been approved or received cash assistance as part of the pilot**. Since the start of the initiative in September, implemented in Zaatari and Azraq camps, UNHCR has received over 1,300 calls to the helpline inquiring about the cash assistance programme. In total, 41 per cent of callers were deemed eligible. Refugees have two weeks to return to Syria after having received the assistance.

Transportation assistance is also continuing. On 23 October, UNHCR facilitated transportation for around 40 refugees from Jordan to Syria. Overall, since the start of the transportation initiative on 20 January 2025, **UNHCR has supported over 9,850 refugees to return to Syria**. The return process is closely coordinated with the UNHCR Operation in Syria to support refugees upon arrival at their final destination.

Lebanon

At present, 25,593 Syrians have been monitored as remaining in Akkar and North since March 2025. In June, the peak of arrivals was nearly 40,000 into the area; since then, there has been onward movement internally in Lebanon.

As of 13 October, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) reported 80,590 new arrivals, including 26,310 residing in 156 collective sites, compared to 23,238 reported in September. The number of individuals in collective sites has risen significantly with the inclusion of those who were previously living in makeshift tents, unfinished buildings, and incomplete apartments.

On 15 October, UNHCR and IOM have processed the fifth organized return of 347 Syrians through the Masnaa / Jdaidet Yabous border crossing point to Rural Damascus, Homs, Hama, Idlib and Aleppo. So far, **920 Syrians have benefited from the organized return programme** since July 2025.

Iraq

Between 8 December 2024 and 16 October 2025, **around 6,500 refugees and asylum-seekers registered with UNHCR have returned from Iraq to Syria**. Men represent around 38% of the total

of returnees, followed by women (23%), boys (20%) and girls (19%). Among them, over 6,200 returned through Peshkhabour border crossing point and were processed by UNHCR and local authorities at the Derabon return centre in Zakho Administration. Another 237 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 decreased slightly compared to the previous week (from 103 to 51 individuals). Most registered refugees and asylum-seekers returned to Aleppo, followed by Al-Hasakeh and Damascus. Registered refugees mentioned the Kurdistan Region's Ministry of Interior instruction on the waiver for overstay fines, improved security situation in their areas of origin and family reunification as main reasons to return to Syria.

Egypt

As of 20 October 2025, approximately **122,340 Syrian refugees were registered in Egypt**. Syrian refugees now account for less than 12% 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 20 October 2025, 11,509 closure requests involving around **25,628 individuals** were submitted, including on-the-spot closures. Among applicants who closed their files, 63% 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 #49, 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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