



Refugee expresses interest in the return programme and receives counselling



Repatriation interview and assessment conducted, including referral to partners, if needed



Refugee approaches Return Space* to confirm voluntariness and receive Repatriation Form. Case is closed and data is shared with UNHCR Syria



Refugee redeems return cash grant through OMT



Refugee self-organizes his/her return or IOM provides transportation to Syria

HIGHLIGHTS

501,603

Syrians inactivated in 2025 from UNHCR's records in Lebanon due to confirmed or presumed return

446,930

Syrians spontaneously returned to Syria (confirmed or presumed)

54,673

Syrians directly supported by UNHCR to voluntarily repatriate

12,218

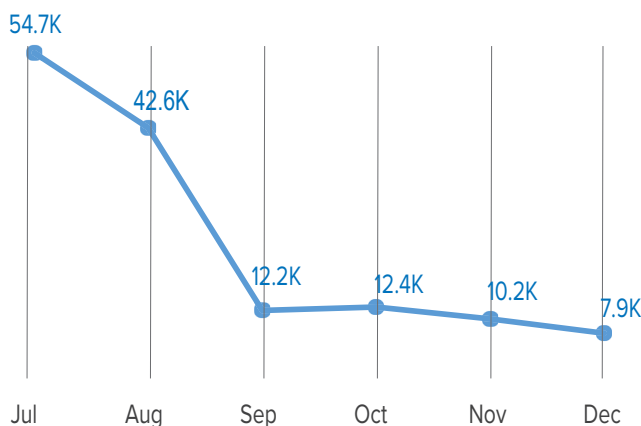
Total number of active and pending individuals (**2,378** households) who have expressed interest in the return programme

Since January 2025, **501,603 Syrian individuals known to UNHCR have been inactivated** from UNHCR's database due to both confirmed and presumed returns to Syria. Among these, **89% spontaneously returned** to Syria – including 13% who returned under duress in late 2024 and remained in Syria, and 21% who were identified by the General Security Office (GSO) when returning through official border crossing points without Repatriation Forms, but benefiting from administrative waivers for return introduced by the GSO. **11% of the inactivated households were facilitated to return by UNHCR** under its voluntary return programmes – 95% opted for the self-organized return programme, while 5% returned through the UNHCR and IOM organized return programme.

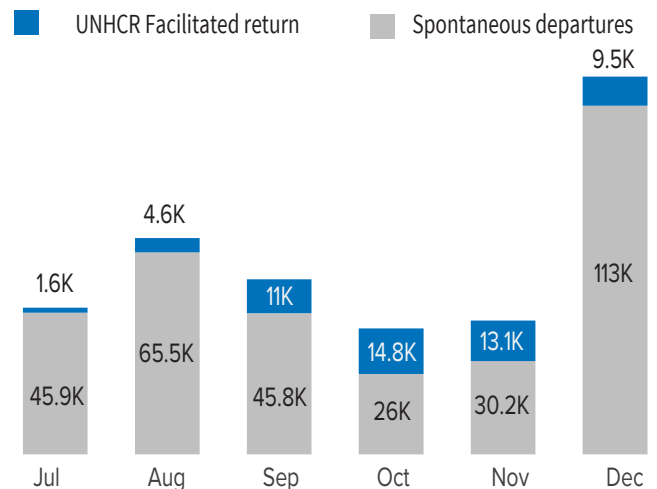
Since UNHCR's launch of the facilitated return programme on 1 July, **a total of 140,000 refugees expressed interest in the programme**. Among these, 60% expressed interest in July and August 2025 and only 12% expressed interest in November and December 2025. The reduction in interest is attributed to the start of the winter season. At the end of December 2025, **12,218 Syrian individuals (2,378 households) who had expressed interest** in UNHCR-facilitated returns remained in the pipeline. **The 84% reduction in active and pending cases for return (12,218 individuals) compared to the previous month (74,231 individuals)** relates to the drop in new expressions of interest, cases being closed due to facilitated returns (40%), inactivation due to confirmed spontaneous returns (25%), individuals being unreachable (25%) or changing their minds (10%).

While expressions of interest to return was highest in July and August 2025, UNHCR's capacity to process cases was upscaled in September 2025, resulting in significantly higher numbers of facilitated departures during Q3 and Q4 of 2025. Meanwhile, the large **increase in the number of inactivated cases due to spontaneous departures in December** is due to the completion of UNHCR's presence verification exercise.

Expressed Interest in Facilitated Return Programme



Facilitated Return vs Spontaneous Departure**



*Interview areas in one of UNHCR's case processing or community development centers in Lebanon.

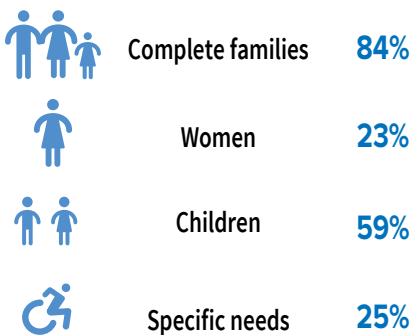
**An additional 120,000 individuals were also inactivated prior to 1 July 2025 before the launch of the Facilitated return programme.

By the end of December 2025, a total of **54,673 Syrian individuals (11,832 households)** known to UNHCR benefited from the facilitated return programmes, including voluntariness assessments, issuance of Repatriation Forms and provision of a return cash grant of USD 100 per returning individual. 34% of those assisted resided in Bekaa, Baalbek and Hermel, 32% in North and Akkar, 24% in Beirut and Mount Lebanon and 8% in South and Nabatieh. Among those assessed for facilitated return, **84% returned to their areas of origin** in Syria – 34% to Homs, 18% to Idlib, 13% to Damascus and Rural Damascus, 13% to Aleppo and 10% to Hama. 41% self-organized their return through Arida border crossing point, 31% through Qaa and 23% through Masnaa border crossing points. Between July and December 2025, UNHCR and IOM have facilitated **13 organized voluntary returns of 2,880 Syrian individuals** through Arida and Masnaa border crossing points – 43% to Homs, 37% to Idlib, 8% to Rural Damascus and Damascus, 8% to Hama and 4% to Aleppo.

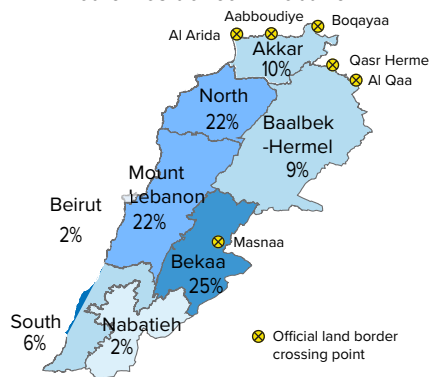
Furthermore, 23% of those assisted with facilitated return were women and 59% were children – **82% of returnees being women and children. 25% have a protection need**, notably 12% with a serious medical condition and 5% are living with disabilities. Importantly, **84% returned in complete families**. Among the 16% remaining behind, 74% are adult men staying for livelihood purposes. While **96% of the adults who returned have Syrian identification documents**, 33% of returning children born in Lebanon only had birth certificates issued by mukhtar, 31% birth certificates issued by nofous* and 25% an updated Syrian family booklet or civil extract. Of the adults who returned, **67% cited factors in Syria as the primary motivator for return**, including improved security in Syria and access to education and healthcare in Syria. The remaining **33% cited problems in Lebanon as the primary motivator for return**, including poor living conditions and lack of employment.

Returns: Demographic

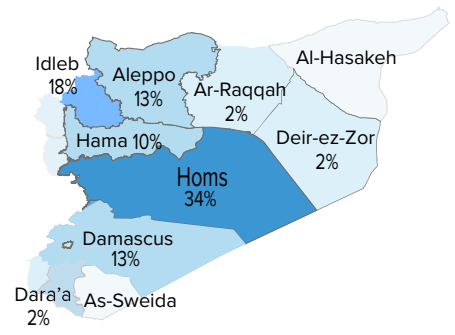
UNHCR - Facilitated Return



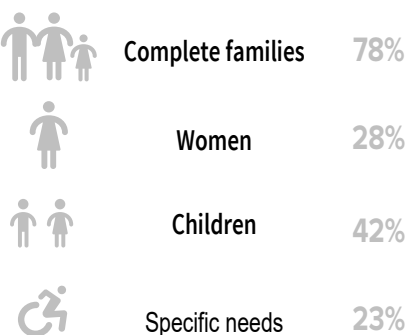
Area of residence in Lebanon



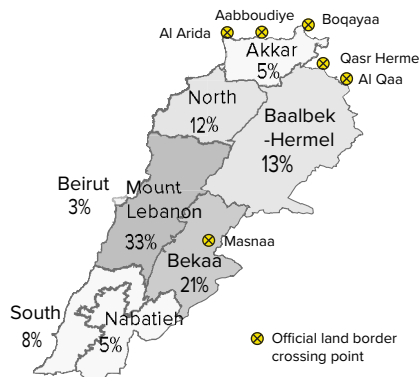
Intended area of return in Syria



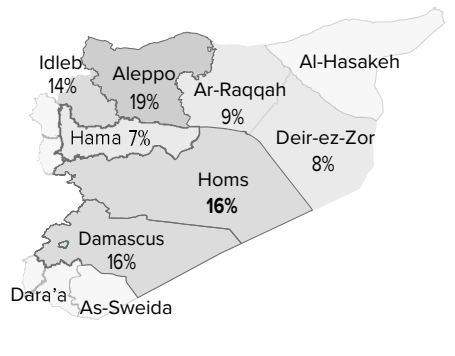
Spontaneous Departure



Area of residence in Lebanon



Presumed area of return in Syria



Among the **446,930 Syrian individuals who spontaneously returned**, fewer families (78%) returned in complete families compared to the households who returned under the facilitated return programme. 34% resided in the Bekaa, Baalbek and Hermel, 17% in North and Akkar, 36% in Beirut and Mount Lebanon and 13% in South and Nabatieh. **Those who returned spontaneously are presumed to have returned to their areas of origin** - 19% to Aleppo, 16% to Homs, 16% to Damascus and Rural Damascus, and 14% to Idlib. Furthermore, 28% of those who returned spontaneously are women and 42% are children – **70% of spontaneous returnees being women and children**. 23% of the individuals who returned spontaneously have a **specific protection need**.

*As part of the five-step birth registration process in Lebanon, the mukhtar at the local/community level records the birth and prepares an initial birth certificate based on the hospital notification, which is not yet legally valid. The certificate only becomes official once it is registered with the nofous (Personal Status Department), to be followed by certification by the Foreigners Registry and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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.



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