UNHCR Syria Flash Update #12

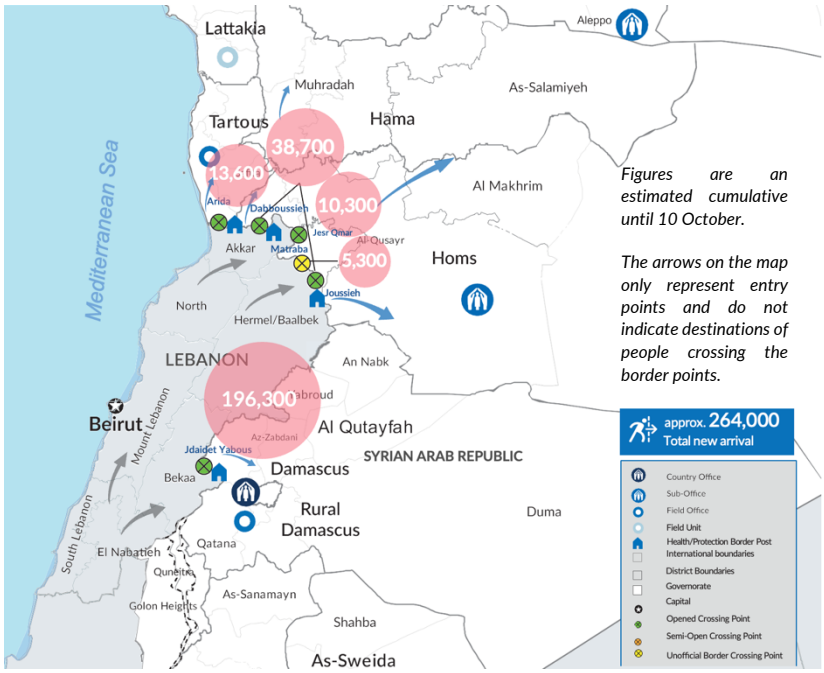
Response to Displacement from Lebanon to Syria

Reporting period: 24 September - 11 October 2024

Provision of UNHCR core relief items for new arrivals in Idleb | © UNHCR Syria

A total of approximately
264,000[1]
people (both Lebanese and Syrians)
are estimated
to have crossed from Lebanon to Syria since the escalation of hostilities in Lebanon.

It is estimated that around
70 per cent are **Syrians**
and
30 per cent are **Lebanese nationals**.



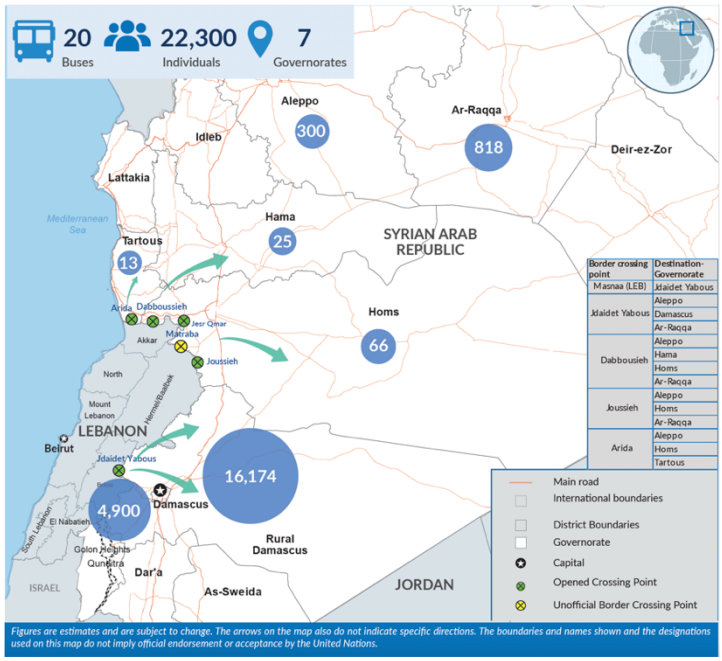
[1] The numbers of new arrivals in this document are based on "*SARC Emergency Response For Lebanese Refugees and Syrian Returnees*". The numbers also include people entering through the Matraba crossing point (an unofficial border) where UNHCR is not present. Figures are undergoing verification and are subject to change.

Overview of Developments

- The flow of arrivals at the Syrian crossing points continued, albeit at a slower pace over the past week. Following a temporary surge in arrivals at some of the other crossing points as a result of the airstrikes that significantly damaged the main road between Masnaa (Lebanon) and Jdaidet Yabous (Syria) on 4th October – the primary entry for arrivals from Lebanon – the rates have now subsided to levels prior to those strikes.
- Exit stamping protocol by Lebanese immigration authorities continues to prompt some Syrian families to bypass the Masnaa crossing point irregularly in order to avoid receiving the stamp. Those resorting to irregular crossing reportedly do so in order to maintain the option of returning to Lebanon, which an exit stamp could significantly hinder. At the onset of the influx from Lebanon to Syria, the protocol was waived to facilitate rapid entries into Syria. However, it was later reinstated on 3rd October.
- Vulnerable families who arrive at the Syrian crossing points exhausted following their long journeys from Lebanon continue to be supported by UN agencies and humanitarian partners with relief items, medical assistance and legal support.
- But there is a parallel although less visible major emergency in those communities all over Syria which are receiving the tens of thousands of Syrians and Lebanese crossing. While every effort is being made to try to reach these with material and legal aid, an injection of international financial support is urgently needed. Most importantly, there is a need to quickly expand the existing aid structures and services provided by UNHCR, UN and NGO partners. It is important to remember that people who are entering Syria with little or nothing (sometimes just a bundle of clothes) are being welcomed and hosted by Syrian communities devastated by 13 years of conflict.
- At the locally-established hosting centres (in Rural Damascus, Tartous, Latakia, Homs and Hama), over 3,500 Lebanese individuals are being accommodated - with a majority of women and children. Regular visits continue to be undertaken to provide assistance and services to the families being hosted.
- The UNHCR-community centres (over 100 across Syria) are also trying to play a vital role in helping those who recently arrived from Lebanon have access to protection services and support needed to assist individuals in integrating into their host/communities. Community centres are one-stop shops that offer a range of services, including awareness sessions, psychosocial support, legal assistance, child protection and gender-based violence case management services.
- A key part of UNHCR's humanitarian work in Syria is our legal support programmes. At the borders, UNHCR legal teams, with local partners, are assisting those arriving with counselling and interventions on a number of issues, including access to civil documentation and managing the issue of missing documents and military service related procedures. UNHCR also supports arrivals from other nationalities on entry and visa procedures. If needed, UNHCR teams follow up on cases through our more than 100 community centres and some 3,000 outreach volunteers.

Overview of New Arrivals

- Between 9 to 10 October, over 6,000 individuals (including Syrians, Lebanese and Palestine refugees in Lebanon) arrived at Jdaidet Yabous (Rural Damascus), Joussieh, Daboussieh and Jesr Al Qmar (Homs), and Al Arida (Tartous).
- UNHCR and its partner SARC continue to provide transportation from the crater near Masnaa to Jdaidet Yabous in order to support families fleeing the hostilities in Lebanon.
- Onward transportation is also ongoing in efforts to alleviate the financial burdens of extremely vulnerable families arriving at the Syrian crossing points from Lebanon. As of 10 October, more than 22,000 persons were able to reach their intended destinations inside Syria as a result of this critical service.



Estimated figures as of 10 October 2024 | © UNHCR Syria

Response at the Borders

Life-saving assistance continues to be provided by UN agencies and humanitarian partners - including **DRC, ICRC, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, Première Urgence Internationale (PUI), SARC,** and **Syria Trust**.

- On 7 and 9 October, a total of 3,800 fresh meals were distributed by **WFP** at the Jdaidet Yabous crossing point.
- **UNHCR's** partner, **Majal Association**, provided over 2,500 food items and implemented children's recreational activities at Jdaidet Yabous.
- At the Joussieh crossing point in Homs, **UNHCR** and its partner **SARC** completed the installation of a Rub-hall. Partner **PUI** will install lights, fans, electric outlets, waiting chairs, and fire extinguishers to enhance the overall conditions of families utilizing the space.
- Health services and legal support remain in effect at all Syrian crossing points.

Installation of a Rub-hall at the Joussieh crossing point | © UNHCR Syria

Hosting Centres for Lebanese Families

- In **Rural Damascus**, the Hujelleh hosting centre continues to accommodate some 208 families (approximately 800 individuals), primarily Lebanese, with one Iraqi family.

  WFP is providing hot meals to families being hosted while **UNFPA** continues to ensure the provision of reproductive health and gender-based case management services.

  UNHCR, in coordination with **PUI**, is also undertaking rehabilitation work, which involves enhancing WASH facilities and upgrading electric installations.
- In **Tartous** and **Latakia**, more than 800 Lebanese families (2,060 individuals) who recently crossed into the Syrian borders are receiving shelter at nine[1] hosting centres.
- In **Homs** and **Hama**, a total of five hosting centres, including Mar Elias, Al Saida Al Athraa and Al Ard churches in rural Homs; the Deaf and Mute centre in Hama; and Tal Al Ghazali school in rural Hama, are hosting a total of 144 Lebanese families (707 individuals).

  UNHCR, in coordination with HEKS-EPER, is rehabilitating two hosting centres in Homs to improve the living conditions of the families being hosted. The work aims to enhance WASH facilities, as well as install water heaters and solar lights.

Families provided with transportation services to help them reach their destinations in Syria | © UNHCR Syria

Community Outreach Efforts

- In **Damascus** and **Rural Damascus,** an estimated 25,000 Lebanese nationals are being hosted within the local communities.
- In **Tartous and Latakia**, more than 3,700 Lebanese nationals are being hosted by Syrians, while some 850 individuals are staying in rented accommodation in both Tartous and Latakia.

  UNHCR and its partners, **Al-Batoul** and **GOPA**, reached 285 Lebanese families (884 individuals) and 83 Syrian families (287 individuals) through the UNHCR-supported community centres in host areas. Most families reported being hosted by relatives or friends due to limited means to rent accommodations.

  In **Idleb**, a total of 800 families (3,442 individuals) – primarily Syrian – have recently arrived following their border crossing from Lebanon.

UNHCR's partner, SARC, distributing much needed relief items to families who recently arrived in Syria | © SARC

[1] The nine hosting centres include Pioneer Camp, Al Karnak (East), Al Karnak (West), Blue Bay in Tartous; and Palm Beach, Blue Beach, Ras Al Basit (Chalets), Ras Al Basit (Labour Union) and Al Sheer in Latakia.

Since 23 September, **UNHCR** and its partners, including **Al-Batoul**, **GOPA** and **SARC**, have provided core relief kits[2] to over 800 Lebanese families (some 4,000 individuals) and 700 Syrian families (3,100 individuals) in Tartous, Latakia and Idleb. In addition, over 2,500 individuals who fled the hostilities in Lebanon were provided with psychosocial support to help them cope with the emotional distress and trauma that they had experienced.

UNHCR and its partners also continue to monitor the situation of new arrivals at the governorate level in order to ensure that they are informed of the services being offered through the community centres.

- In **Homs,** an estimated 8,000 families (38,250 individuals) – primarily Lebanese - are being hosted by relatives and the community in Al-Qusayr, Tall Kalakh, Ar-Rastan, Al Makhrim, Mahin districts, and Homs city.

  UNHCR, through its partners, has distributed some 4,000 core relief and winter kits. UNHCR is also expanding its reach to new arrivals through outreach volunteers who refer individuals to the nearest community centres in their host areas.

  As of 10 October, UNHCR has reached some 7,500 families–primarily Syrians- through its outreach volunteers – and referred them to the UNHCR-supported community centres.

- In **Syria's southern** part, including **As-Sweida, Quneitra, and Dar'a**, a total of 2,600 Syrians and 60 Lebanese recently arrived from Lebanon. Of these, 60 per cent are children and adolescents.

  During the home visits conducted by UNHCR and its partners to newly arrived families, the main needs identified included medicines, support for persons with specific needs and relief items.

  UNHCR has so far reached over 2,000 individuals with relief items, including mattresses, blankets, jerry cans, kitchen sets, plastic sheets, solar lamps, sleeping mats, jerrycans and winter clothing. UNPFA and its partner, the Syrian Family Planning Association, have also provided over 800 female hygiene kits and supported some 170 women and girls with reproductive health and gender-based violence case management services.

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[2] Core relief *kits* comprise a set of various essentials including hygiene kits, blankets, kitchen sets, plastic sheets, winter clothing among other items.