

Update on Displacement from Lebanon to Iraq

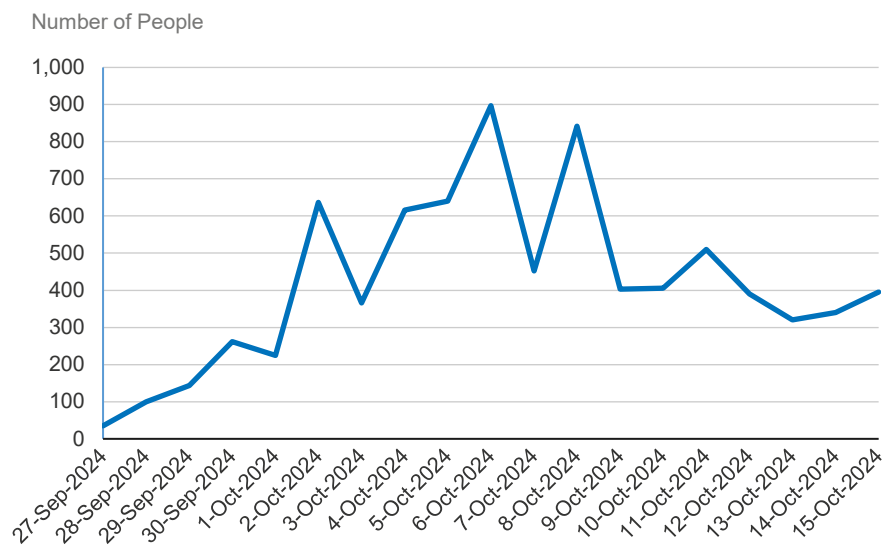
16 October 2024

Data referenced is based on information UNHCR has collated from Government sources and partners between 27 September and 15 October.^{1,2}

Situation Overview

- UNHCR is aware of **11,700 Lebanese arrivals** to Iraq since the escalation of hostilities in Lebanon through various points including the Al-Qaim border crossing (7,980) and airports in Baghdad and Najaf.
- Over the previous three days, UNHCR has observed a slight decrease in the daily numbers of Lebanese arriving through Al-Qaim border crossing with 320, 340 and 390 individuals arriving on Sunday 13, Monday 14, and Tuesday 15 respectively.
- It is worth noting that UNHCR continues to observe Lebanese as the primary nationality of individuals crossing from Syria to Iraq after fleeing the hostilities in Lebanon. There have been no reported instances of Syrian refugees, or other nationalities, previously hosted in Lebanon, entering Iraq. UNHCR continues to monitor this situation.
- At Al-Qaim, the border crossing is mainly open to receive Lebanese arriving to Iraq between 15:00 – 20:00. Individuals arriving after 20:00 are reportedly having to wait until the next day to be processed and enter Iraq.
- 46 percent of the Lebanese new arrivals are hosted in **Najaf and Karbala**. The remaining are spread across different Governorates in central and south Iraq, including **Salah al-Din, Babil, Ninewa, Basra, Diyala** and Baghdad.
- An **estimated 62% of the Lebanese arrivals are women and children**. In addition, approximately 50% of households are reportedly headed by women.
- Since Monday 14 October, buses bringing Lebanese to Iraq organized by the Ministry of Transport and private entities, have been taking the new arrivals to Babel as opposed to Najaf and Karbala where accommodation facilities have reportedly reached capacity.

Lebanese Arrivals to Iraq through Al-Qaim Border Crossing



¹ Flash Updates for Lebanon and Syria can be viewed here: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/syrian-arab-republic-response-displacement-lebanon-flash-update-14> and <https://reporting.unhcr.org/lebanon-emergency-flash-update-5>

² Interagency Flash Appeals for Lebanon and Syria can also be viewed here: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/lebanon-flash-appeal> and <https://reporting.unhcr.org/inter-agency-emergency-appeal-influx-lebanon-syria>

UNHCR and Partner Presence

These sections contain information on the recent arrivals of Lebanese nationals in Iraq over the past week. Some points may reiterate details from previous Flash Updates for ease and relevance.

- UNHCR and its partner the International Rescue Committee (IRC) remain present at the Al-Qaim border. UNHCR has requested full access to the new arrivals at the border given the current limitations in place to access and monitor new arrivals from Lebanon
- On Monday 14 October, UNHCR and IOM conducted a joint mission to the Al-Qaim border crossing to analyse the situation where the team met with local authorities including the Mayor in Anbar, MOMD Anbar, border crossing management and IRCS. During the visit, UNHCR and IOM observed the crossing of new arrivals from Lebanon.
- Through its partners, the Legal Clinics Network (LCN) and Intersos, UNHCR is also present in Najaf, Karbala, Baghdad, Salah al-Din and other Governorates maintaining contact with local authorities to gather information on the arrival of Lebanese nationals in these areas.
- To respond to the critical protection needs of new arrivals from Lebanon, UNHCR, in collaboration with existing partners in Federal Iraq, has started providing child protection, gender-based violence (GBV), and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services to those individuals who approach the community centres requiring these services.
- UNHCR has deployed staff to Anbar (covering Al-Qaim border crossing as well as Salah Al-Din and Diyala governorates), Najaf, Karbala and Baghdad. UNHCR continues to liaise with government and local authorities so as to gather information on the government plans.

Government of Iraq Response

- A directive issued by the [Iraqi Prime Minister's office on 07 October](#), instructed that Lebanese citizens who are arriving in Iraq should be called “guests of Iraq” instead of “displaced”.
- Following a directive from the Iraqi Prime Minister's, Lebanese citizens without a valid passport are allowed to enter Iraq using an identity card, an individual or family civil status extract, or an expired passport. In addition, the Iraqi government, in coordination with the Lebanese embassy in Syria, has also expedited travel processes, ensuring that Lebanese citizens without passports can receive emergency travel documents, allowing them entry to the country. For those with documentation, free entry visas for Lebanese nationals are issued at Iraq's border crossings. The Directorate of Residency Affairs also continues to extend the stay of Lebanese citizens present in Iraq without the need for them to leave the country. Their stay is extended for 30 days and can be renewed under the Residency Law.
- [The Government of Iraq has committed to include Lebanese arrivals in national systems.](#) Iraq's Minister of Education has issued instructions advising schools in Iraq to host students and pupils coming from Lebanon to avoid depriving them of studying this year. The [first Lebanese student was reported to have enrolled](#) in a school in Diyala governorate on 15 October. In addition, Lebanese arrivals to Iraq have access to national public health services. The Government of Iraq has also approved the allocation of three billion dinars (approximately \$2.27 million) to assist Lebanese refugees arriving in country.
- On Tuesday 14 October, the undersecretary for the Iraqi ministry of Migration and Displacement (MOMD) [stated in a media interview](#) that Iraq does not plan to set up camps in Iraq for Lebanese arriving to Iraq. In addition, the spokesperson for MOMD mentioned in a [separate media interview](#), that the ministry continues to record the names of Lebanese arriving to Iraq and that there is no plan to distribute Lebanese across Iraq cities, instead they are welcome to go to different provinces based on their own free will.