UNHCR - Facilitated Return of Syrian Refugees - Lebanon | April 2026

CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENTS

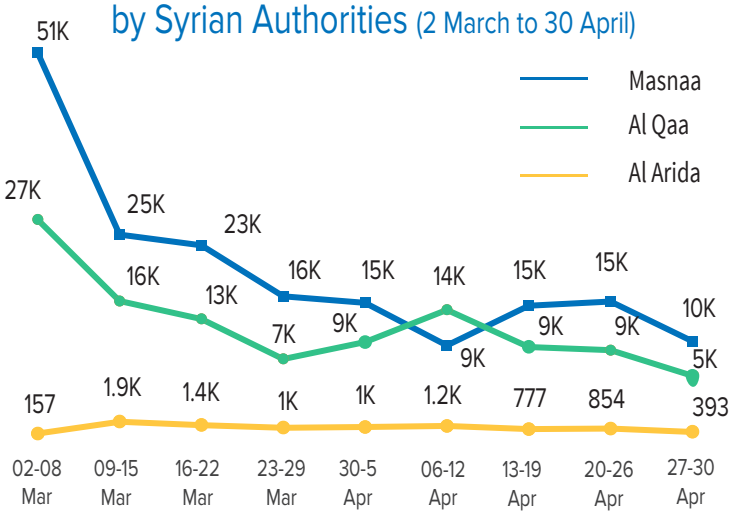
298,534
Syrians crossed from Lebanon into Syria (Syrian GAPC)

207,363
Syrians crossed from Lebanon into Syria (Lebanon GSO)

Since the escalation of hostilities on 2 March 2026, and until 30 April, the Syrian General Authority for Border and Customs (GAPC) estimates that 298,534 Syrians crossed from Lebanon into Syria, while the Lebanese General Security Office (GSO) estimates that 207,363 Syrians departed through Official Crossing Points (OCPs) during the same reporting period.

During the first week of the escalation of hostilities, average daily movements of Syrians from Lebanon into Syria tripled at Masnaa and Al Qaa, the two main OCPs, including with women and children fleeing the conflict in Lebanon. Movements, however, soon stabilized to an average of 3,600 individuals per day, noting an increase through Al Qaa OCP following the evacuation order and closure of Masnaa OCP between 4 - 8 April; and the reopening of the Arida OCP to pedestrian crossings on 8 March. While many movements to Syria were driven by the escalating conflict in Lebanon, others reflect previously planned returns. Syrians crossing include people known, and not known to UNHCR, namely both refugees and Syrians who have stayed in Lebanon under various visa and sponsorship arrangements or been in Lebanon on temporary visits. According to information collected by the Syrian authorities at the borders, some 28% of arriving Syrians indicate an intention to return permanently. As of end April, only 10% of Syrians who left Lebanon through the OCPs, based on General Security data, have so far been verified to be known to UNHCR. Further verification, data collection and triangulation are ongoing.

Weekly Cross-Border Movements Reported by Syrian Authorities (2 March to 30 April)



Since March 2026, UNHCR has undertaken 33 missions to OCPs, and conducted interviews with a sample of 400 Syrians both known and not known to UNHCR, as they were departing to Syria – 52% were conducted with adult men and 47% with adult women. Most Syrian families (55%) were observed traveling in complete male-headed families, while 27% were single adult males. Further, while 55% of Syrians interviewed in March indicated they were leaving Lebanon due to the security situation; this dropped to only 24% citing the security situation in April, with the majority (32%) leaving Lebanon in April for family reasons. 36% indicated an intention to return to (Rural) Damascus, 16% to Aleppo and 9% to Homs. These findings are based on a random sample and are not representative of the profiles and intentions of all returning Syrians, including those known to UNHCR.

RETURN HIGHLIGHTS (as of end-April 2026)

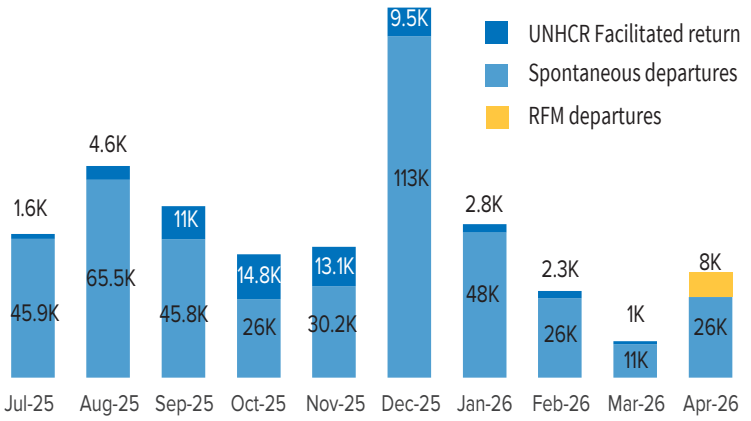
629,140
Syrians known to UNHCR returned to Syria since 1 Jan. 2025 (confirmed or presumed)

560,249
Syrians known to UNHCR spontaneously returned to Syria (confirmed or presumed)

68,891
Syrians directly supported by UNHCR to voluntarily repatriate

Since January 2025, 629,140 Syrians known to UNHCR have been confirmed or presumed to have returned to Syria, and consequently inactivated from UNHCR's records. Among these, 89% spontaneously returned to Syria – including 12% who returned under duress in late 2024 and remained in Syria; 22% who were identified by GSO when passing through OCPs without Repatriation Forms; and 4% so far identified by GSO as having returned due to force majeure (after 2 March 2026). Among the 629,140 Syrians who returned, 11% (68,891 individuals) were facilitated to return by UNHCR – 60,793 under the voluntary return programme and 8,098 under the return due to force majeure programme in April 2026. Spontaneous departure figures reflected in the chart indicate date of inactivation from UNHCR's database and not date of departure, accounting for the large number of inactivation in December 2025 due to the completion of the presence verification exercise.

UNHCR - Facilitated Return vs Spontaneous Departure*



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

For more information on the UNHCR-supported voluntary programme, please visit UNHCRHelp – Voluntary Return page.

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UNHCR-facilitated: Return due to force majeure

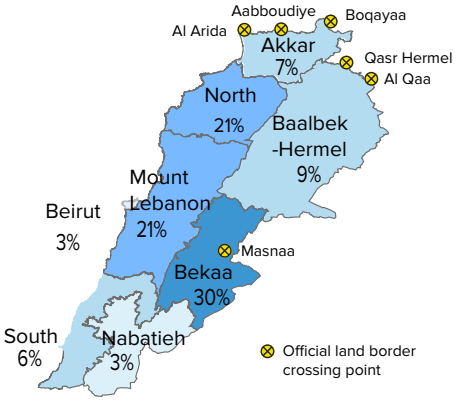
In response to the escalation of hostilities in Lebanon, UNHCR launched the return due to force majeure (RFM) programme on 1 April 2026, based on a humanitarian imperative to alleviate harm and support refugees who were left with no viable alternative other than to return to Syria. While returns in the current adverse conditions of hostilities in Lebanon are not considered voluntary, UNHCR provides this support as a harm-reduction measure, aiming to assist and support with transportation, food and other essential items during return to Syria under the current volatile conditions. Returning cases are shared with UNHCR in Syria for follow-up and assistance inside Syria. By the end of April, over 14,000 individuals (3,000 families) contacted UNHCR and were provided counselling on RFM and information on services available in Syria. Among the Syrians counselled, 8,098 individuals (1,758 families) made the decision to return to Syria and were provided with a USD 100 cash grant per returning individual.

Returns: Demographic

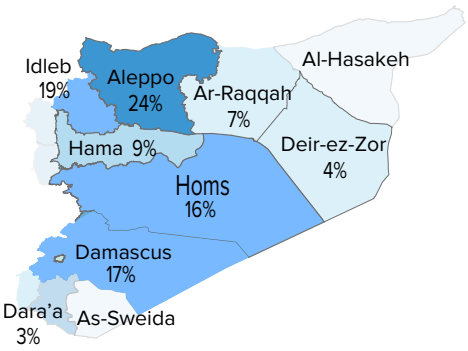
UNHCR - Facilitated Return: RFM

Complete families	96%
Women	23%
Children	59%
Specific needs	22%

Area of residence in Lebanon



Intended area of return in Syria



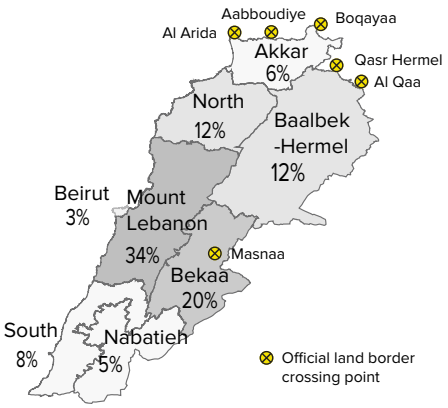
Among the 8,098 individuals assisted under the RFM programme, 39% resided in Bekaa, Baalbek and Hermel, 28% in North and Akkar, 24% in Beirut and Mt. Lebanon, and 9% in South and Nabatieh . 14% were internally displaced within Lebanon prior to their return to Syria, viewing return as their only viable alternative to safety. Only 70% of the households indicated that they planned to return to their areas of origin in Syria compared to 84% of families who previously returned under the voluntary return programme, suggesting an urgency to return due to the ongoing conflict. Among the RFM, 24% indicated planned return to Aleppo, 19% to Idlib, 17% to Rural Damascus and 16% to Homs.

23% of those assisted with RFM were women and 59% were children, making 82% of returnees women and children. 22% of those who were assisted to return due to force majeure have a protection needs, notably 10% with a serious medical condition and 4% having a disability. Importantly, 96% returned in complete families – substantially higher than the 85% who returned in complete families under the voluntary return programme. Of the adults who returned due to force majeure, 54% cited poor living conditions in Lebanon while 35% cited the insecurity and conflict in Lebanon as the main drivers for their return, further illustrating the influence the precarious security situation inside Lebanon has on decision-making.

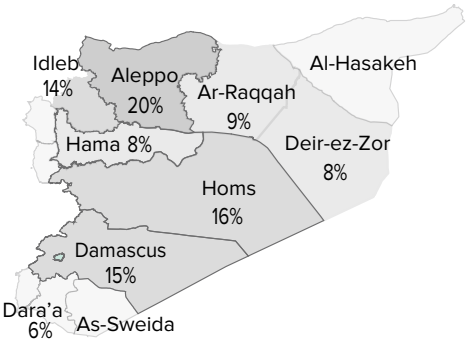
Spontaneous Departure

Complete families	77%
Women	29%
Children	41%
Specific needs	23%

Area of residence in Lebanon



Presumed area of return in Syria



Among the 560,249 Syrian individuals who spontaneously returned, fewer families (77%) returned in complete families compared to 85% returning in complete families of those facilitated with VolRep and 96% returning in complete families of those facilitated with RFM . Prior to spontaneous return, 37% resided in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, 32% in Bekaa, Baalbek and Hermel, 18% in North and Akkar, and 13% in South and Nabatieh. Those who returned spontaneously are presumed to have returned to their areas of origin – 20% to Aleppo, 16% to Homs, 15% to Damascus and Rural Damascus and 14% to Idleb. Furthermore, 29% of those who returned spontaneously are women and 41% are children – with women and children representing 70% of spontaneous returnees. 23% of individuals who returned spontaneously have identified specific protection needs.

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.