Middle East Situation

as of 22 April 2026

Overview

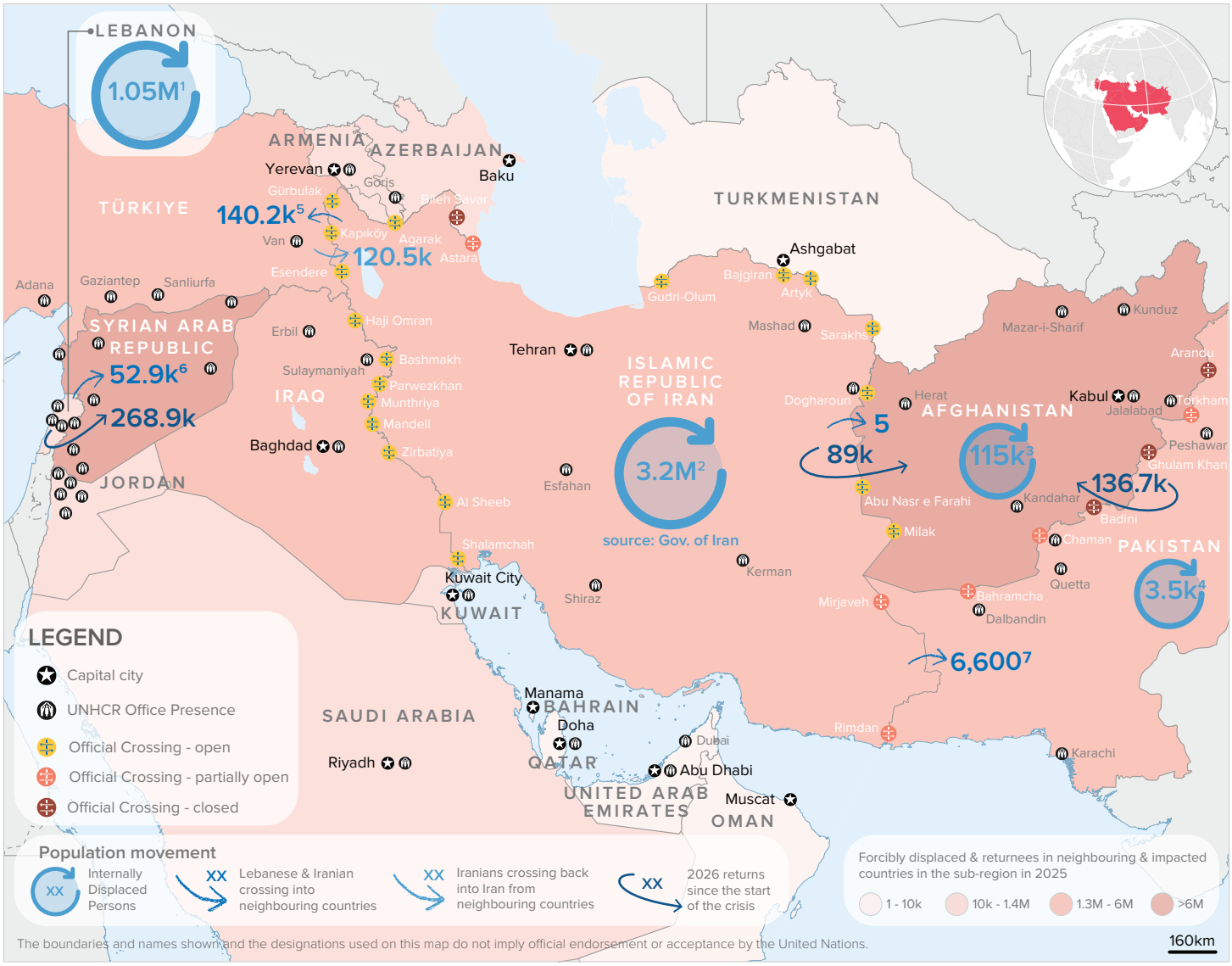
Escalating hostilities across Asia and the Middle East have led to a deterioration in the humanitarian situation. The affected areas already host 24.6 million forcibly displaced people, many of whom, alongside host communities, face significant protection risks and humanitarian needs.

With limited funding, many countries are struggling to meet existing needs, making it increasingly difficult to absorb additional pressures and support newly displaced populations.

Protection needs are rising, alongside heightened risk of internal displacement, new cross-border outflows, and onward movements to neighbouring countries.

An inter-agency emergency response has been launched to address urgent needs across the region. In Iran, the Flash Refugee Response Plan targets 1.65 million Afghan and Iraqi refugees and others in need of international protection, alongside 1 million host community members and 150,000 Afghans of other status. In Lebanon, a USD 308.3 million Flash Appeal aims to support 1 million people with lifesaving assistance and protection.

Situation Overview



Türkiye estimates, IDPs, and Afghan returns' estimates (from Iran & Pakistan) and crossings to Syria (Syrian returns and Lebanese nationals) are as of 22 April and crossing into Pakistan is as of 16 April.

[1] Source: Government of Lebanon. [2] Source: Government of Iran. [3] Source: OCHA Afghanistan. [4] Source: Government of Pakistan.
[5] Source: UNHCR. Some Iranian nationals may be entering Türkiye under the visa-free short-term stay regime (up to 90 days). Such movements may reflect precautionary or temporary travel while individuals assess the situation in Iran.
[6] Source: UNHCR and Government of Syria. [7] IOM-UNHCR Joint border monitoring

Population Movements

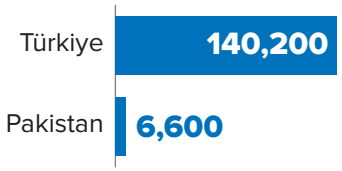
Lebanese refugees

52,900
Lebanese refugees arrived in Syria

Since the onset of the crisis, the number of Lebanese refugees arriving in Syria has increased, with arrivals averaging around 1,000 individuals per day.

Iranian nationals crossing into neighbouring countries

146,800
Iranian nationals crossed into Pakistan and Türkiye



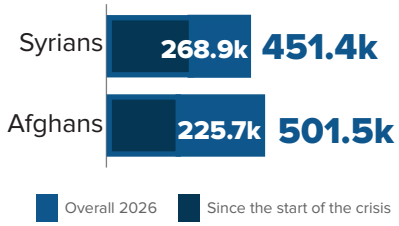
UNHCR considers that Iranian nationals outside the country – whether already present in or newly arriving to third countries – may have international protection needs on account of the armed hostilities in Iran, or other reasons.

The number of Iranians entering Türkiye remains below pre-conflict levels. These figures do not necessarily indicate permanent departures, as available data do not clearly distinguish between those who remained and those who later returned to Iran. For some Iranian nationals entering Türkiye under the visa-free regime (up to 90 days), movements may reflect routine travel, such as visits, transit to catch a flight, or precautionary trips while they assess the situation in Iran. Between 3 March and 22 April, **some 120,500 Iranian nationals were recorded crossing from Türkiye back into Iran**.

In **Armenia**, direct observation and triangulated information indicate continued cross-border movement of Iranian nationals. Between 2 and 19 April, **an estimated 400–700 individuals entered Armenia each day**, with similar levels of movement from Armenia into Iran. In **Azerbaijan**, land border crossing remain closed due to public health restrictions except for commercial traffic; Limited movements may be permitted in specific cases, including evacuations of third-country nationals.

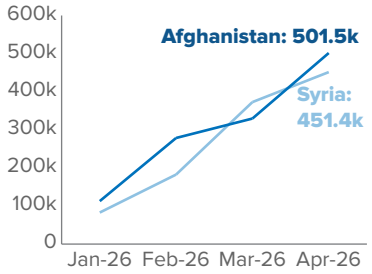
In **Pakistan**, as per IOM and UNHCR joint border monitoring, some **6,600 Iranians crossed between 1 March and 16 April** mainly via Taftan for routine business or family visits. Movements between **Iraq** and Iran remain routine; border conditions are fluid.

Afghan and Syrian returnees[8]

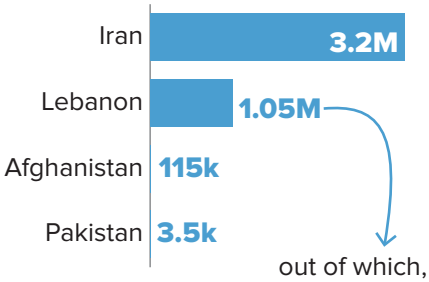


Afghan return[9] figures are preliminary and expected to fluctuate upon validation on a weekly basis.

Syrians crossing the border include those who had planned to return before the conflict and others compelled to cross due to current conditions. **74,967** reported intending to return permanently.



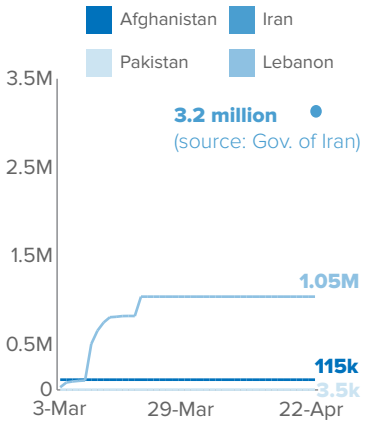
New IDPs since the start of the crisis



out of which, 121,100 displaced persons registered in 642 collective shelters nationwide.

According to the Government of Iran, around **3.2 million people (800k HHs)** internally relocated in the country, which has resulted in one of the largest internal relocations in Iran in recent decades. **75% of the relocated people are in Tehran** followed by Hormozgan (8%), Bushehr (5%) and Khuzestan (3%) provinces.

The relocated people are currently living in temporary accommodation centers such as schools, guesthouses and sports halls. In some locations, nearly **17% of the relocated people lacks access to clean water** due to overcrowding.



[8]'Returnees' includes people returning under adverse circumstances due to the situation in countries of asylum; for Syrians, return dynamics vary and some returns may be temporary (including households where some family members remain in Lebanon).
[9]Afghan returns is an umbrella term that includes all returns including deportations, assisted repatriation, and other returns of Afghans of all statuses such as PoR, ACC, Amayesh cardholders, headcounted slip holders and undocumented, excluding passport holders.

Afghan refugees in Iran

Iran continues to host **1.65M** refugees and others in need of international protection. Based on an analysis of calls received through the UNHCR helpline from 1-31 March, the following are **the three highest priority needs reported by Afghan refugees in Iran.**

Financial assistance for basic needs and relocation

By mid-March, most calls related to requests **for cash assistance to cover basic needs such as food, rent, utilities and transport,** with these requests increasing over time. Afghans also need cash to relocate from high-risk areas but cannot afford to move.

Safe shelter and physical safety from attacks

Across all four weeks, Afghans report **bombings, explosions and house damage** and ask for **safe shelter or relocation.** This includes both **emergency shelter** after damage and **preventive relocation** away from areas at risk of future strikes.

Access to healthcare

Many Afghans report having **serious or chronic illnesses** and being unable to pay for treatment or medicines.

Profiles

52% Iranians crossing to Türkiye are **families.** Based on some 3,200 interviews conducted by UNHCR with arriving Iranian nationals between 4 March and 22 April, the age and gender breakdown was as follows: **62% adult men, 28% adult women, 5% girls, and 5% boys.**

In **Lebanon, 35%** of IDPs are estimated to be **children**[10] where as in Iran **60% are women and children**.

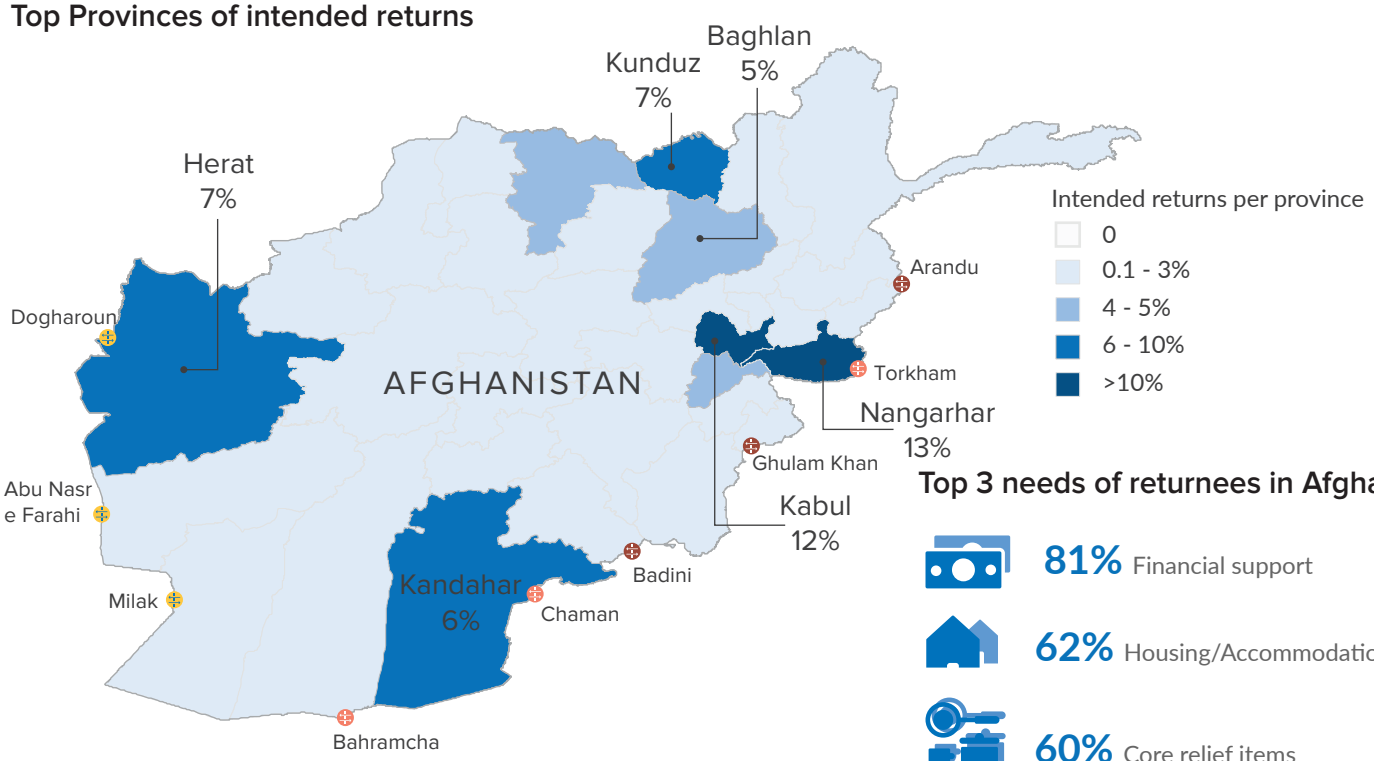
In **Afghanistan, 73% of the IDPs are women and children**. Protection concerns have arisen in displacement sites. Authorities have ordered IDPs in seven displacement sites to return to their areas of origin, with two sites already fully vacated.[11]

In **Pakistan**, IDPs moved to safer areas, where the district administration has established two IDP centers, one in Drosh and another in Akroye. **57% are children, and 28% are women.**

Returns to Afghanistan

Among the Afghan returnees assisted by UNHCR since the start of the crisis, **women and children constitute 82% of those returning from Pakistan and 58% of those returning from Iran.**

Top Provinces of intended returns

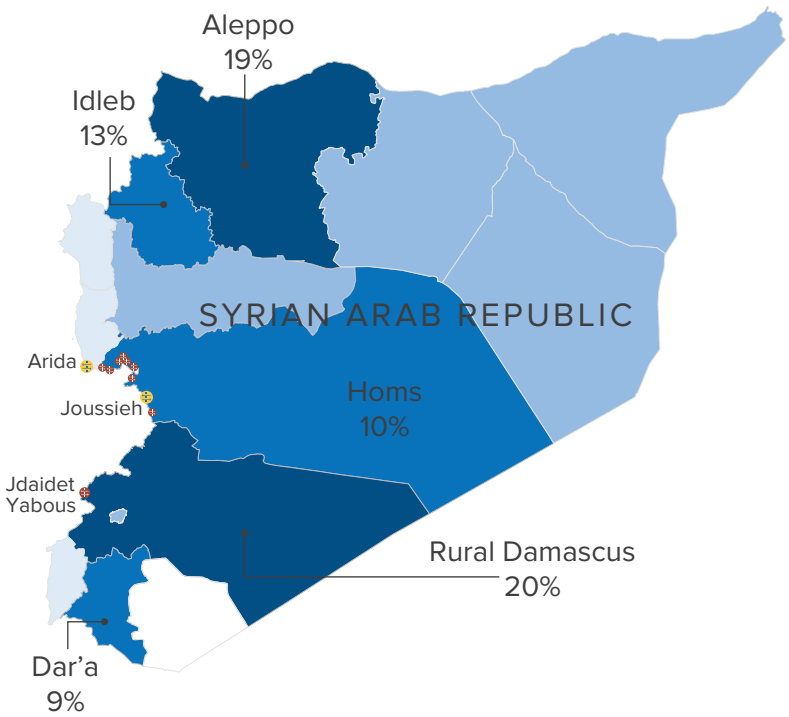


[10]Source: UNICEF. [11]Source: OCHA Afghanistan.

Returns to Syria

Crossings into Syria are primarily **family-based**, with Syrians comprising the majority of those returning. Among the Syrian families interviewed, **females account for approximately 52%**.

Top Provinces of intended returns



Intended returns per province
- 0
- 0.1 - 2%
- 3 - 8%
- 9 - 15%
- >15%

Top 3 needs of returnees in Syria

83% Housing/Shelter

81% Food or nutrition

50% Employment or income opportunities

UNHCR Preparedness and Coordination

UNHCR is leading cross-regional preparedness and response coordination for potential cross-border refugee movements, working with authorities, UN agencies and humanitarian partners. The Regional Bureaux for Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa, and Europe are working closely with country operations to monitor developments and advance preparedness and response planning.

Should a response be required, emergency financial aid would be the primary assistance modality, supported by systems already in place in Afghanistan, Armenia, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and Türkiye and through our global stockpiles and UNHCR's mechanism to reinforce staffing capacity.

Operational Presence

Forcibly displaced persons & returnees in neighbouring & impacted countries in the sub-region in 2025. For more information on Forcibly Displaced definition and methodologies, click here.