



# UNHCR Syria Emergency Response Brief

25 November 2024

UNHCR assisting a vulnerable returnee to cross the crater in the road following the recent attack on Jousseieh Border Crossing in Homs | ©UNHCR Syria

## Population Movement\*



**562,000**  
**Estimated Individuals**  
Who arrived in Syria from  
Lebanon since 24 Sep 2024



**63%** of arrivals are **Syrians**  
and  
**37%** are **Lebanese** nationals

The overall security situation in most parts of the country remained relatively calm compared to the previous week. However, on 23 November, four airstrikes, reportedly carried out by Israel, targeted the area near the Jousseieh crossing point in Homs. The strikes caused material damage to the crossing point and its surroundings, significantly complicating passage for individuals fleeing Lebanon.

\*Figures are undergoing verification and are subject to change.

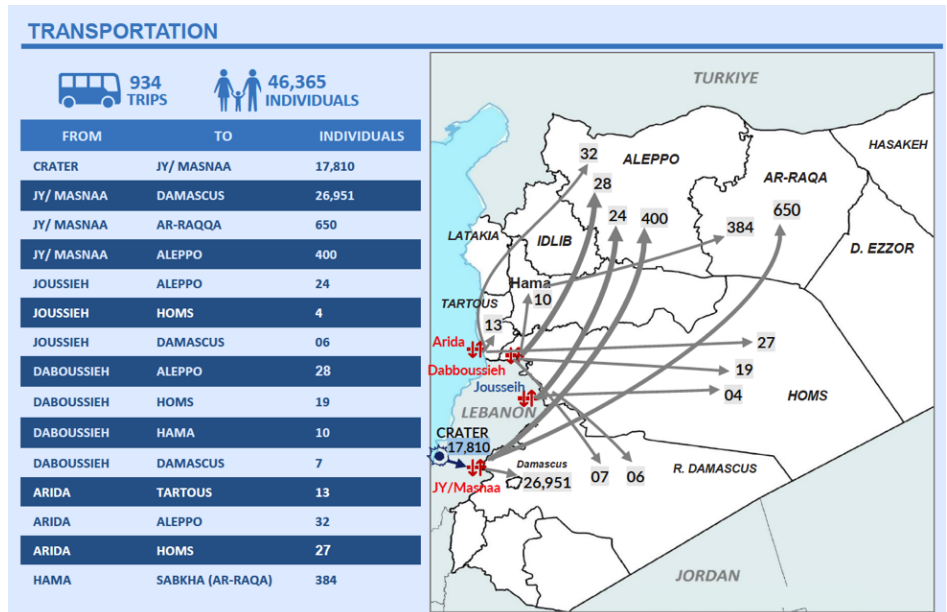
At the borders, medical support continues to be provided to new arrivals to address their immediate health needs. As of 16 November, SARC's mobile health units have provided medical services to some 35,000 individuals at the crossing points since the beginning of the influx.

### Rural Damascus Governorate

On 24 November, close to 1,000 individuals arrived in Syria through the Jdaidet Yabous crossing point from Lebanon. Buses continue to be operational to provide transportation from the crater areas in Masnaa (Lebanon) to the crossing point, from where UNHCR and SARC teams are providing vulnerable individuals with transportation support for their onward movement towards their intended destinations.

Reverse movements from Syria to Lebanon have also been observed, with some 30 recently arrived Syrians and Lebanese returning to Lebanon on 23 November. The reasons for their decision to return to Lebanon despite the ongoing hostilities are varied, but the poor economic situation of Syria was a primary factor.

In addition, 120 high school Syrian students who arrived in Syria on 21 November using UNHCR/SARC transportation from the craters in Masnaa, undertook their preliminary exams in Syria (in preparation for the national exams) and returned to Lebanon on 24 November to rejoin their families. Since 2014, Syria has allowed students who fled the country to return for national exams and depart afterwards, particularly benefiting refugees in neighbouring countries like Lebanon. This process requires coordination with authorities and institutions to ensure safe passage and compliance with regulations.



Transportation services provided by UNHCR and its partner SARC at and from the border crossing points | UNHCR Syria

### Homs Governorate

The rate of new arrivals at the Daboussieh and Jesr Qmar crossing points in Homs remains relatively steady. On 23 November, some 400 individuals were recorded as having crossed from Lebanon.

At around 2100hrs on 23 November, the Jousseieh border crossing suffered a **third missile strike** following similar attacks on 25 October and 2 November, destroying what was the remaining pedestrian pathway. Despite this damage, the border point remained operational and crossings by new arrivals continued, albeit in much reduced quantities. UNHCR and SARC colleagues were on-hand to help families cross the craters that were created, but some elderly arrivals were unable to cross due to the conditions and were forced to return to Lebanon. The recent attack also caused additional material damage to the immigration office which was already being repaired following the earlier strikes.

## Tartous Governorate

Between 22 and 23 November, UNHCR observed 23 Lebanese and Syrian families (64 individuals) crossing from Lebanon through the Al Arida crossing point. Some families reported that the psychological distress impacting their children was the main factor that pushed them to flee Lebanon.

Three Lebanese families were also observed returning to Lebanon, citing challenging living conditions and the harsh weather as their reasons for returning.



## Operational Highlights

The majority of newly arrived Syrians are hosted by their relatives and local communities. The majority of Lebanese refugees are staying in rented accommodation or with host families. Lebanese who do not have alternative accommodation are staying in hosting centres established by local authorities.

There are currently 44 locally established hosting centres in Syria, with an estimated collective capacity of more than 11,000 persons. At present, 21 centres hosting Lebanese families are active.

Many of these hosting centres were established in buildings of public institutions, such as schools or sports and religious facilities, which were not originally designed to accommodate people, thus requiring further adjustments and rehabilitation to address protection-related gaps. At the intended destinations, the UN agencies and international and national NGOs provide diverse and complementary support to the new arrivals based on their needs identified through monitoring. However, a shortage of funding remains a significant challenge to these humanitarian efforts, given the scale of the needs.



## Protection



**114**  
Community Centres



**91,084**  
Individuals Reached

UNHCR staff continues to be deployed at five border crossings between Lebanon and Syria. Together with its local legal partners, it is providing essential protection and legal services to facilitate entry into Syria, including direct communications with the prosecutor's office on pending charges, raising awareness to arriving young men about the active amnesty of 22 September relating to military service, and supporting their access to civil documentation.

Protection monitoring and the provision of legal advice is also taking place in communities of return. The challenge is now to expand this capacity, but for this to happen, additional financial resources from donors are urgently required.

The UNHCR Representative in Syria met with the Minister of Justice together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and discussed the importance of the legal assistance programme carried out by UNHCR and its local legal partners, and the need to expand this programme. They also discussed the critical importance of the issue of housing, land and property rights in the context of the mass arrival of over 400,000 Syrians since 24 September and agreed that this will continue to be an essential part of the ongoing dialogue between UNHCR and the Government.

The distribution of core relief items (CRIs) and winter kits is essential for those fleeing, often leaving behind their livelihood, possessions and sources of income. UNHCR ensures that assistance is provided to new arrivals to help them meet their basic needs as well as cope with the plummeting temperatures.

On 23 November, UNHCR in collaboration with WFP and SARC, supported some 540 individuals in Aleppo with CRIs and food baskets. UNHCR is also planning to dispatch additional CRIs to some 9,800 Syrian and Lebanese families. So far, over 34,600 individuals benefitted from CRIs and food baskets in Aleppo since the onset of the influx, while an additional 7,280 individuals will receive winter kits – each containing five blankets, two winter jackets, one plastic sheet and undergarments. Distribution of CRIs and winter kits is ongoing in other locations too. Since the beginning of the influx, over 17,000 winter kits have been distributed to newly arrived families in Syria.

The severity of winter is expected to intensify in the coming months, exposing recently arrived families from Lebanon, especially female-headed households and those with children, to heightened vulnerability. The lack of fuel and electricity for heating as well as adequate shelter is further straining families. Providing timely winterization assistance is crucial to help these families endure the challenges and safeguard their well-being.



## Inter-Agency Coordination

Since the beginning of the influx, the WASH Sector – led by UNICEF – has been actively coordinating the efforts of 17 partners, including four UN agencies, three national NGOs, and 10 international NGOs. The Sector responded to the WASH needs of more than 240,000 individuals at five border crossing points and in 13 hosting centres by providing bottled water, water trucking, distributing hygiene items, and ensuring the availability of sufficient sanitation services. As part of the comprehensive response, the WASH partners have distributed over 70,000 hygiene kits, including baby diapers, sanitary pads, and other supplies, significantly contributing to meeting the immediate needs of the affected populations. Despite these achievements, the WASH Sector faces significant challenges due to a shortage of funding for the influx response.

The financial constraints across Sectors have forced partners to adjust some of their interventions, stretching their capacities in efforts to continue addressing the needs of newly arrived populations.

### Emergency Appeal Funding

Since the launch of the Inter-Agency Emergency Appeal for the Influx from Lebanon to Syria in early October, 17 per cent of the required funding has been secured. To date, US\$55 million – both received and projected contributions – was provided, out of the total US\$324 million funding required.

Urgent financial support is critical to meet the pressing needs of new arrivals and host communities in Syria and to deliver life-saving assistance.