

UNHCR Syria Flash Update #14

Response to Displacement from Lebanon to Syria

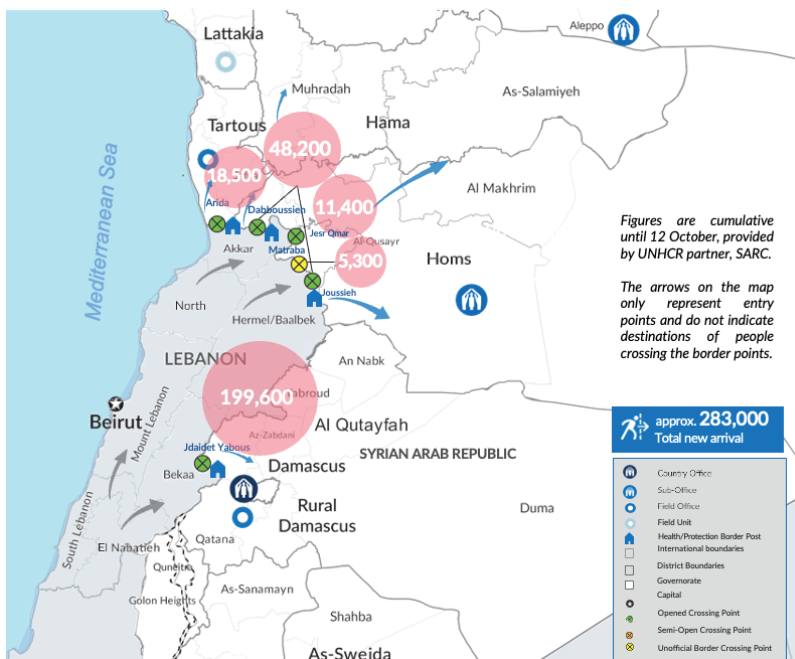
Reporting period: 24 September - 15 October 2024



An elderly man who recently arrived from Lebanon is being accommodated at a hosting centre in Homs | © UNHCR Syria

A total of approximately **283,000¹** 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” (issued 14 October). The numbers also include people entering through the Matraha crossing point (an unofficial border) where UNHCR is not present. Figures are undergoing verification and are subject to change.

Overview of Developments

- In the opening statement at the 75th Plenary Session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme in Geneva, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, made reference to the UN funding appeal (USD 324M) that was recently launched in Damascus for Syrian returnees and Lebanese refugees in need of "immediate relief", urging the Government of Syria to ensure the safety and security of all returnees and calling on donors to support "significant interventions not only in the humanitarian sphere, but also in the early recovery space", thereby contributing towards sustainable solutions for Syrian refugees.
- On 15 October 2024, the USD 100 exchange requirement at border crossings briefly resumed in the morning but was lifted again in the afternoon following a decision by the council of Ministers to apply the waiver until the end of the calendar month.
- The Syria Department of Education estimated that 1,450 students who had recently arrived had now been registered in schools in Aleppo. The Education Sub-national Sector is actively exploring how to ensure that newly arrived children can be quickly engaged in the education system.
- So far, since 24 September, some 27,000 individuals have arrived in northeast Syria. It was further reported that four buses carrying Syrian returnees (more than 180 persons) arrived at the Tayha with the intention of crossing the Aoun Dadat crossing point.

Overview of New Arrivals

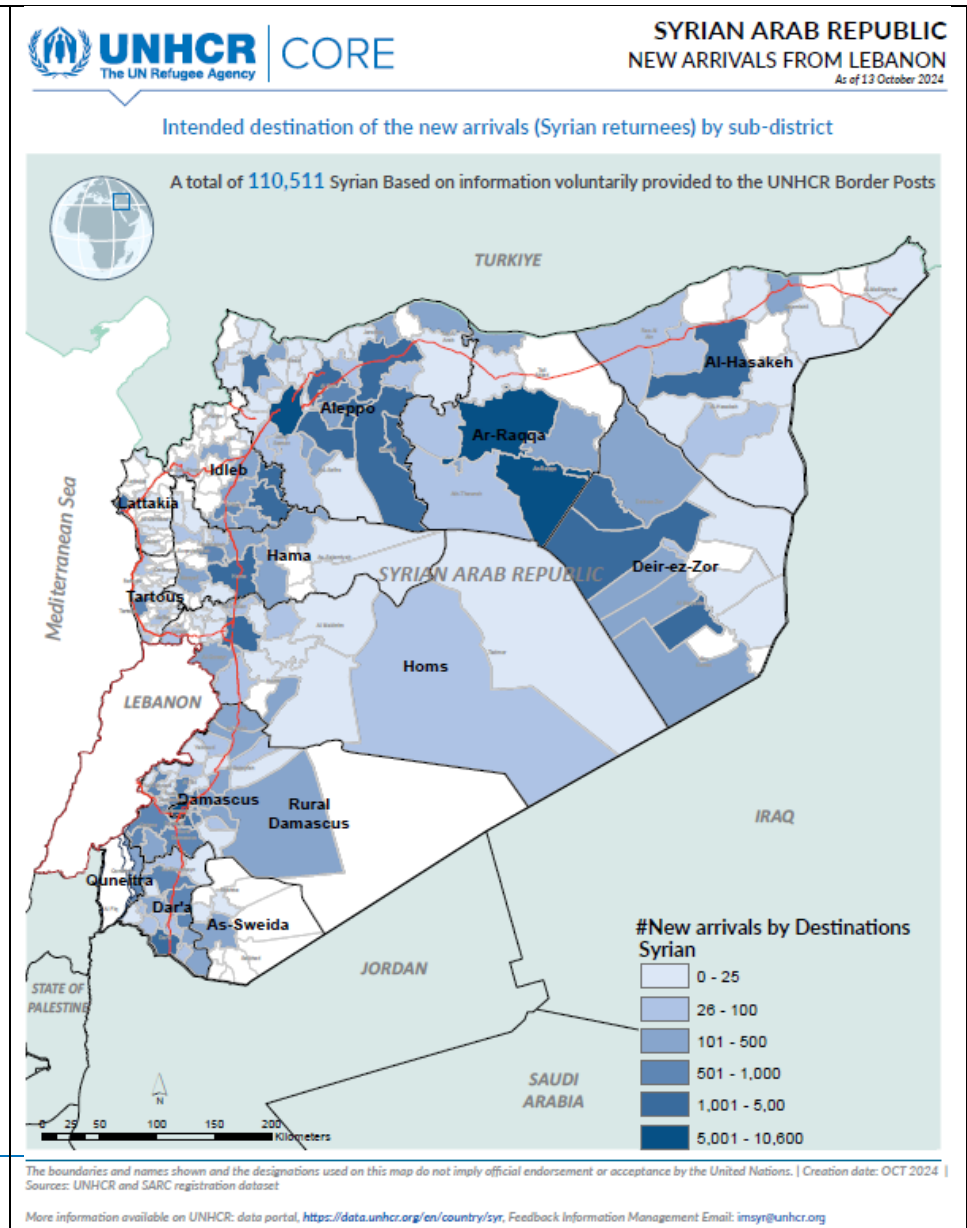
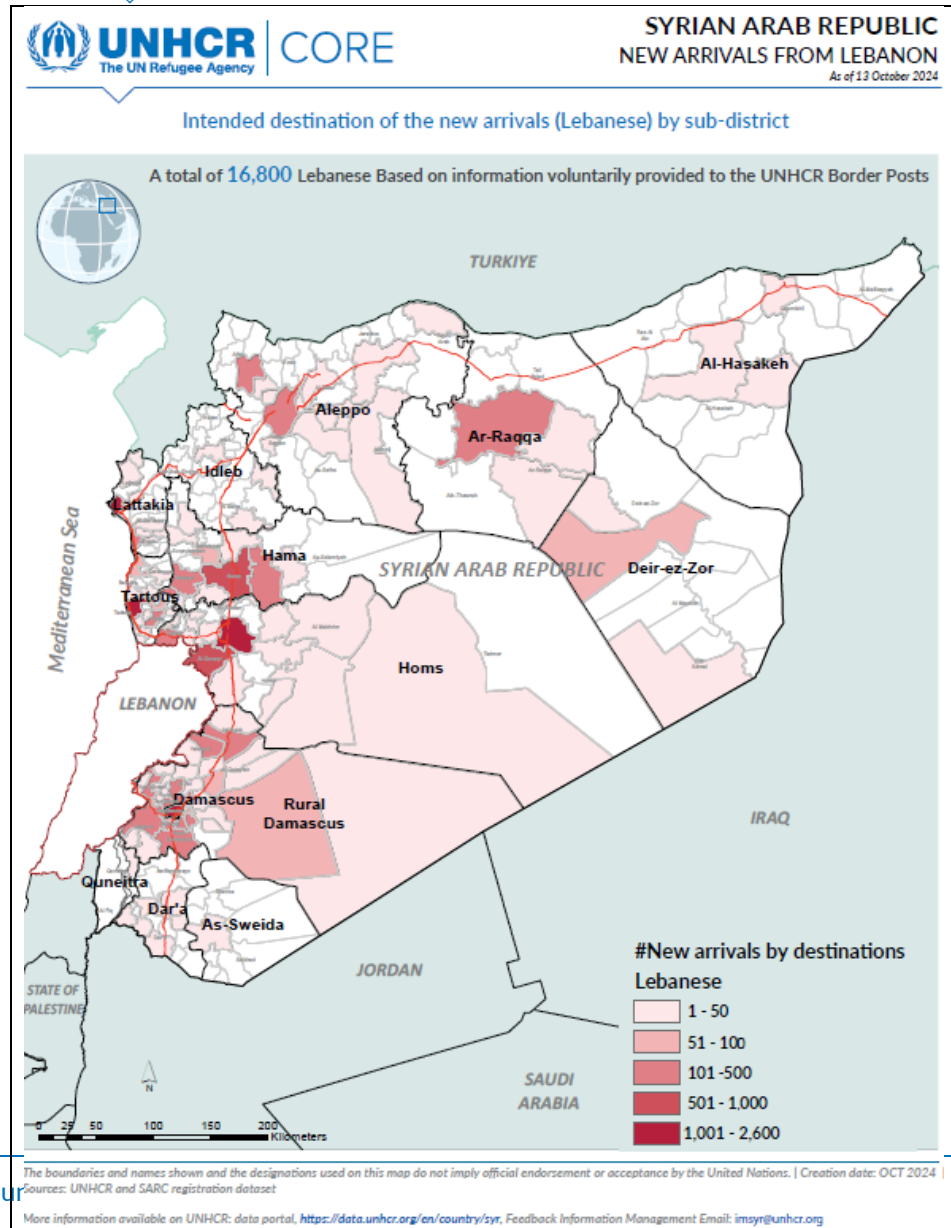
- New arrivals to the Border Posts continued at a steady pace but with reduced inflows compared with late September. Overall, across all the border crossings, it was observed that traffic through these crossings generally increased later in the day.
- At Jdaidet Yabous crossing point, some 4,700 individuals arrived between 10 and 12 October, including 2,386 Syrians, 2,210 Lebanese, and 107 Palestine refugees.
- At Joussieh, Daboussieh and Jesr Al Qmar border crossings, some 1,275 individuals crossed into Syria between 12 and 13 October. These include 775 Syrians and 500 Lebanese.
- At Al Arida crossing, a total of 172 Lebanese and 70 Syrians arrived on 13 October. This is the only border crossing where the proportion of Lebanese entering is greater than that of Syrians returning.
- Outreach to local communities suggests increased movements by new arrivals through unofficial border crossings. While these movements are by nature difficult to track, it is estimated that some 8,100 families (37,000 individuals) have crossed through these means since the start of the influx.



New arrivals resting in the Rub-hall at Al Arida (Tartous) | © UNHCR Syria

The following maps below reflect the intended destinations of a sample of the new arrivals, based on analysis of the information available as of 13 October 2024, as captured at individual Syrian border crossings by UNHCR and SARC.¹ Please note that these maps are indicative only.

¹ These are directly available for download from UNHCR's Operational Data Portal at: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/111752>



Response at the Borders

- UN agencies and humanitarian partners - including **DRC, ICRC, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, Première Urgence Internationale (PUI), SARC, and Syria Trust**, continue to be physically present, providing life-saving assistance to new arrivals at the Syrian border crossing points:
 - Legal aid remains essential for many Syrians returning from Lebanon, as many face challenges with civil documentation, including expired or lost identification, and unregistered civil events such as births and marriages. Over 48,000 individuals have received legal support at the Syrian crossing point through UNHCR and its legal partners Syria Trust and SARC. Assistance was also extended to vulnerable Iraqi and Sudanese for immigration challenges at the border.
 - UNHCR and SARC continued to provide free transportation to vulnerable new arrivals between the damaged road at the Masnaa border crossing (Lebanon) and Jdeidet Yabous; and from the border posts to their destinations. To date, some 4,600 families (23,600 individuals) have benefited from this service.

Hosting Centres for Lebanese Families



There are currently 25 Hosting Centres active across the country accommodating the new arrivals from Lebanon, who are predominantly Lebanese without means and a place to stay.

- In **Rural Damascus**, the Hujelleh hosting centre currently accommodates some 260 Lebanese families (approximately 1,015 individuals) who recently crossed into Syria.
- In **Tartous** and **Latakia**, a total of 950 Lebanese families (3,100 individuals) are receiving shelter at nine² hosting centres.
- In **Homs** and **Hama**, a total of 145 Lebanese families (713 individuals) are being hosted at five hosting centres.

Community Outreach Efforts

- In **Tartous**, a total of 66 Lebanese and Syrians were newly identified and referred to assistance and protection services by **UNHCR's partner, Al-Batoul**, through outreach volunteers and mobile teams.
- In **Aleppo**, UNHCR, through its partner, SARC, has verified the arrival of some 1,700 Syrian and Lebanese families (8,000 individuals).

UNHCR has so far provided core relief items to 1,124 new arrivals, while partner SARC is coordinating with **WFP** for the provision of food kits to further support new arrivals in meeting their basic needs.

At the **community centres in Aleppo**, some 6,700 Syrians and Lebanese – including 1,542 women and 3,900 children – were registered for assistance and protection services. Out of these, some 900 individuals have benefitted from health assistance, child protection and gender-based violence case management, educational support, and tailored services for persons with specific needs.



UNHCR staff helping a new arrival at the Syrian border | ©UNHCR Syria

² 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.

In addition, UNHCR and its legal partners provided legal assistance to some 650 individuals who recently arrived from Lebanon.

- In **southern Syria**, over 7,000 individuals (including 173 Lebanese and 6,902 Syrians) have arrived in As-Sweida, Dar'a and Quneitra since the influx from Lebanon. Out of these, 56 per cent are children and adolescents. UNHCR and its partners have distributed core relief and winter items - including mattresses, blankets, jerrycans, plastic sheets, kitchen sets, solar lamps and winter clothing - to some 2,400 individuals.

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