

UNHCR Syria Flash Update #6

Response to Displacement from Lebanon to Syria

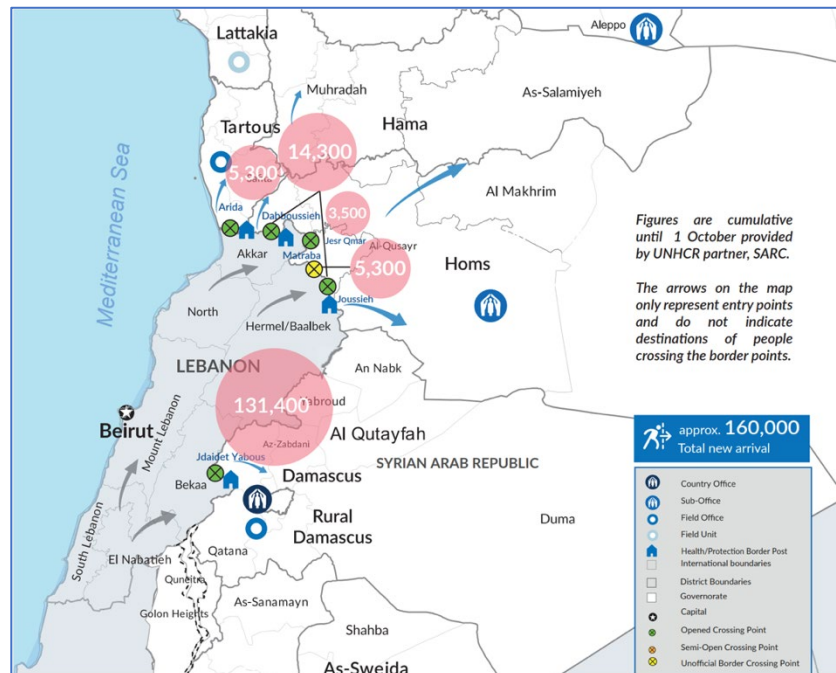
Reporting period: 24 September- 2 October 2024



New arrivals from Lebanon at the Joussieh border crossing point (Homs Governorate) ©UNHCR Syria

A total of approximately
160,000¹
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**.



Figures are cumulative until 1 October provided by UNHCR partner, SARC.

The arrows on the map only represent entry points and do not indicate destinations of people crossing the border points.

¹ The numbers of new arrivals in this document are from "Middle East Crisis- SARC Emergency Response: Syrian Returnees and Lebanese Refugees Influx" (1 October 2024). The numbers also include people entering through the Matraba crossing point (an unofficial border) where UNHCR is not present.

Overview of Developments

- The influx of arrivals at the Syrian borders continues following the escalation of hostilities in Lebanon on 23 September. Jdaidet Yabous remains the primary entry point for most of the Syrian and Lebanese families crossing into Syria.
- In Homs, UNHCR will visit a border crossing point (Jesr Alkmar, Tall Kalakh) to which it has not been before, but where according to SARC around 800 families have crossed into rural Homs. This is an important development. SARC Homs is providing water and food items to these families.
- Other nationals have also been recorded amongst the new arrivals. According to the Embassy of Iraq in Damascus, over the past week, 1,450 Iraqis who were in Lebanon have crossed to Syria through the Jdaidet Yabous border point.
- It was noted that since the beginning of the month, Syrians were being permitted to depart Lebanon to Syria without being subjected to re-entry bans.
- On 2 October, UNHCR met **the Minister of Interior** to express appreciation for various measures taken to facilitate entries for both Syrians and Lebanese. One of the specific requests made by UNHCR to the Ministry was to deploy mobile civil registration teams to the border crossings, as required, which was agreed to.
- The Syrian authorities recently announced a time-bound waiver of fines related to delays in registering civil events such as registration of births, deaths, marriages etc. This measure reduces the financial burden for Syrians who enter the country. This is the result of active and sustained advocacy by UNHCR, preceding this latest emergency.
- Decongestion at border was greatly helped by the announcement of a week-long waiver of mandatory US\$ 100 exchange required of each Syrian for entry, announced on 29 September (Council of Minister's decision No. 12147/1). UNHCR is advocating for at least a short extension.
- UNHCR and its partner SARC continue to provide transportation to extremely vulnerable families from the Syrian borders to their destinations inside Syria. On 2 October, SARC facilitated the transportation for some 700 individuals, bringing the total number of persons assisted to 7,700 since 23 September.
- On 2 October, five unaccompanied children were identified at the Jdaidet Yabous border crossing point. UNHCR and SARC provided them immediate child protection support and referred to relevant authorities for solutions.
- Urgent medical interventions for new arrivals continued to be a regular need. As of 30 September, SARC and the Ministry of Health have provided emergency medical assistance to more than 1,000 cases. A baby girl was delivered at the Jdaidet Yabous border point on 1 October.

Overview of New Arrivals

- While a regular stream of new arrivals continued at all four border crossings where UNHCR are present, the rate of arrivals visibly reduced on 2 October, with large tour buses replaced by smaller minivans and private vehicles. The new arrivals also appeared to be better prepared, with possessions neatly packed and stored, in contrast to earlier days when many arrived carrying their possessions in large bags in their hands.
- For Lebanese nationals entering Syria, the immigration authorities continue to accept any form of official identification presented as sufficient documentation for entry.



Arrivals at Daboussieh crossing point in Homs. ©UNHCR Syria

Response by UNHCR and Partners

- **UNHCR** is working closely with its partners – notably **UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, ICRC, and SARC**, together with several local and international NGOs - to provide vital assistance and services to new arrivals at the Syrian borders.
 - **UNHCR** continues to provide core relief items to new arrivals. On 1 October, 1,000 blankets were distributed at the Joussieh and Daboussieh border points (Homs Governorate). This brings the total number of relief items and food items distributed by UNHCR until 1 October to some 120,000 and 180,000, respectively.
 - On 2 October, **UNHCR** installed a third Rub-hall at the Jdaidet Yabous border crossing point to expand the resting areas for over 500 new arrivals, many of whom arrive at the border exhausted.
 - **UNHCR** and its partner **Première Urgence Internationale (PUI)** also completed the cleaning work at the surrounding area of the immigration office as part of ongoing efforts to improve health and hygiene conditions.
 - Since 29 September, **UNFPA** has stationed mobile teams at the Syrian borders to provide essential reproductive health services including psychosocial support to new arrivals.
- To ensure continuous support for new arrivals at all times, **SARC** has deployed 300 volunteers at the Jdaidet Yabous border point. At the Daboussieh border point (Homs Governorate), SARC has also allocated additional resources to the Border Health-Protection Support Point, including a mobile clinic, an emergency team, a disaster response team, and volunteers. In addition, four lawyers from **Syria Trust** are serving on-site at the Daboussieh border point to provide legal support to newly arrived families.
- In Rural Damascus, 16 Lebanese families (56 individuals, including 27 children) are being accommodated in the Hurjalleh hosting centre. On 1 October, UNHCR conducted a visit to identify and respond to their needs. Two mobile clinics of **SARC** and the **Ministry of Health** are also stationed at the centre to provide medical assistance.



Cleaning work at Jdaidet Yabous border crossing point ©UNHCR Syria

- In Tartous Governorate, as of 1 October, 30 Lebanese families (90 individuals) are staying at the Pioneer Reception Centre. UNHCR continues to provide relief items and psychosocial support on-site.
- In Latakia Governorate, Ras Al-Basit and Al-Sheer hosting centres are housing 300 and 100 individuals respectively. Beyond the hosting centres, some 350 Lebanese families (1,250 individuals) are currently staying in hotels and rented accommodation. UNHCR's partners also identified 9 Syrian families recently arrived from Lebanon.
- In Homs and Hama Governorates, as of 1 October, 3 hosting centres are currently housing around 80 Lebanese families (370 individuals). UNHCR through SARC distributed more than 100 core relief kits to these hosting centres. Additionally, on 29 September, SARC distributed 1,000 relief items, including winter clothes, to new arrivals – primarily Lebanese - who are being hosted in the districts of Al Qsseir, Talkallah, Rastan, Al- Makhrim, and Homs city.
- UNHCR is dispatching more than 2,600 core-relief and winter items for families who recently crossed into Syria with intended final destination in Ar-Raqqa, Homs, Hama and Aleppo Governorates.



Provision of NFI/Winter kit for Lebanese families at the hosting center in Hama city ©UNHCR Syria

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