

# LEBANON

## COUNTRY BRIEF - MAY 2025

### BACKGROUND

The Government of Lebanon estimates that some 1.5 million Syrian refugees live in Lebanon, including approximately 717,657 registered with UNHCR as of April 2025. The number of refugees and asylum-seekers from countries other than Syria who are registered with UNHCR are 11,291 as of April 2025. The Lebanon Response Plan targets 1.3 million refugees for assistance by humanitarian partners. Iraqis continue to make up the largest percentage (55%) of the total refugee population from countries other than Syria, followed by Sudanese (19%) and Ethiopians (13%).

Lebanon is not a signatory to the Refugee and Statelessness Conventions and has not enacted legislation or a comprehensive policy to respond to the specific needs of refugees and asylum-seekers. Refugee stay is regulated under the framework applicable to other foreigners and notwithstanding their specific circumstances. Restrictions on admission to territory, suspension of UNHCR new registrations of Syrians by the Government of Lebanon in 2015 as well as deportations, continue to impact refugees' access to safety and protection in Lebanon.

Legal residency rates remain low among Syrians, with just 20% of individuals above the age of 15 having legal residency. Deportations of Syrians who entered or re-entered Lebanon irregularly after April 2019 continue, often without due process and procedural safeguards. Lebanon continues to face a severe socio-economic and financial downturn. The situation is prolonged in the absence of a comprehensive macroeconomic and financial stabilization plan. The country failed to elect a President throughout 2023 resulting in prolonged office of the ad interim Government. The impacts of these crises are exacerbating a range of political, social and environmental issues that are inflicting significant human suffering and increasing the risk of social tensions and instability. Municipalities

are also affected and are under increasing pressure but unable to provide basic services due to a lack of funding. The level of vulnerability among the Lebanese population has also increased, resulting in increased competition over scarce resources. The impact of the crises is exacerbating a range of political, social and environmental issues that are inflicting significant human suffering and increasing the risk of social tensions and instability.

Since the fall of the regime in Syria on 8 December, new arrivals have entered Lebanon, including approximately 85,327 Syrians and Lebanese to Baalbek Governorate in the Bekaa, as well as some 32,002 recent new arrivals to the North of the country fleeing recent violence in Syria's coastal areas as of 24 April 2025. While the vast majority remain in these areas, some have since moved to other governorates within Lebanon.

UNHCR coordinates the return related preparation and implementation through the Durable Solutions Working Group (DSWG) and is engaging with the Government of Lebanon on creating pathways for voluntary return, anchored in protection principles and guided by the voices of refugees, to ensure that Syrian refugees who, fully informed, voluntarily choose to return home are supported to do so; and that international protection is secured for those Syrian refugees who choose to remain in Lebanon.

### JOINT COLLABORATION

UNHCR and IFC are working together under the PROSPECTS Partnership (Phase II), Multiannual Country Program (MACP) for 2024-2027. UNHCR provides tailored support to Prospects partner organizations to optimize the targeting and referral of vulnerable refugees for selected education and employment programme activities, using the refugee database as the primary source of information.