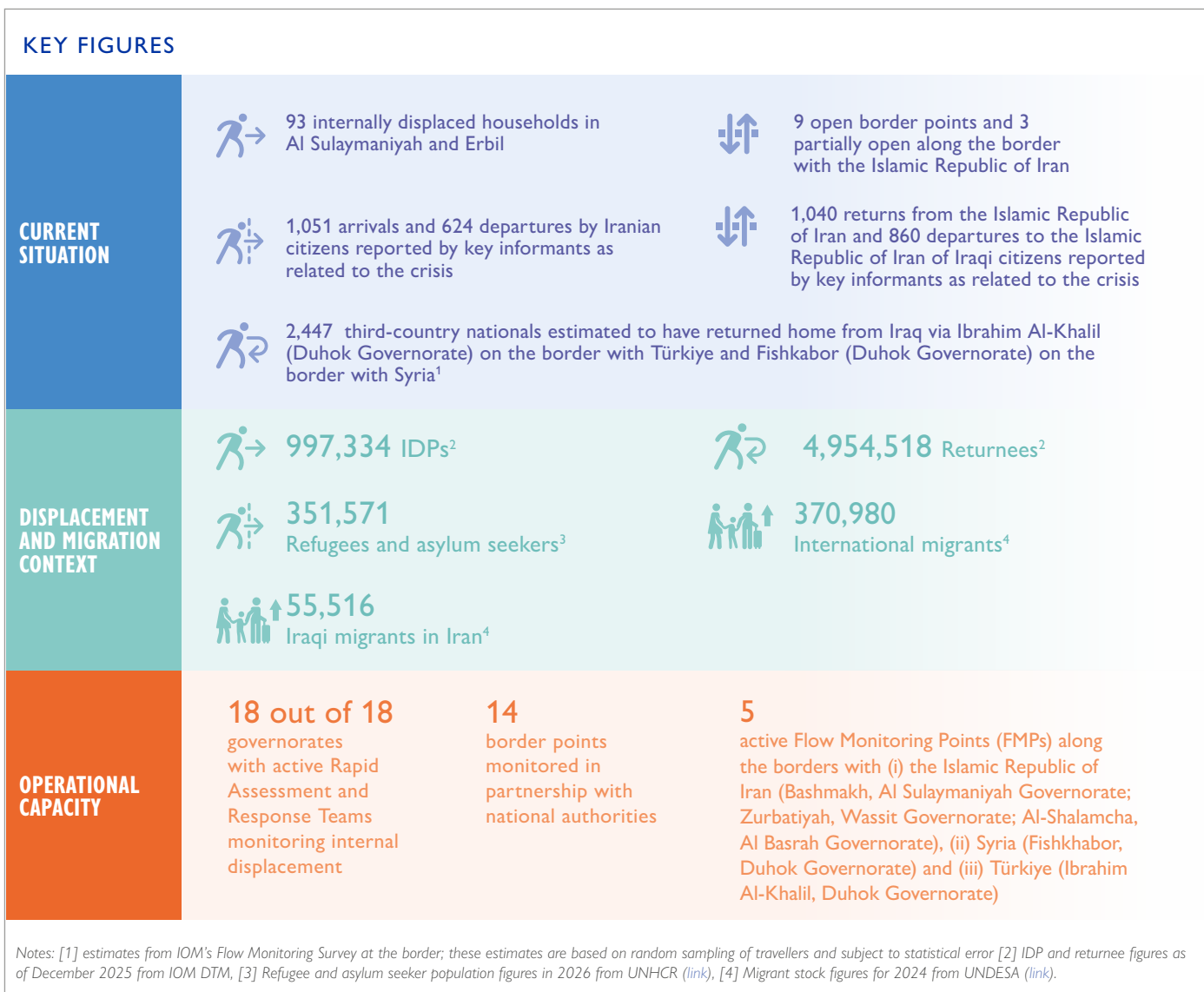


# UPDATE ON CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY AND INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN IRAQ

SITUATION AS OF 06 APRIL 2026

Regional tensions continue following escalatory actions in and around the Islamic Republic of Iran since late February 2026. In Iraq, the situation remains fluid, with disruption to airspace, civilian mobility, and humanitarian access across multiple countries. This crisis compounds pre-existing vulnerabilities linked to Iraq's complex security dynamics and protracted displacement associated with the conflict with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Continued monitoring of internal displacement and cross-border mobility dynamics remains critical to inform operational planning, preparedness, and humanitarian response.



## OPERATIONAL CAPACITY FOR DISPLACEMENT MONITORING

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) plays a key role in the systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of data on migration and displacement in Iraq. Working in close coordination with the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD), IOM monitors mobility dynamics across the country and at its borders. IOM implements its global data collection system, the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), applying standardized methodologies to generate timely, reliable, and comparable data on population movements.<sup>1</sup> DTM provides granular, location-level

information on displacement trends, population profiles, and mobility patterns, enabling continuous monitoring of evolving dynamics. DTM data serves as a critical evidence base for operational planning and decision-making, supporting humanitarian, recovery, and stabilization interventions. As a global public good, IOM makes DTM data available to government counterparts and humanitarian partners to inform coordinated response efforts, enhance targeting of assistance, and optimize the allocation of resources across preparedness, response, and return contexts.

1 See the DTM Methodological Framework.

To monitor **internal displacement and return in Iraq**, IOM DTM relies on trained Rapid Assessment and Response Teams (RARTs), consisting of 40 local responders with over a decade of operational experience. RARTs maintain deep-rooted institutional connections to local authorities across all governorates, with the capacity for rapid scaling, and leverage a network of approximately 3,732 key informants. RARTs provide constant situational awareness and early warning, monitoring local developments and verifying any reports of displacement through Emergency Tracking assessments at the location level. Additionally, they conduct regular countrywide assessments to update displacement stock estimates and, based on need, multi-sector needs assessments.

To monitor **cross-border mobility and displacement in Iraq**, IOM DTM operates flow monitoring points (FMPs) at key transit locations, such

## INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

In addition to the previously documented 90 internally displaced households since the start of the crisis, during this reporting period, three additional households belonging to a minority in the Ninewa Plains reportedly relocated to Erbil following harassment, which may constitute a small-scale but relevant instance of internal displacement. While limited in scale, such movements may also indicate localized tensions and potential limited social cohesion amid broader regional escalation. More acute social tensions were also observed in Al-Qaim, where clashes between members of the Albu Mahal and Al-Jehaifa tribes on 6 April resulted in reported fatalities and injuries, alongside the subsequent imposition of a curfew and the visible deployment of tribal forces in the streets.

Since the start of the crisis, airstrikes and drone attacks have been reported in at least 15 governorates, including Al-Anbar, Babil, Baghdad, Al Basrah, Diyala, Duhok, Erbil, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Al Najaf, Ninewa, Missan, Salah Al-Din, Al Sulaymaniyah, and Wassit. Many incidents continue to target military and security forces; during this reporting period, these attacks included strikes on Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) positions and related infrastructure in Al-Qaim (Al-Anbar), Tal Afar and Hamdaniya (Ninewa), and Makhmour (Erbil). The bombing of Al-Sadeeq Airport near Tuz Khurmatu (Salah Al-Din), targeting PMF facilities, was also reported. Casualties among security personnel have been documented in some cases, including in Al-Qaim and Tal Afar, while in others, information remains limited or unverified. Meanwhile, incidents involving Peshmerga forces have also been reported in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), particularly in Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate, with no reported casualties.

Additionally, recent reports indicate that incidents have increasingly affected civilian areas and infrastructure across various governorates. In Erbil city, repeated drone activity has affected urban areas, including Seberdan and Nusaran neighbourhoods and 32 Park, where intercepted drones or falling debris have impacted residential zones, causing property damage and, in some cases, injuries. Additional drone activity has been recorded across Shaqlawa, Soran, and Koya districts in Erbil Governorate. Camp Azadi in Koya district, hosting Iranian Kurdish populations, was also reportedly targeted by missiles and drones. In Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate, drones have been repeatedly intercepted over urban areas, including western parts of Sulaymaniyah city, with debris falling in residential areas. While no casualties were reported, these incidents continue to generate fear among residents. In Duhok Governorate, repeated drone activity has been reported across Amedi district, impacting several villages, while in Ninewa Governorate, an airstrike targeted a warehouse storing agricultural produce in Telkaif district.

as border crossings and major travel routes. At these points, trained enumerators conduct short interviews with travellers to collect data on population movements, including routes, demographics, mode of travel, and reasons for crossing. IOM currently operates three FMPs **along the borders with the Islamic Republic of Iran** (Bashmakh, Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate, active since 15 March 2026; Zurbatiyah, Wassit Governorate, and Al-Shalamcha, Al Basrah Governorate, active since 17 March 2026), one on the border with Syria (Fishkhabor, Duhok Governorate) and one on the border with Türkiye (Ibrahim Al-Khalil, Duhok Governorate), collecting data on a daily basis. Additionally, IOM works closely with the Ministry of Interior and the Border Commission to monitor mobility dynamics across a broader set of border crossing points (BCPs).

A development during this reporting period is the increased targeting of oil infrastructure. In Erbil Governorate, a warehouse storing oil products was targeted by multiple drones. In Al Basrah and Duhok Governorates, drone incidents targeted oil fields and facilities, including sites operated by foreign companies, with some incidents resulting in casualties or injuries. Missan Governorate was also affected during this reporting period, including reported drone strikes on oil fields in Amarah District. In Wassit Governorate, authorities have warned residents to conserve water after detecting oil pollution in the Tigris River.

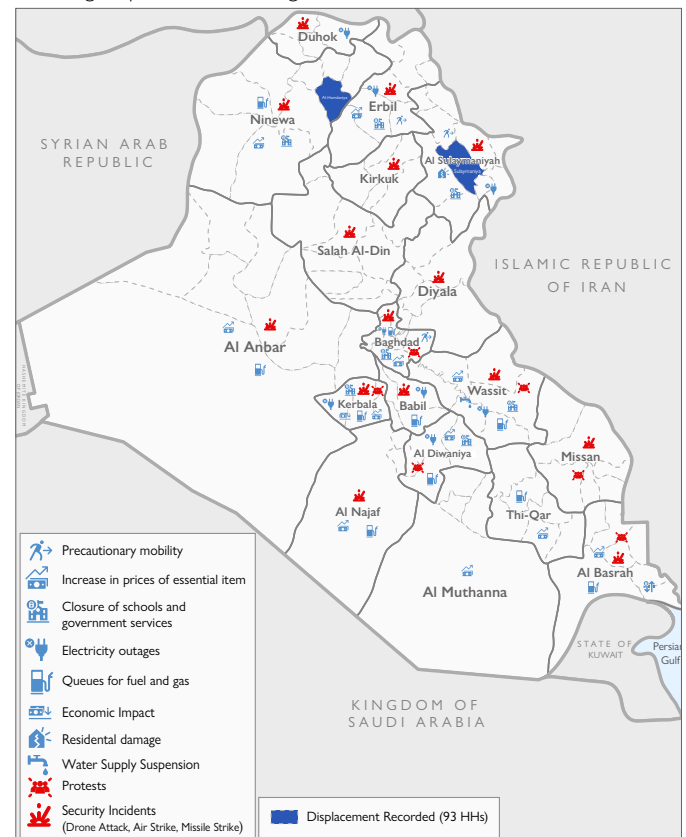


Figure 1: Humanitarian impact of the crisis and displacement risk factors inside Iraq. The information is reported at the governorate level based on reports from DTM field teams and media sources since 1 March 2026 and may not be exhaustive. This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Attacks have also increasingly affected border areas and crossing points. In Wassit Governorate, airstrikes were reported near the Zurbatiyah border crossing. In Al Basrah Governorate, operations at the Al-Shalamcha border crossing with the Islamic Republic of Iran were briefly suspended following

damage to civilian infrastructure on the Iranian side. The incident disrupted passenger processing and commercial flows, with some initial reports indicating that at least one Iraqi traveller was killed and others injured.

These developments are generating wider cascading impacts. Disruptions to oil infrastructure and cross-border trade have contributed to fuel shortages and rising prices in several governorates, including Kerbala and Al-Qadisiyah, often resulting in long queues at fuel stations. Increases in food prices continue to be reported in Al-Muthanna Governorate, with a sharp increase

## CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY

### The Islamic Republic of Iran border monitoring<sup>2</sup>

Iraq shares a long land border with the Islamic Republic of Iran that runs across six governorates: four in Federal Iraq, Diyala, Wassit, Missan, and Al Basrah, and two in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), Erbil and Al Sulaymaniyah. Regular cross-border movements take place between the two countries for trade, business, tourism, and religious activities. Notably, during this reporting period, none of the 12 BCPs were reported as fully closed.

As of 6 April 2026, border conditions remained broadly stable compared to the previous reporting period (30 March), with most crossing points open and no major restrictions observed. Across the Iraq–Iran border, the number of fully open crossings remained unchanged at nine, although their composition shifted. Al-Sheeb (Missan Governorate), Zurbatiyah (Wassit Governorate), Hajj Omran (Erbil Governorate), Bashmagh (Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate), Al-Shalamcha (Al Basrah Governorate), Muntheriyah (Diyala Governorate), Pshta and Twila (Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate) remained fully open, while Siran Bin (Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate) reopened after being fully closed on 30 March.<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile, the number of partially open BCPs increased. Kele (Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate) and Sumar/Mandeli (Diyala Governorate) remained partially open, while Broizkhan (Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate) shifted from open to partially open. Commercial transit was permitted at all three crossing points, while Broizkhan also allowed the return of Iraqis to Iraq and Iranians to the Islamic Republic of Iran.<sup>4</sup>

Estimates by border officials suggest that at least 1,040 Iraqis have returned by land since 6 March for reasons described by border officials as related to the current crisis (see Table 1 for daily movement estimates as of 6 April), representing a substantial increase compared to the previous reporting period.<sup>5</sup> This increase may reflect improved reporting by border authorities, increased cross-border movements, or a combination of both. Similarly, the number of Iraqis reportedly travelled to the Islamic Republic of Iran for the same reasons also rose substantially, reaching 860 as of 6 April.<sup>6</sup>

following attacks at the Al-Shalamcha border crossing.

During this reporting period, demonstrations were reported again in multiple locations, including in Kerbala, Al Basrah, and Missan, indicating wider risks to stability in Iraq. In Baghdad Governorate, the reported kidnapping of an American journalist highlights the broader deterioration of the security environment in the country. The ongoing escalation of the crisis continues to increase concern among civilians and is likely to lead to further localized movements and internal displacement.

Additionally, border authorities estimated 1,051 arrivals and 624 departures of Iranians linked to the crisis. As of 6 April, the estimated number of third-country nationals (TCNs) who had entered Iraq due to the current crisis remained unchanged at 10, with no new arrivals reported since 30 March.

Across all open and partially open BCPs, key informants reported continued regular commercial and non-commercial cross-border flows in both directions. Since 6 March, a total of 45,827 entries and 45,908 exits were recorded. Border authorities indicated that these flows are routine and are not linked to the current crisis. Between 31 March and 6 April alone, 8,894 incoming and 8,999 outgoing regular movements were reported. Data on movements were unavailable for some open or partially open BCPs, meaning the reported figures likely underestimate movement flows.

Among the nine open or partially open BCPs for which incoming and outgoing movements were reported in at least one direction, the majority indicated that flows were broadly unchanged compared to the previous day.<sup>7</sup> Five BCPs (Bashmagh, Broizkhan, Twila, Siran Bin and Zurbatiyah) reported movements as stable, while one (Muntheriyah) reported stable outgoing movements only.

One BCP (Al-Shalamcha) reported lower movements, and two Hajj Omran (for incoming movements only) and Al-Sheeb (for both incoming and outgoing movements) reported much lower movements. In this reporting period border authorities reported that Hajj Omran (Erbil Governorate) had put in place temporary measures allowing entry for people lacking documentation.

While in previous reporting periods Zurbatiyah (Wassit Governorate) was the only BCP reporting preparedness measures for a potential emergency, as of this round, Al-Shalamcha (Al Basrah Governorate) also reported such measures. Led by border authorities, this included support to border health facilities, improvements to water, hygiene, and sanitation services, the deployment of ambulances and fire trucks, and the establishment of an emergency response and evacuation plan. Both BCPs also reported security incidents, including shelling near the border crossing points and periodic shelling in the surrounding area.

2 Border monitoring relies on key informant estimates from border officials across all BCPs.

3 According to border authorities, several status changes took place on 4 April. Pshta reopened for commercial exchange, as previously practiced, while Twila and Siran Bin reopened for both travellers and commercial exchange.

4 According to border authorities, Kele shifted to partially open on 4 April and remained open for commercial transit only, while travellers were not allowed to cross from the Iranian side. Similarly, starting from 4 April, Broizkhan was reported as operating from 8:00 a.m to 8:00 p.m.; passengers' traffic was reported as normal for Iranian citizens, while departures of Iraqi citizens were reportedly limited to 20 people per day. Commercial traffic continued as usual.

5 Compared to 181 Iraqis registered as of 30 March.

6 Compared to 70 Iraqis registered as of 30 March.

7 Eight BCPs reported incoming movements (Al-Shalamcha, Bashmagh, Broizkhan, Twila, Siran Bin, Hajj Omran, Al-Sheeb, Zurbatiyah) and eight reported outgoing movements (Al-Shalamcha, Bashmagh, Broizkhan, Twila, Siran Bin, Muntheriyah, Al Sheeb, Zurbatiyah).



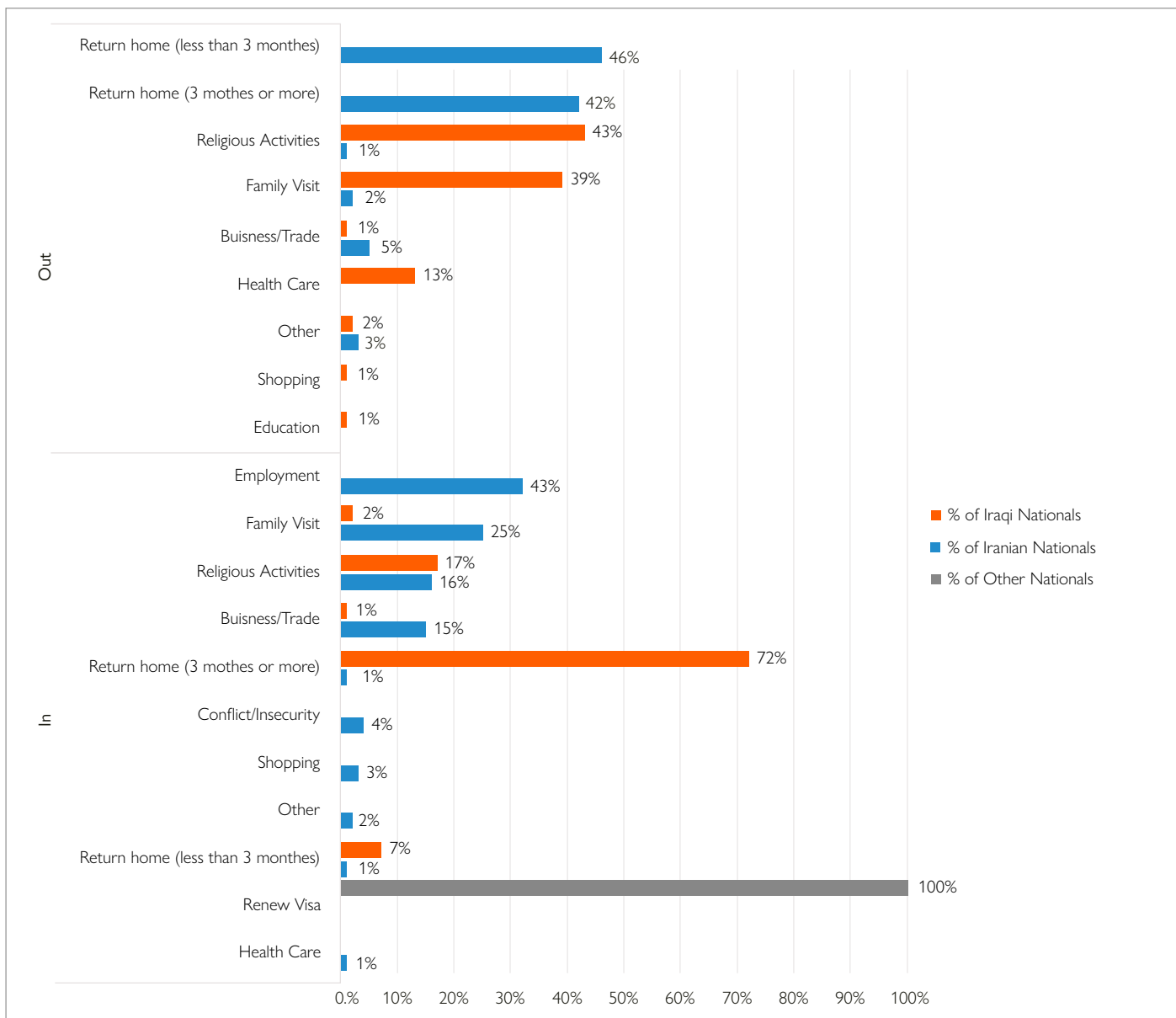


Figure 3: breakdown of arrivals from and departures to the Islamic Republic of Iran by reason for movement

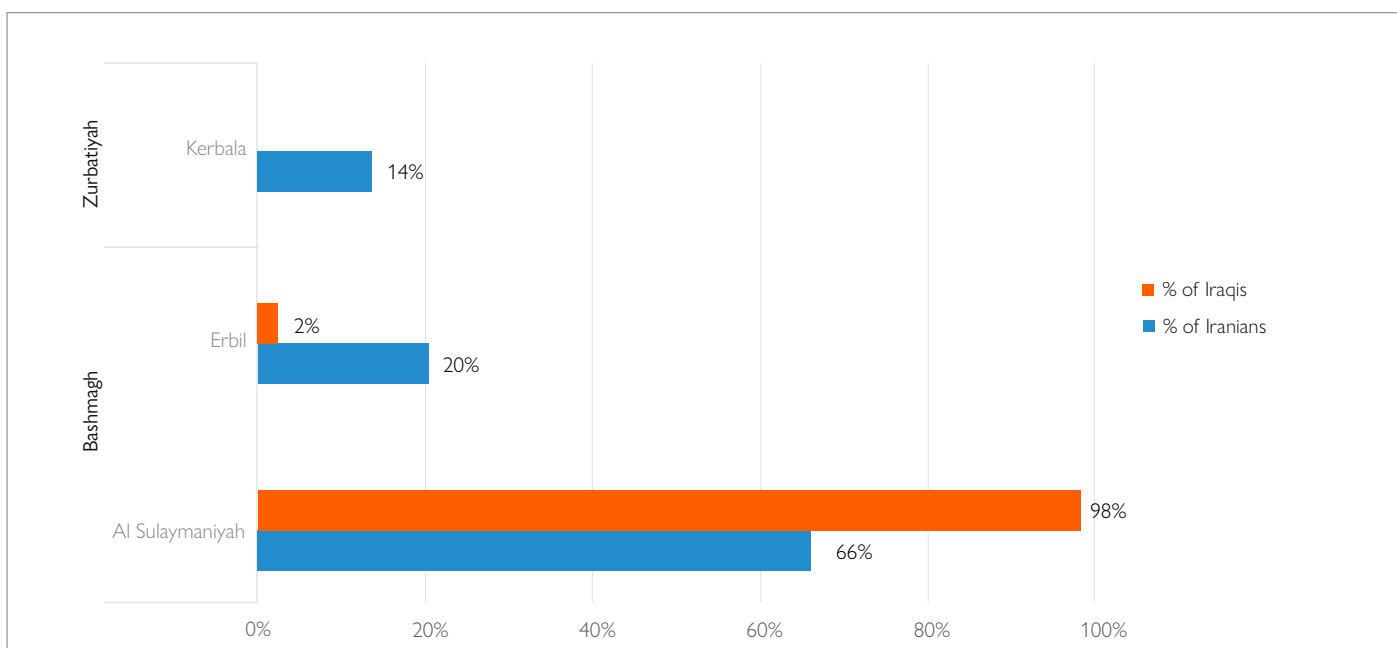


Figure 4: breakdown of arrivals from the Islamic Republic of Iran of Iranian citizens (movements related to the crisis) and Iraqi citizens returning home (3 months or more) by Flow Monitoring Point and governorate of destination.

## Türkiye and Syria flow monitoring

IOM is also conducting Flow Monitoring Surveys at Ibrahim Al-Khalil (Duhok Governorate), on the border with Türkiye, and Fishkabor (Duhok Governorate), on the border with Syria. Due to the volume of traffic, these surveys are conducted with a random sample of travellers using interval sampling and are therefore subject to statistical error. Based on

this data, IOM estimates that 2,447 TCNs returned home from Iraq via these two land crossings between 10 March and 6 April 2026.<sup>10</sup> The countries of nationality of these travellers included Türkiye, Germany, Syria, France, Italy, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

**Table 1: status of border crossing points along the Iraq-Iran border and estimated flows based on reports by border authorities: 6 April 2026**

GOVERNORATE	BORDER POINT	TYPE	STATUS	INCOMING MOVEMENTS DAILY ESTIMATE ON 6 APRIL	OUTGOING MOVEMENTS DAILY ESTIMATE ON 6 APRIL
Al Basrah	Al-Shalamcha	Formal	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Movements decreased</li> <li>232 ind. regular movements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Movements decreased</li> <li>147 ind. regular movements</li> </ul>
Diyala	Sumar / Mandeli	Formal	Partially open	None reported; commercial transit permitted	None reported; commercial transit permitted
Diyala	Muntheriyah	Formal	Open	None reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Movement flow stayed consistent with the previous day;</li> <li>3 ind. Iranian crisis movements</li> </ul>
Erbil	Hajj Omran	Formal	Open	Movements noticeably decreased	None reported
Missan	Al-Sheeb	Formal	Open	Movements noticeably decreased	Movements noticeably decreased
Al Sulaymaniyah	Bashmagh	Formal	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous day</li> </ul>
Al Sulaymaniyah	Broizkhan	Formal	Partially open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous day</li> <li>Commercial transit and return of nationalities permitted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous days;</li> <li>Commercial transit and return of nationalities permitted</li> </ul>
Al Sulaymaniyah	Twila	Formal for KRI only	Open	Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous day	Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous days
Al Sulaymaniyah	Kele	Formal for KRI only	Partially open	None reported; commercial transit permitted	None reported; commercial transit permitted
Al Sulaymaniyah	Siran Bin	Formal for KRI only	Open	Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous day	Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous days
Al Sulaymaniyah	Pshta	Formal for KRI only	Open	None reported	None reported
Wassit	Zurbatiyah	Formal	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous day</li> <li>40 ind. Iranians reported by border officials as having moved due to the crisis;</li> <li>150 ind. regular movements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous days</li> <li>117 ind. regular movements</li> </ul>

<sup>10</sup> The estimates are based on a sample size of 652 respondents (533 at Ibrahim Al-Khalil and 119 at Fishkabor), out of whom 193 were TCNs returning home, weighted for the overall volume of traffic at each location. Data collection takes place only during regular working hours and was suspended 1-9 March as a security precaution.