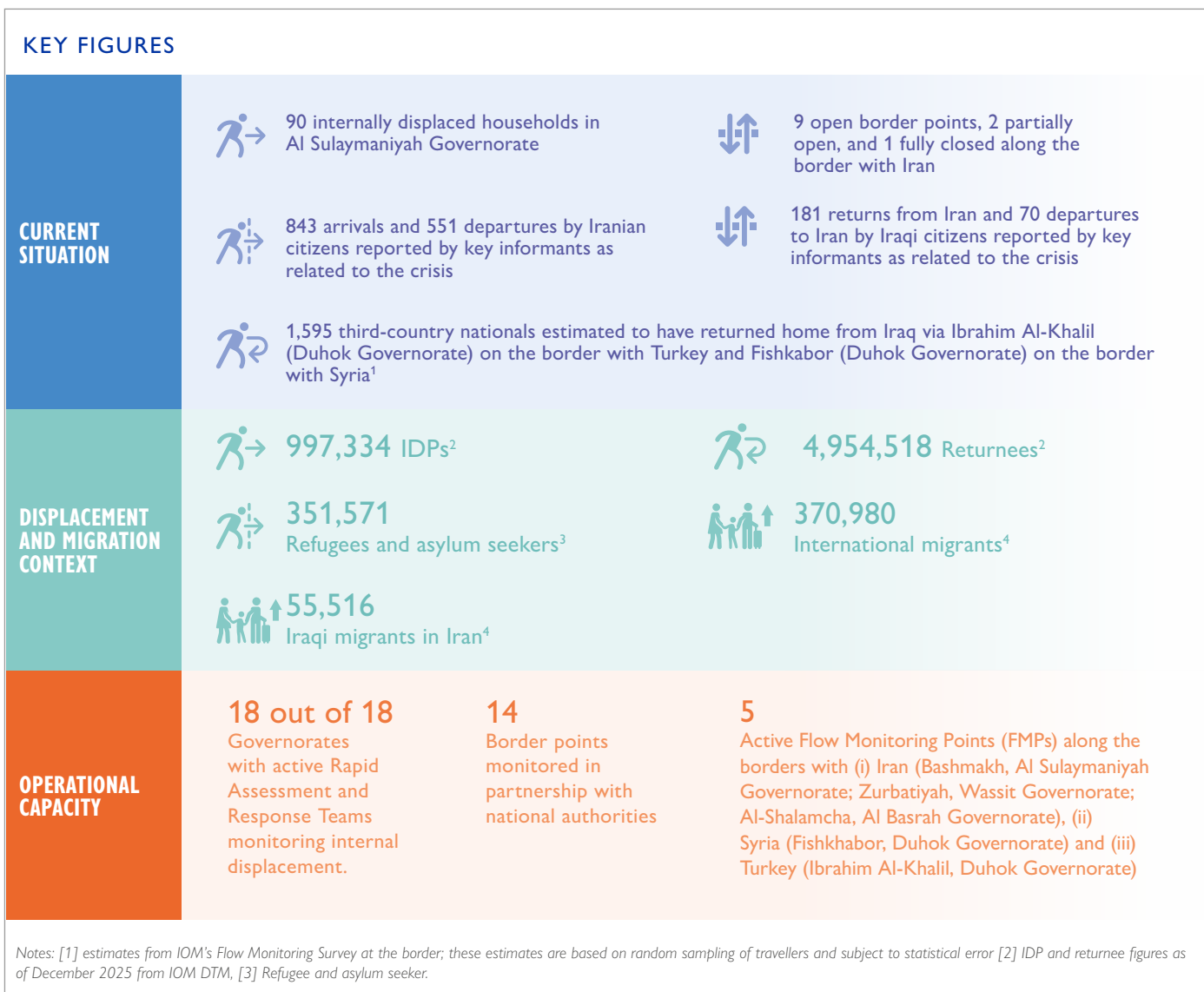


UPDATE ON CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY AND INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN IRAQ

SITUATION AS OF 30 MARCH 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.¹ 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

During the previous reporting period, IOM recorded 90 households internally displaced within Al Sulaymaniya Governorate, from the village of Zirgwzalla in Tanjaro sub-district to the city of Sulaymaniya, due to fear of drone and missile strikes. The ongoing escalation of security incidents continues to increase concern among communities and is likely to lead to further localized movements, especially in areas near potential military targets.

Since the start of the crisis, airstrikes and drone attacks have been reported in at least fourteen governorates, with incidents in Al-Anbar, Babil, Baghdad, Al Basrah, Diyala, Duhok, Erbil, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Al Najaf, Ninewa, Salah Al-Din, Al Sulaymaniyah, and Wassit. Most recorded strikes in the previous reporting periods have targeted military and security infrastructure. As of March 30, such incidents were recorded in Al-Habbaniyah and Al-Qa'im (Al-Anbar Governorate), Tuz Khurmatu (Salah Al-Din Governorate), Al-Azizia (Wassit Governorate), and at multiple locations across the governorates of Baghdad, Erbil, Kirkuk, and Ninewa. Confirmed casualties among security personnel have been reported, including in Al-Anbar, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Wassit. In other cases, no casualties were reported, or information remains unavailable at the time of reporting.

During this reporting period, incidents have increasingly affected civilian areas and infrastructure across different governorates. These include reported drone strikes in residential neighbourhoods in Duhok, Erbil, and Baghdad, as well as a civilian home in Zirgwwez village (Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate) and a school in Al-Mahmoudiya district (Baghdad Governorate). In all cases, no injuries were reported, although some material damage occurred. In Erbil, security sources reported more than 20 drone attacks in a single night on Saturday, March 28, targeting multiple locations, but details about casualties or damage remain limited. Cascading impacts on civilians were also reported. In Al-Muthanna Governorate, key informants noted localized increases in the prices of food, household goods, and solar energy systems, reportedly due to concerns over potential future disruptions to the electricity supply.

The evolving security situation continues to disrupt public services. Schools and universities in some governorates, including Erbil and Al Sulaymaniyah, have been temporarily closed or moved online, with authorities in Al Sulaymaniyah advising students to vacate dormitories. In Baghdad, classes at the American University of Iraq were reportedly suspended following security advisories linked to potential risks. The crisis also continues to trigger public demonstrations, including in Al Basrah during this reporting period, reflecting risks to social cohesion and stability within Iraq.

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, 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).

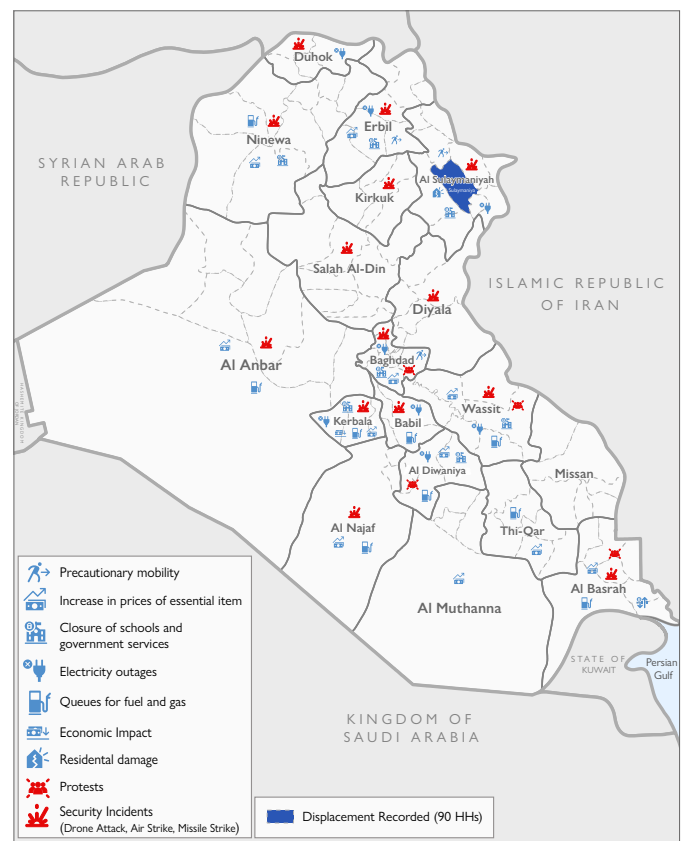


Figure 1: Humanitarian impact of the crisis and displacement risk factors inside Iraq. The information is reported at the governorate level based on reports from DTM field teams and media sources since 1 March 2026 and may not be exhaustive. This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries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

Unrelated to the security situation, heavy rainfall and flooding in Hammam Al-Aliil (Ninewa) and Bzebiz and Haditha (Al-Anbar Governorate) have affected multiple neighbourhoods, posing potential future internal displacement risks and prompting local authorities to call for a state of emergency to be declared and the urgent provision of humanitarian assistance.

CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY

Iran border monitoring²

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. Usually, regular cross-border movements take place between the two countries for trade, business, tourism, and religious activities. Since the start of the crisis, staff shortages amongst border officials, disruptions to information systems, and nearby air strikes have affected border operations on the Iranian side, resulting in temporary closures.

As of 30 March, border conditions have become less restrictive than in the previous reporting period (24 March), with most crossing points reopening and movement limitations being lifted. Across the Iraq–Iran border, the number of fully open crossings increased from four to nine. Al-Sheeb (Missan Governorate), Zurbatiyah (Wassit Governorate), Hajj Omran (Erbil Governorate) and Bashmagh (Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate) remained fully open, while Al-Shalamcha (Al Basrah Governorate), Muntheriyah (Diyala Governorate), Broizkhan, Pshta, and Twila (Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate) reopened after being partially or fully closed on 24 March.

Meanwhile, two BCPs remained partially closed. The number remained the same as in the previous reporting period (24 March), although their composition changed. Kele (Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate) and Sumar/Mandeli (Diyala Governorate) shifted from fully closed to partially open by 30 March, but with only commercial transit permitted. In contrast, the number of fully closed decreased from six to only one (Siran Bin, Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate).

While large-scale cross-border movements were not observed at the time of publication, estimates by border officials suggest that at least 181 Iraqis have returned by land since 6 March due to the current crisis

Iran flow monitoring³

Between 24 and 30 March, DTM flow monitoring points in Bashmagh (Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate), Zurbatiyah (Wassit Governorate), and Al-Shalamcha (Al Basrah Governorate) recorded 2,523 incoming and 2,260 outgoing movements. Iranians accounted for 93 per cent of incoming and 85 per cent of outgoing movements. Among incoming Iranian movements, the main reported purposes were employment (36%), family visits (31%), religious activities (14%), and business or trade (7%). Meanwhile, 7 per cent reported that their movement was linked to conflict or insecurity (see Figure 2). Outgoing movements

(see Table 1 for daily movement estimates as of 30 March). An additional 70 Iraqis reportedly returned to Iran for the same reasons. Additionally, border authorities estimated 843 arrivals and 551 departures of Iranians linked to the crisis. For the first time, during this reporting period, border officials estimated that 10 third-country nationals (TCNs) entered Iraq due to the current crisis.

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 36,933 entries and 36,909 exits were recorded. Border authorities indicated that these flows are routine and are not linked to the current crisis. On 30 March alone, 1,456 incoming and 1,563 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 eight open or partially open BCPs reporting incoming and outgoing movements, the majority indicated that flows were broadly unchanged compared to the previous day: five BCPs (Al-Shalamcha, Broizkhan, Twila, Muntheriyah and Zurbatiyah) reported movements as stable; one (Bashmagh) reported movements as lower, and two (Hajj Omran and Al-Sheeb) reported movements as much lower.

Consistent with the previous reporting periods, the only BCP that reported preparedness measures for a potential emergency was Zurbatiyah (Wassit Governorate), led by border authorities. These 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.

of Iranian nationals were primarily driven by returns to Iran following short-term (52%, under 3 months) or longer-term (31%, 3 months or more) stays. Incoming movements by Iraqi citizens were overwhelmingly instances of return by migrants who had been residing in Iran for over three months (93%). Iranians whose incoming movements were self-reported as related to the crisis and Iraqis who returned home after three months or more in Iran moved to locations within Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate, with smaller numbers going to Erbil, Kerbala, Al Najaf, and Wassit (see Figure 3).

² The border monitoring relies on border officials' estimates across all BCPs.

³ Flow monitoring is implemented by DTM at three BCPs, limited to working hours and subject to security conditions. Unlike border monitoring, which is based on estimates from border officials, flow monitoring relies on interviews with individuals crossing the border.

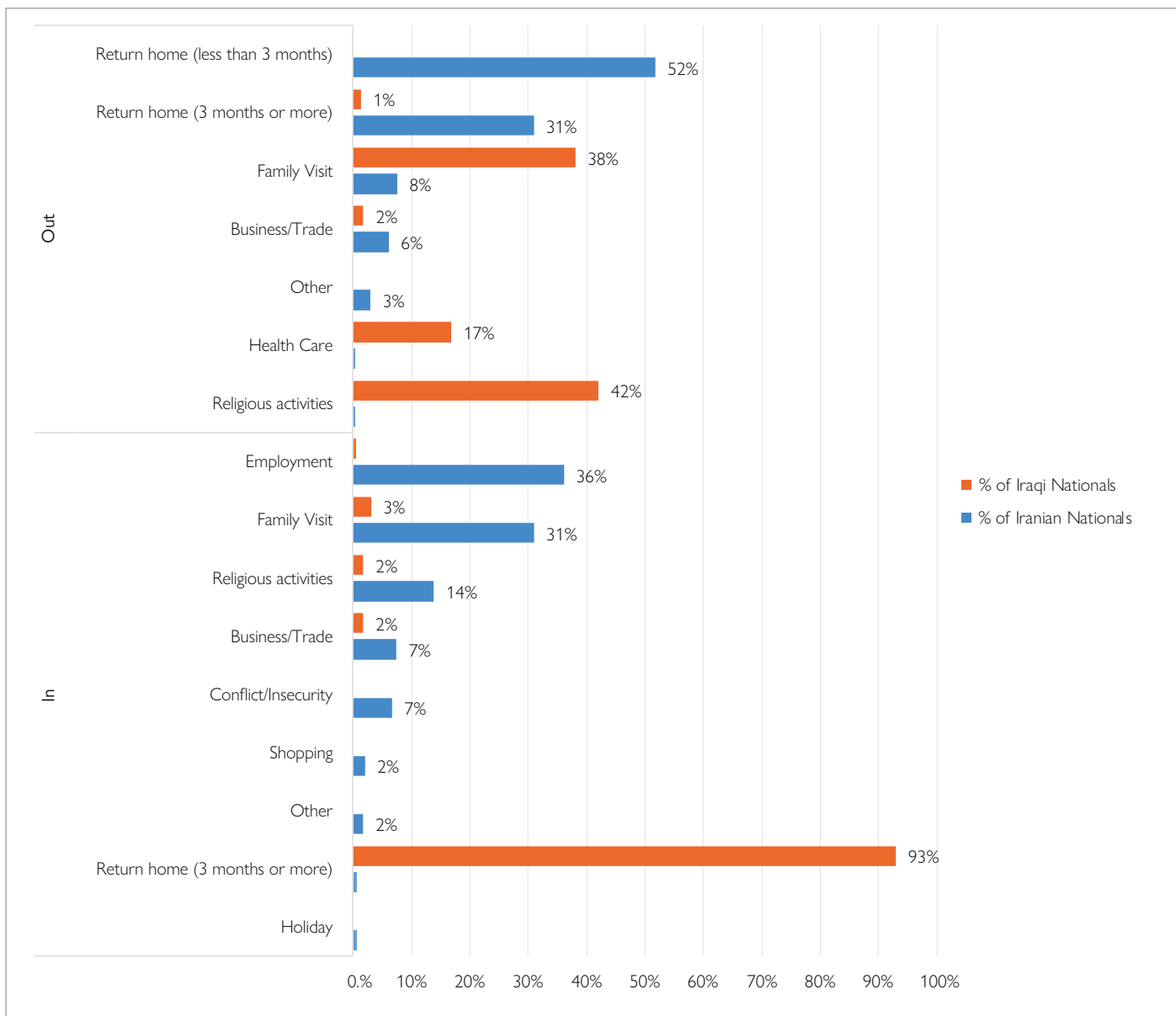


Figure 3 : breakdown of arrivals from and departures to Iran by reason for movement

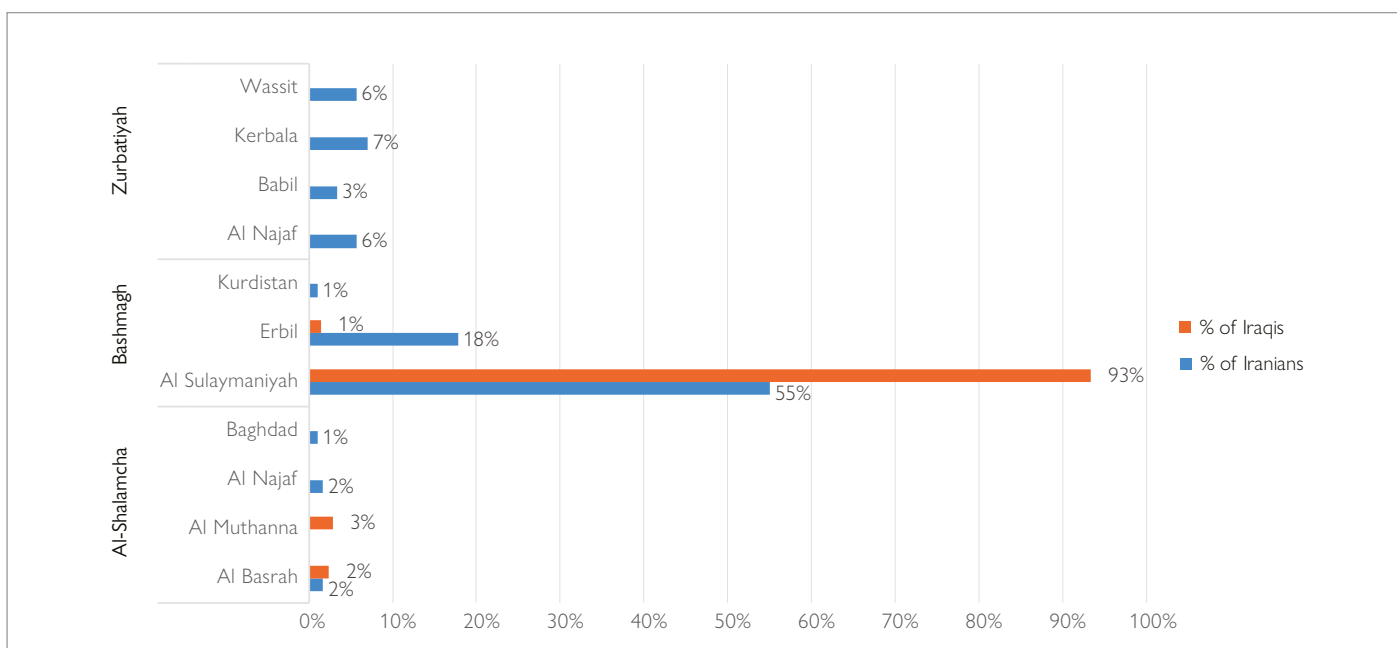


Figure 4: breakdown of arrivals from Iran of Iranian citizens (movements related to the crisis) and Iraqi citizens returning home (after 3 months or more) by Flow Monitoring Point and governorate of destination.

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 1,595 TCNs returned home from Iraq via these two land crossings between 10 and 30 March.⁴ The countries of nationality of these travellers included Türkiye, Germany, Syria, France, Italy, Portugal, and the United Kingdom.

Table 1: status of border crossing points along the Iraq-Iran border and estimated flows based on reports by border authorities: 30 March 2026

GOVERNORATE	BORDER POINT	TYPE	STATUS	INCOMING MOVEMENTS DAILY ESTIMATE ON 30 MARCH	OUTGOING MOVEMENTS DAILY ESTIMATE ON 30 MARCH
Al Basrah	Al-Shalamcha	Formal	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous day • 5 ind. Iranians reported by border officials as having moved due to the crisis • 10 third-country nationals reported by border officials as having moved due to the crisis • 1056 ind. regular movements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous day • 1093 ind. regular movements
Diyala	Sumar / Mandeli	Formal	Partially open	None reported; commercial transit permitted	None reported; commercial transit permitted
Diyala	Muntheriyah	Formal	Open	Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous day	Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous days
Erbil	Hajj Omran	Formal	Open	Movements noticeably decreased	Movements noticeably decreased
Missan	Al-Sheeb	Formal	Open	Movements noticeably decreased	Movements noticeably decreased
Al Sulaymaniyah	Bashmagh	Formal	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movements decreased • 400 ind. regular movements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movements decreased • 400 ind. regular movements
Al Sulaymaniyah	Broizkhan	Formal	Open	Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous day	Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous days
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	Closed	None reported	None reported
Al Sulaymaniyah	Pshta	Formal for KRI only	Open	None reported	None reported
Wassit	Zurbatiyah	Formal	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous day • 30 ind. Iranians and 18 ind. Iraqis reported by border officials as having moved due to the crisis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement flows stayed consistent with the previous days • 50 ind. Iraqis reported by border officials as having moved due to the crisis; 70 ind. regular movements

⁴ The estimates are based on a sample size of 456 respondents (361 at Ibrahim Al-Khalil and 95 at Fishkabor), out of whom 86 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.