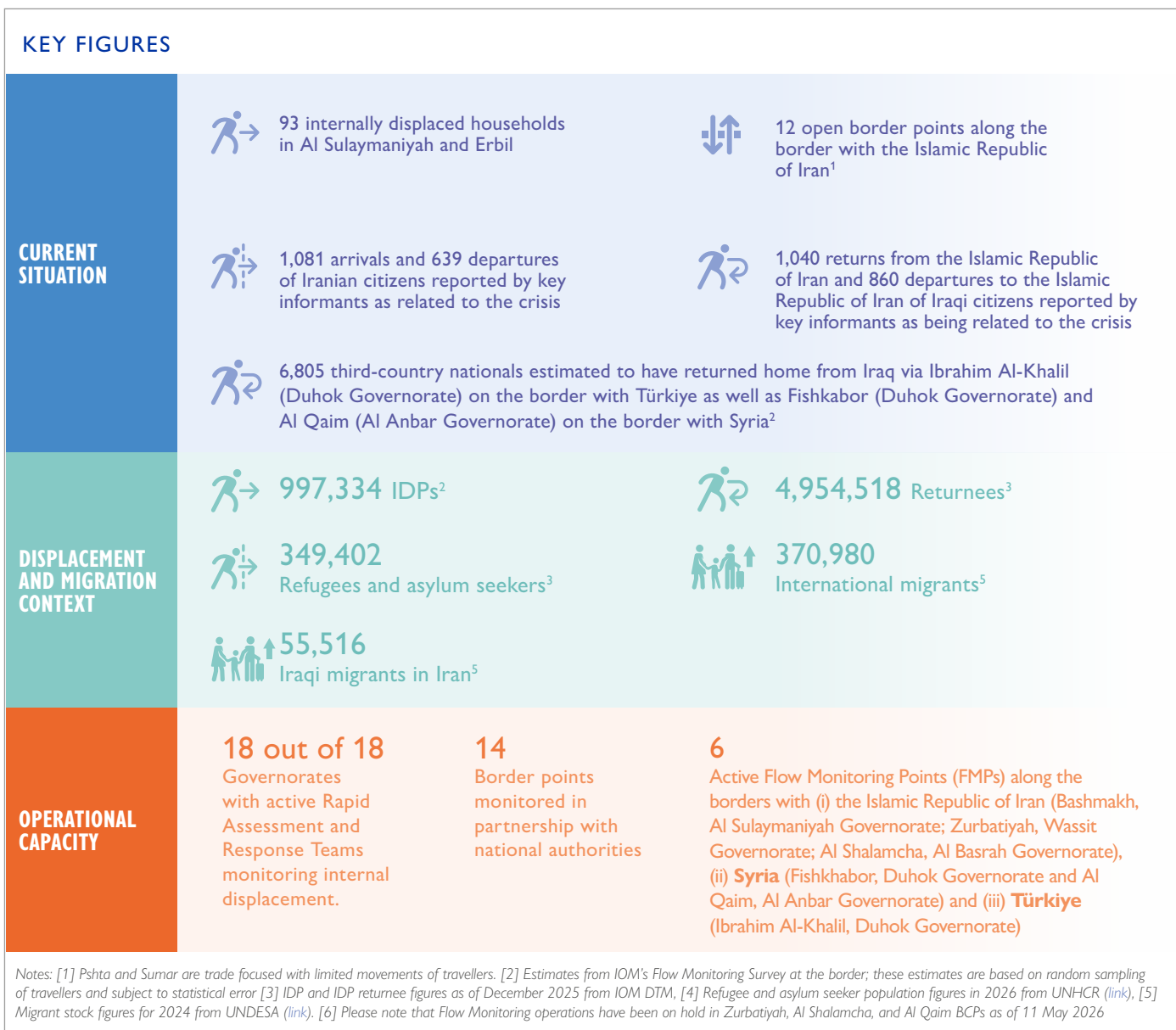


UPDATE ON CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY AND INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN IRAQ

SITUATION AS OF 11 MAY 2026

Regional tensions continue following escalatory actions in and around the Islamic Republic of Iran since late February 2026. In view of the fragile ceasefire in place since 8 April, Iraq continues to face escalating pressures stemming from regional tensions. This crisis further exacerbates pre-existing vulnerabilities linked to the country's complex security environment 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.

1 See the DTM Methodological Framework.

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.

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 over 3,700 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.

DRIVERS OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Since the start of the escalations, IOM tracked 93 internally displaced households, with no additional instances of displacement recorded since 13 April. Displacement remains limited despite ongoing drone threats in two governorates (Al Sulaymaniyah and Erbil) during the reporting period.

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 but also displacement sites.

Despite the continued ceasefire extension, security incidents persisted across the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). On 5 May, drone attacks targeted Surdash camp in Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate, reporting no casualties. Between 6 and 7 May, multiple drone attacks and interceptions were reported across Erbil Governorate, including in Erbil district, Sidakan, Koya, Balisan in Shaqlawa district, and Harir subdistrict. According to local media, several of the incidents targeted Iranian settlements in Balisan, which were struck by four missiles. On 10 May, a missile attack targeted the Doli Alan settlement in Khalifan subdistrict, Soran district, without casualties.

While no new displacement because of the escalations were reported during the week, the repeated attacks – particularly within the KRI - continue to contribute to insecurity and fear among communities residing near targeted locations and may lead to negative perceptions of safety, freedom of movement, and longer-term return intentions in affected areas.

To monitor cross-border mobility and displacement in Iraq, IOM DTM operates Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs) at key transit locations, such 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), two on the border with Syria (Fishkhabor, Duhok Governorate, and as of 30 April 2026 Al Qaim, Al Anbar 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).

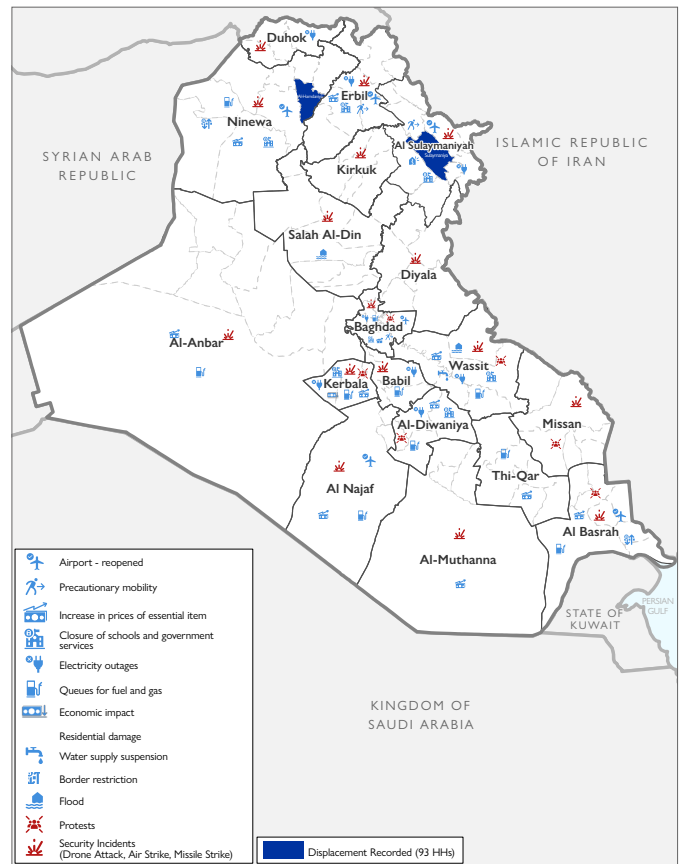


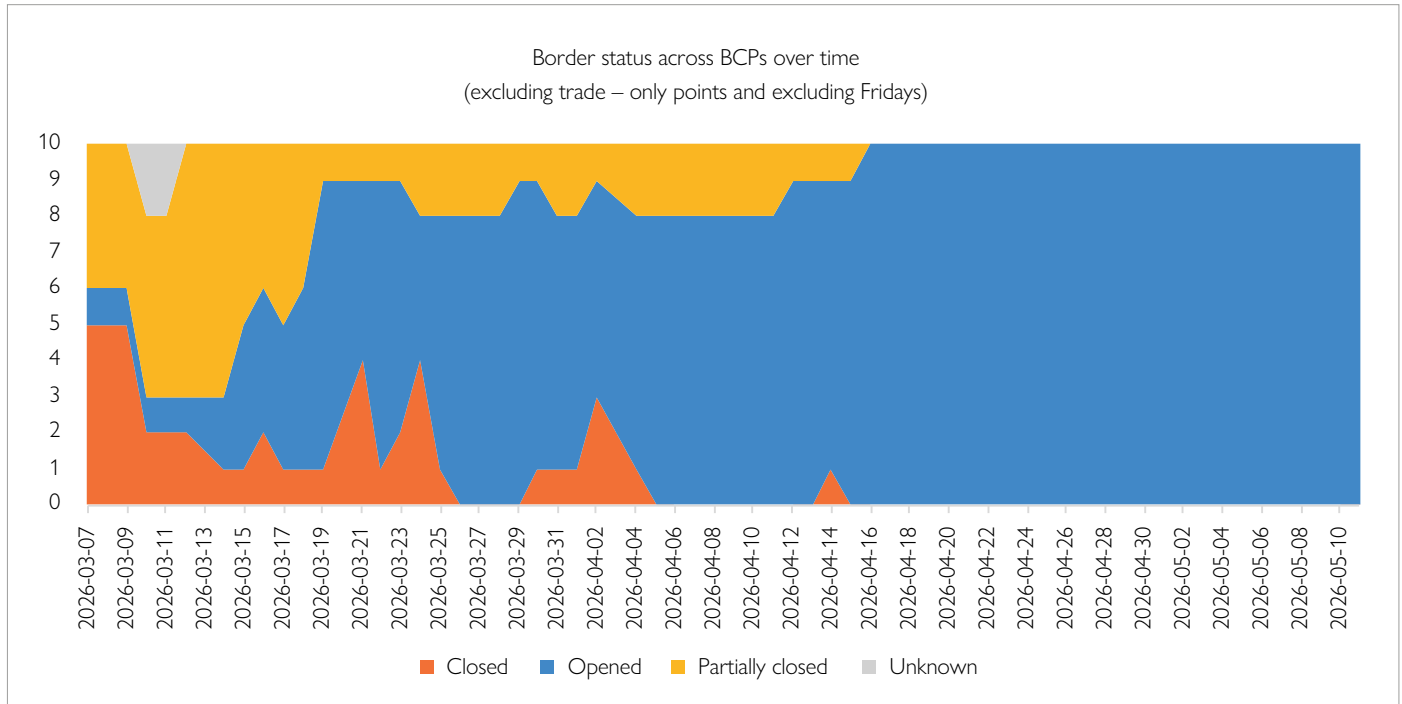
Figure 1: Humanitarian impact of the crisis and displacement risk factors inside Iraq. The information is reported at the governorate level based on reports from DTM field teams and media sources since 1 March 2026 and may not be exhaustive. This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries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

CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY

Islamic Republic of 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 KRI, Erbil and Al Sulaymaniyah. Regular cross-border movements take place between the two countries for trade, business, tourism, and religious activities. All 12 BCPs remained open during the reporting period with increased regular traveller movements since the initial closures following the start of the hostilities.

As of 11 May 2026, border conditions remained broadly stable compared to the previous reporting period (week ending 4 May), with all crossing points remaining open and no major restrictions observed. All BCPs reported in- and out-going movements with exceptions unrelated to the current escalations, such as border closures on Fridays or movements being – as before the conflict – restricted to trade at Pshta and Sumar BCPs. Despite the open BCPs, IOM received information from Key Informants that travel has not yet reached levels from before the escalations began.



Key informants reported no drastic changes in flows on most days during the reporting period across most BCPs where data was available. However, a notable increase in outgoing movement was observed at the Muntheriyah border point, primarily driven by Iraqi students traveling to Iran for final academic examination.

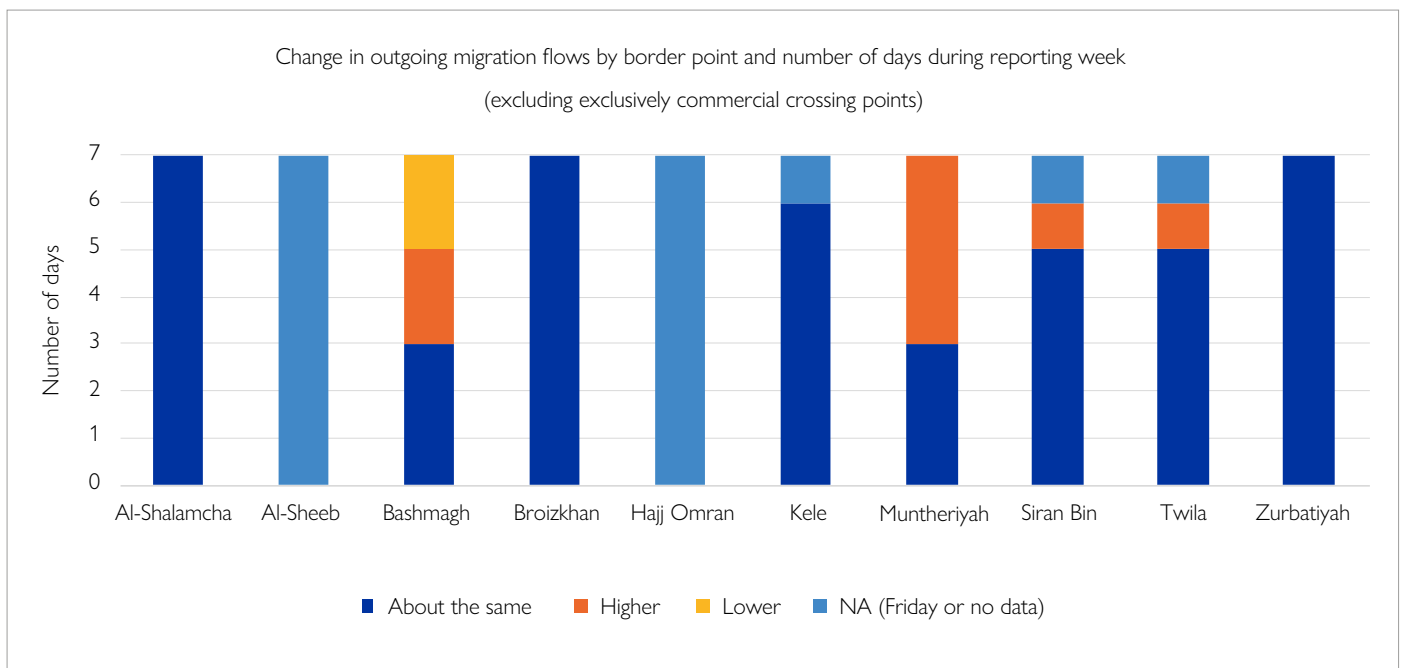


Figure 3. Change in outgoing migration flows

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

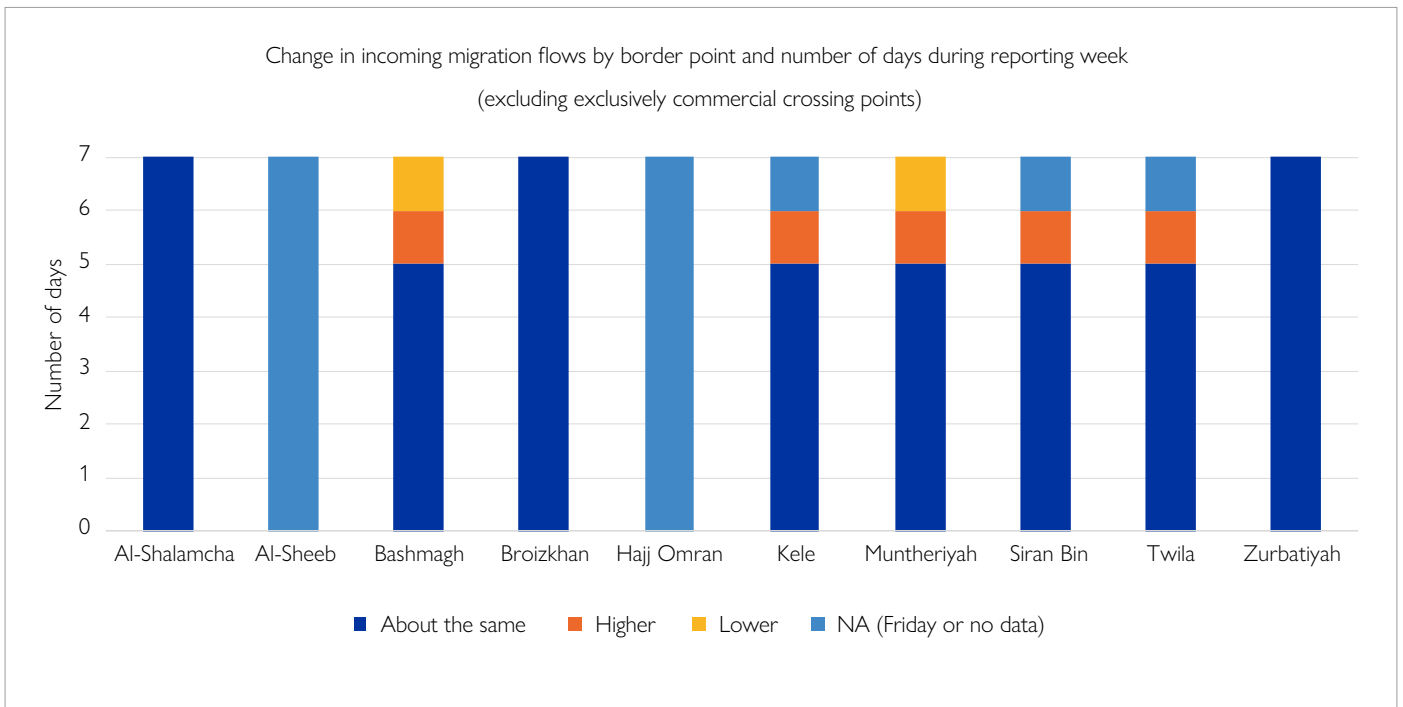


Figure 4. Change in incoming migration flows

No BCPs reported emergency response or security incidents during the reporting period.

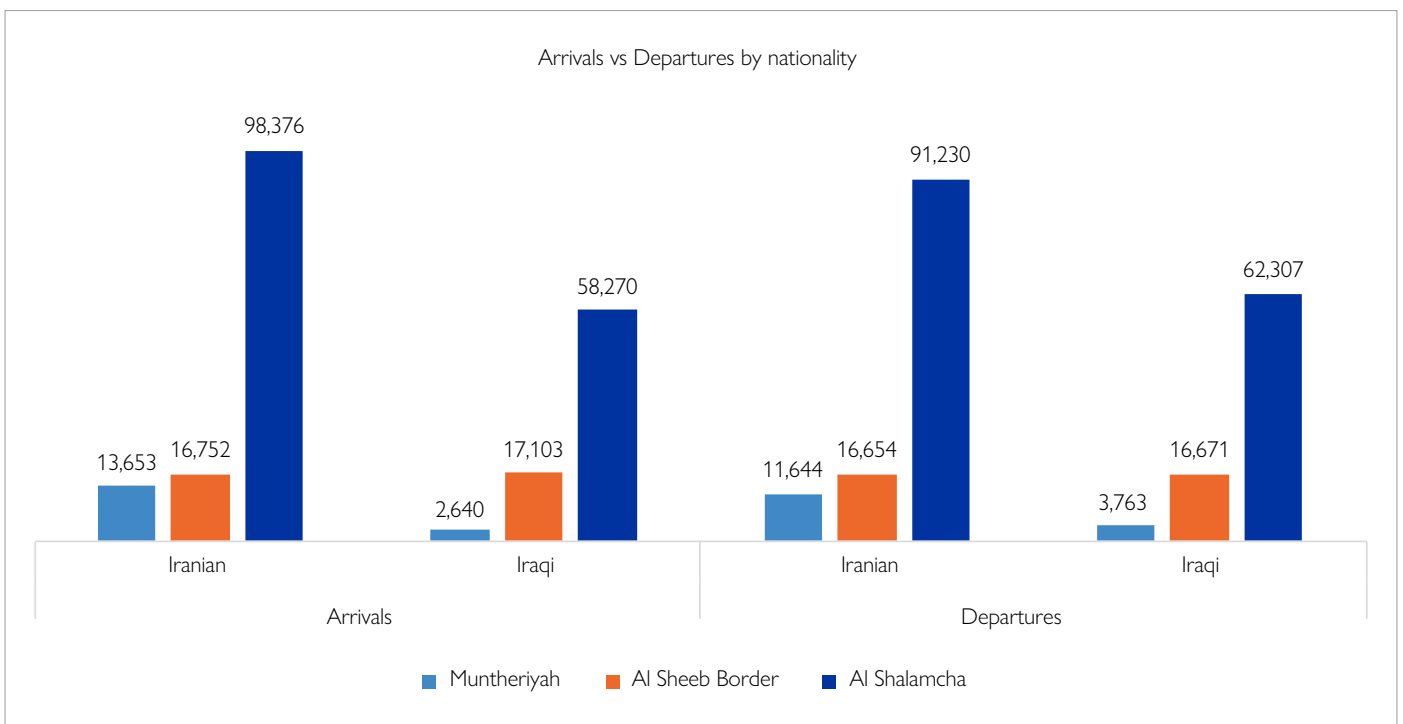


Figure 5. Arrivals vs Departures by nationality

Islamic Republic of Iran Flow Monitoring³

Between 5 and 11 May,⁴ DTM flow monitoring points in Bashmogh, Al Zurbatiyah, and Al Shalamcha (Al Basrah Governorate) recorded 2,509 incoming and 3,904 outgoing movements representing a 33 per cent decrease in incoming movements and 5 per cent increase in outgoing movements compared to the previous reporting week. Iranian nationals accounted for 79 per cent of incoming and 69 per cent of outgoing movements. Other Third Country Nationals (TCN) accounted for less than one per cent in both directions.

Among incoming Iranian movements, the main reported purposes were religious activities (31%), family visits (27%), and employment (21%). Meanwhile, no travellers reported movement linked to conflict or insecurity during the reporting period. Outgoing movements of Iranian nationals were primarily driven by returns to the Islamic Republic of Iran following short-term (47%, less than 3 months) or long-term (43%, 3 months or more) stays. Incoming movements by Iraqi citizens were overwhelming instances

of return by migrants who had been residing in the Islamic Republic of Iran for over three months (81%) and under three months (17%). Furthermore, outgoing movements by Iraqi citizens were primarily driven by family visits (32%) and religious activities (22%).

In this round of flow monitoring, IOM recorded 32 TCNs from People's Republic of China and Uganda entering Iraq from Iran, primarily for visa renewal, business, and employment. IOM also recorded 62 TCNs, who were nationals of People's Republic of China, India and Pakistan, transiting through and exiting Iraq, mainly to renew their visas or return home. Incoming TCNs reported Iraq as their final destination whereas several outgoing TCNs were transiting Iran to reach Pakistan.

Iraqi nationals who returned home (over 3 months) moved to locations within Al Sulaymaniyah (87%), with smaller numbers going to Al Basrah (9%) and four other governorates (4%).

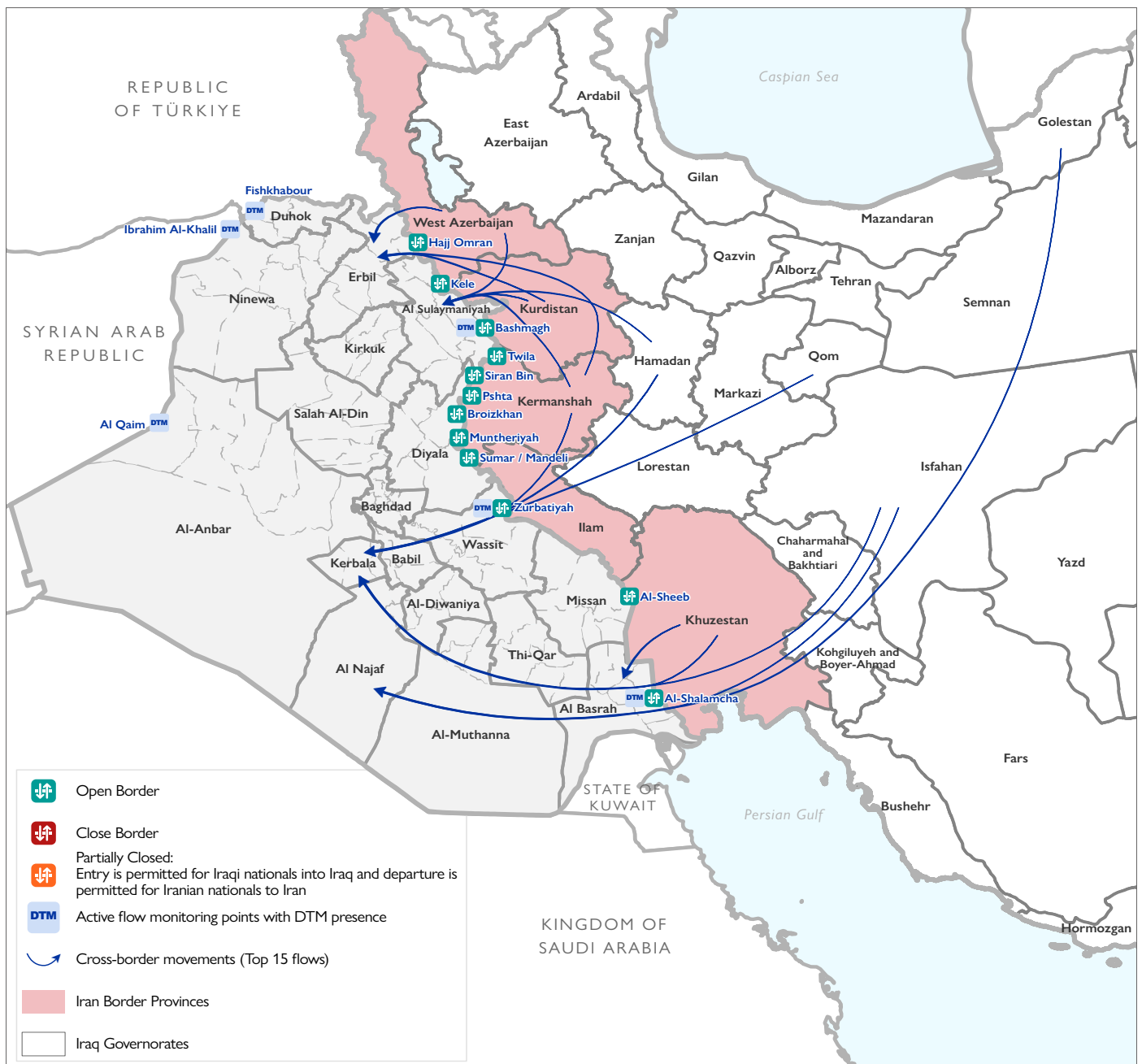


Figure 6: Status of border crossing points along the Iraq-Iran border and location of DTM flow monitoring points. This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

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.

⁴ Note that IOM's Flow Monitoring operations have been put on hold in Zurbatiyah, Al Shalamcha, and Al Qaim BCPs as of 11 May.

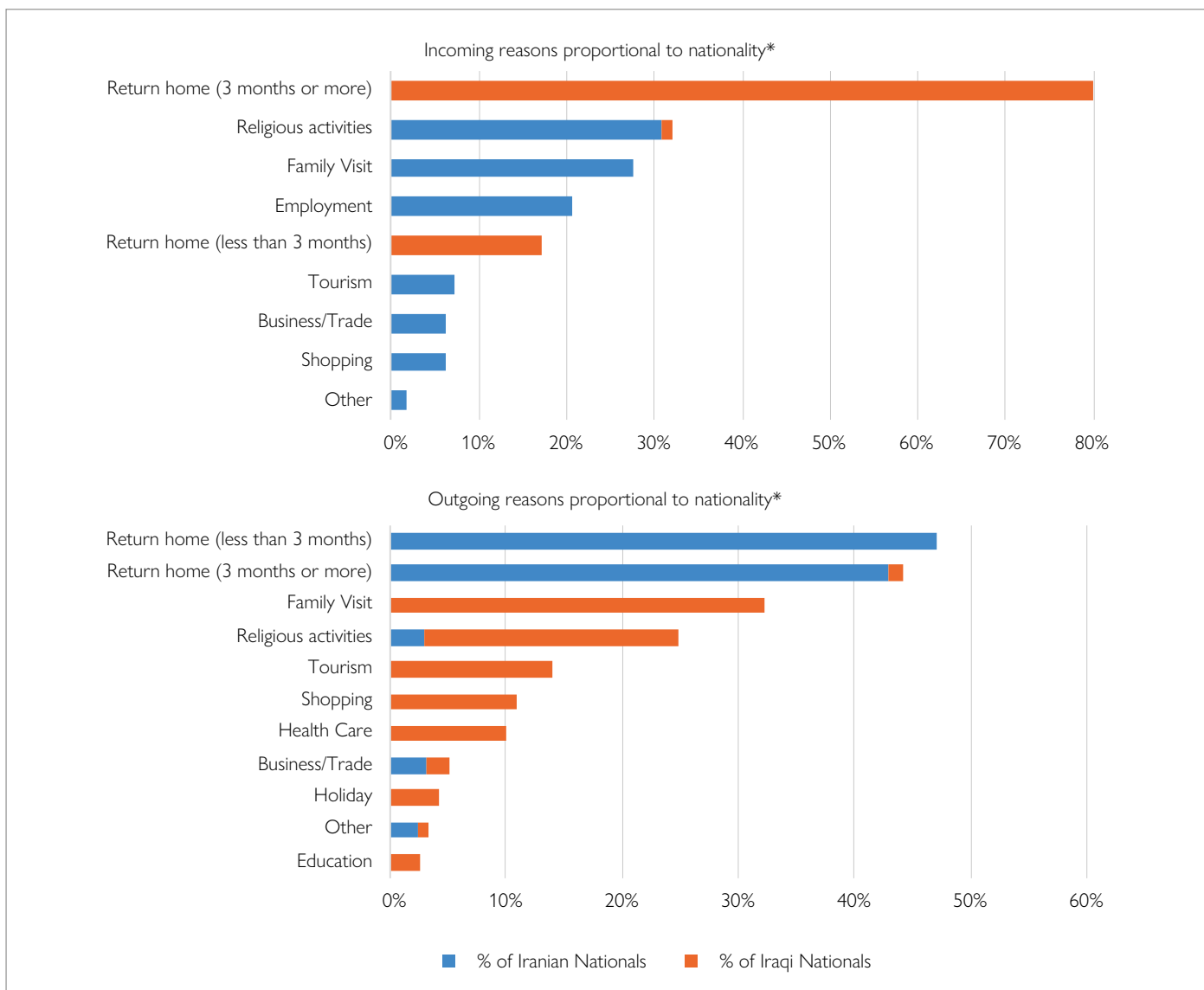


Figure 6 : breakdown of arrivals from and departures to the Islamic Republic of Iran by reason for movement

*TCNs are not represented.

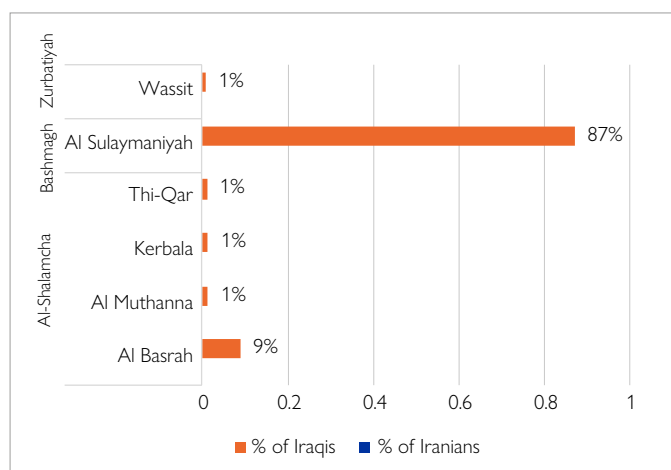


Figure 7: breakdown of arrivals from the Islamic Republic of Iran of Iranian citizens (movements related to the crisis) and Iraqi citizens returning home (3 months or more) by Flow Monitoring Point and governorate of destination.

Türkiye and Syria Flow Monitoring

IOM is also conducting Flow Monitoring Surveys at Ibrahim Al-Khalil (Duhok Governorate), on the border with the Republic of Türkiye, in addition to Fishkabor (Duhok) and Al Qaim FMP on the border with the Syrian Arab Republic. 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 6,805 TCNs returned home from Iraq via these three land crossings between 10 March and 11 May 2026.⁵ The countries of nationality of these travellers included nationals of the Republic of Türkiye, the Syrian Arab Republic, Germany, France, Italy, United States of America, China, United Kingdom, Portugal, and Nigeria.

5 The estimates are based on a sample size of 1,623 respondents (1,193 at Ibrahim Al-Khalil, 318 at Fishkabor and 112 at Al Qaim), out of whom 234 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.