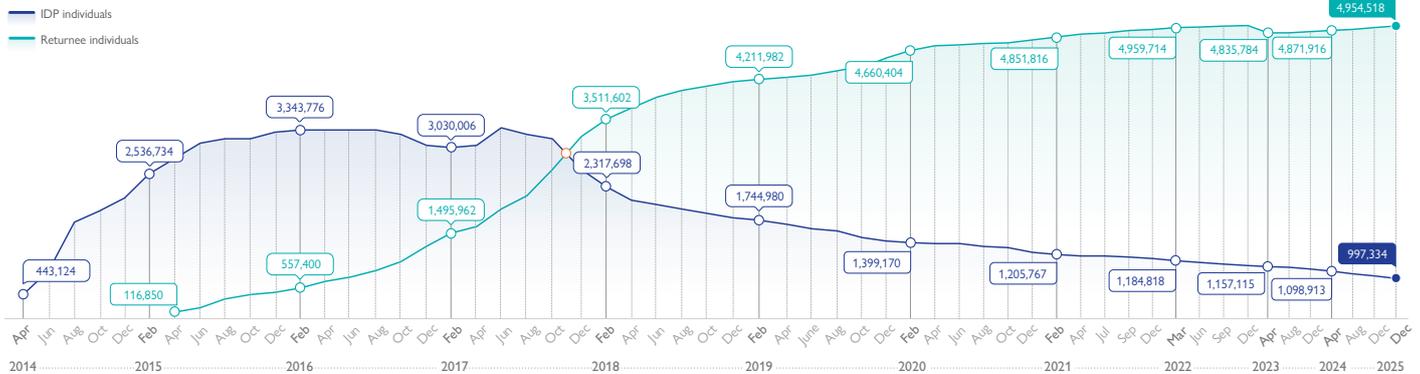


HIGHLIGHTS

Figure 1: Number of IDPs and returnees over time



Since 2014, the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) unit in Iraq has collected information on internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees using a network of key informants across the country.¹ Data for this round were collected from 1 September to 31 December 2025. While collection took place during this period, the data reflects conditions and movements observed throughout the 2025 calendar year.

IDPs 997,334

▼ -34,141

- As of 31 December 2025, DTM identified **997,334** individual IDPs (169,751 households).
- Decrease** of **34,141** individual IDPs since the previous year, Round 134 (September - December 2024) (- 3%).²
- The highest decrease in individual numbers was in the following governorates: Ninewa (-13,428 individuals), Duhok (-5,287), Salah Al-Din (-3,066) and Erbil (-2,376).
- The decrease was primarily driven by returns to areas of origin following **security clearance, rehabilitation of housing, improved security conditions** and **basic services**, emotional attachment to home areas, and the **return of families from camps in Duhok to their area of origin in Ninewa after prolonged displacement**.
- This decrease is partly due to the reclassification of households verified as locally integrated under MoMD's Local Integration Fund.
- The number of new arrivals during 2025 has increased compared to the previous year (31,919 versus 29,767 individuals). This includes IDPs arriving from another location of displacement – relocation (26,549) and secondary displacement (3,168) along with 1,512 individuals arriving from their area of origin after return - failed return.
- The number of IDPs living in **critical shelters fell by 3,258** individuals compared to last year.



169,751
Households
▼-5,923



2,343
Locations
▼-164



18
Governorates



100
Districts

▼▲ Change since the last year

Returnees 4,954,518

▲ +26,628

- As of 31 December 2025, DTM identified, **4,954,518** individual returnees (825,753 households).
- Increase** of **26,628** individual returnees since previous year, Round 134 (September - December 2024) (1%).
- The highest increase in number of returnees was observed in Ninewa and Salah Al Din governorates (11,118 and 9,726 individuals, respectively).
- In Ninewa, returns were driven by **emotional desire, reunification with relatives and friends, rehabilitation of houses, improved security, and access to public services**. In Salah al-Din, returns were driven by **rehabilitation of houses, improved security and public services, and families returning after obtaining permission from authorities**, with movements recorded from Al-Amal center.
- This round, most returns from camps were to **Ninewa** and **Salah al-Din** governorates (70% and 30%).
- The number of returnees residing in **critical shelters decreased by -2,760** individuals compared to last year.



825,753
Households
▲+4,438



2,248
Locations
▲ +18



9
Governorates



39
Districts

▼▲ Change since the last year

1. For more information on the Master List methodology, please refer to the [Methodology](#) at the end of this report.
2. For more information on the rate of change in the IDP and returnee caseloads, please refer to the [Methodology](#).

DISPLACEMENT OVERVIEW

Figure 2: IDP shelter types as of December 2025



OVERALL TRENDS

During Round 135, DTM identified 997,334 IDPs (169,751 households). This is a decrease of 34,141 individuals compared to the previous year, Round 134 (September – December 2024) (-3%).

At the district level, the most significant decreases in IDPs were recorded in Mosul (-11,406) in Ninewa Governorate, Sumel (-2,806) in Duhok Governorate, Erbil (-1,946) in Erbil Governorate, Zakho (-1,916) in Duhok Governorate, Al-Hamdaniya (-1,880) in Ninewa Governorate, Tikrit (-1,698) in Salah Al-Din Governorate and Kerbala (-1,512) in Kerbala Governorate.

The main reasons behind these reductions in **Mosul district** are families returning to their areas of origin due to emotional desire, rehabilitation of houses, improved security and better access to public services. Some families also moved within the governorate to join relatives or access locations with better housing and services. Despite limited movements in several sub-districts, return and local integration were facilitated after families obtained security clearance, while persistent challenges such as damaged infrastructure, limited services, and financial constraints continue to limit large-scale sustainable returns.

In **Sumel district**, the reduction in IDPs was primarily driven by families returning to their areas of origin, with most returnees completing their relocation during this reporting period. This trend mirrors previous rounds, where returns were influenced by camp closures.

The reduction in IDP families was also the result of DTM's verification of households registered under the Ministry of Migration and Displacement's (MoMD) Local Integration Fund, whereby families confirmed to be locally integrated were reclassified and removed from the IDP list. The largest decreases were recorded in Al Basrah (385 families), Kerbala (228 families), and Missan (97 families).

In contrast to the above decreases, **Sulaymaniya District** in **Al Sulaymaniyah Governorate** witnessed an increase in IDPs, primarily driven by families arriving from other displacement locations and areas of origin in search of better security conditions, improved income opportunities, more affordable housing and enhanced public services. Moreover, in Hatra and Al-Ba'aj districts in Ninewa Governorate witnessed an increase in IDPs, primarily due to families arriving from areas affected by drought and from other displacement locations seeking better housing and services. The movement was influenced by limited access to basic services and livelihoods in their areas of origin, prompting many families to resettle in locations within these districts rather than returning home.

RECENT IDP MOVEMENTS

In this round, the total of 31,919 new IDP movements were observed (3% of caseload). Most of these movements involved individuals who were relocated (26,549; 83%), followed by individuals who experienced secondary displacement (3,168; 10%). Additionally, 1,512 individuals experienced failed returns (5%). Most of these movements were recorded in Erbil, Al Sulaymaniyah and Ninewa governorates.

Erbil and Al Sulaymaniyah governorates recorded the highest volume of relocations (62% and 27%, respectively), primarily driven by improved living conditions, including better services and income opportunities.

Moreover, Erbil Governorate recorded most of the IDPs who experienced secondary displacement (94%).

Additionally, 1,512 individuals experienced failed returns and majority were recorded in Ninewa Governorate (1,194 individuals). Most of these individuals originated from Hatra District in Ninewa Governorate. These individuals were forced to leave again after returning due to drought and lack of public services at their area of origin.

Table 1: Top three districts recording recent movement

District, Governorate	Displaced for the first time	Relocation	Secondary displacement	Failed returns
Erbil, Erbil	0	16,068	2,970	0
Sulaymaniya, Al Sulaymaniyah	468	5,334	42	252
Hatra, Ninewa	0	468	0	900

3. DTM collects data on the number of families per location. For camps, it estimates the number of individuals by multiplying the number of households by five (the average size of camp households in Iraq).

SHELTER TYPES

Consistent with the previous round, four in five IDPs (81%; 810,210 individuals) reside in private settings, followed by 11 per cent (105,860 individuals) in camps and 8 per cent (81,234 individuals) in critical shelters. Compared to last year, IDPs living in camps witnessed the highest decrease (-6%; -6,985 individuals), followed by IDPs in critical shelters (-4%; -3,258) and IDPs in private settings (-3%; -23,868).

Critical Shelters⁴

IDPs living in critical shelters may face challenges such as limited access to livelihoods and basic services. Compared to last year, Round 134 (September - December 2024), the number of IDPs residing in critical shelters has decreased by 3,258 individuals. The most significant reductions were in Sumel District in Duhok Governorate (-564), followed by Tikrit District in Salah Al-Din Governorate (-420) and Baquba District in Diyala Governorate (-402).

In some districts, IDPs live in critical shelters only. These were evident in Falluja and Ramadi districts in Anbar Governorate (12,816 and 4,476, respectively), Mahmoudiya District in Baghdad Governorate (4,824), Sumel District in Duhok Governorate (2,136).

Figure 3: Number of IDPs in critical shelters by top 10 districts of displacement

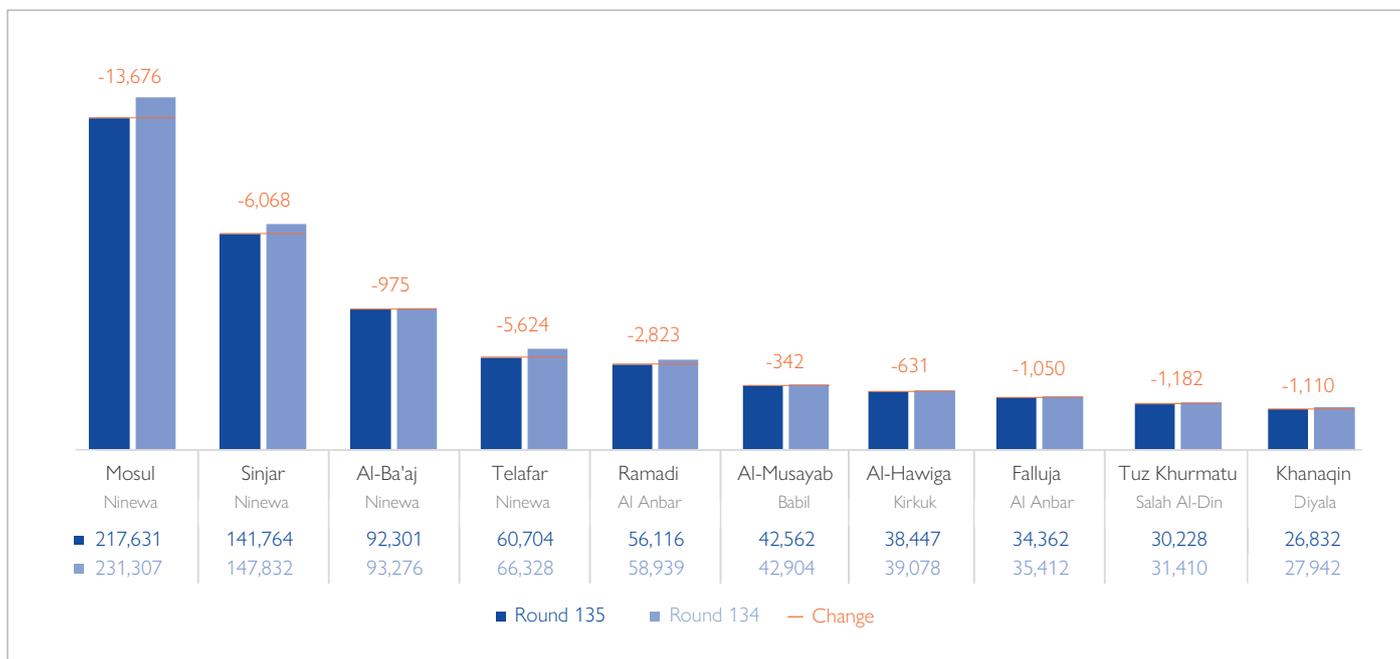
Sumel Duhok	12,726 -564 ▼	Kirkuk Kirkuk	10,746 120 ▲
Mosul Ninewa	2,688 -60 ▼	Sinjar Ninewa	2,634 -240 ▼
Zakho Duhok	1,554 -36 ▼	Al-Shikhan Ninewa	786 -120 ▼
Duhok Dahuk	558 -36 ▼	Erbil Erbil	354 42 ▲
Akre Ninewa	150 0	Sulaymaniyah Al Sulaymaniyah	72 0

▼ ▲ Change since the last year

IDP AREAS OF ORIGIN

Slightly more than half (55%) of IDPs originate from Ninewa Governorate, in particular Mosul (39%), Sinjar (26%), Al-Ba'aj (17%) and Telefar (11%) districts. A further 22 per cent of IDPs originate from Anbar or Salah al-Din governorates (11% each).

Figure 4: Number of IDPs by top 10 districts of origin



4. For IDPs, critical shelters may include uninhabitable apartments or houses, tents, caravans, makeshift shelters, mud or brick houses; unfinished or abandoned buildings; public buildings or collective shelters; religious buildings or school buildings.

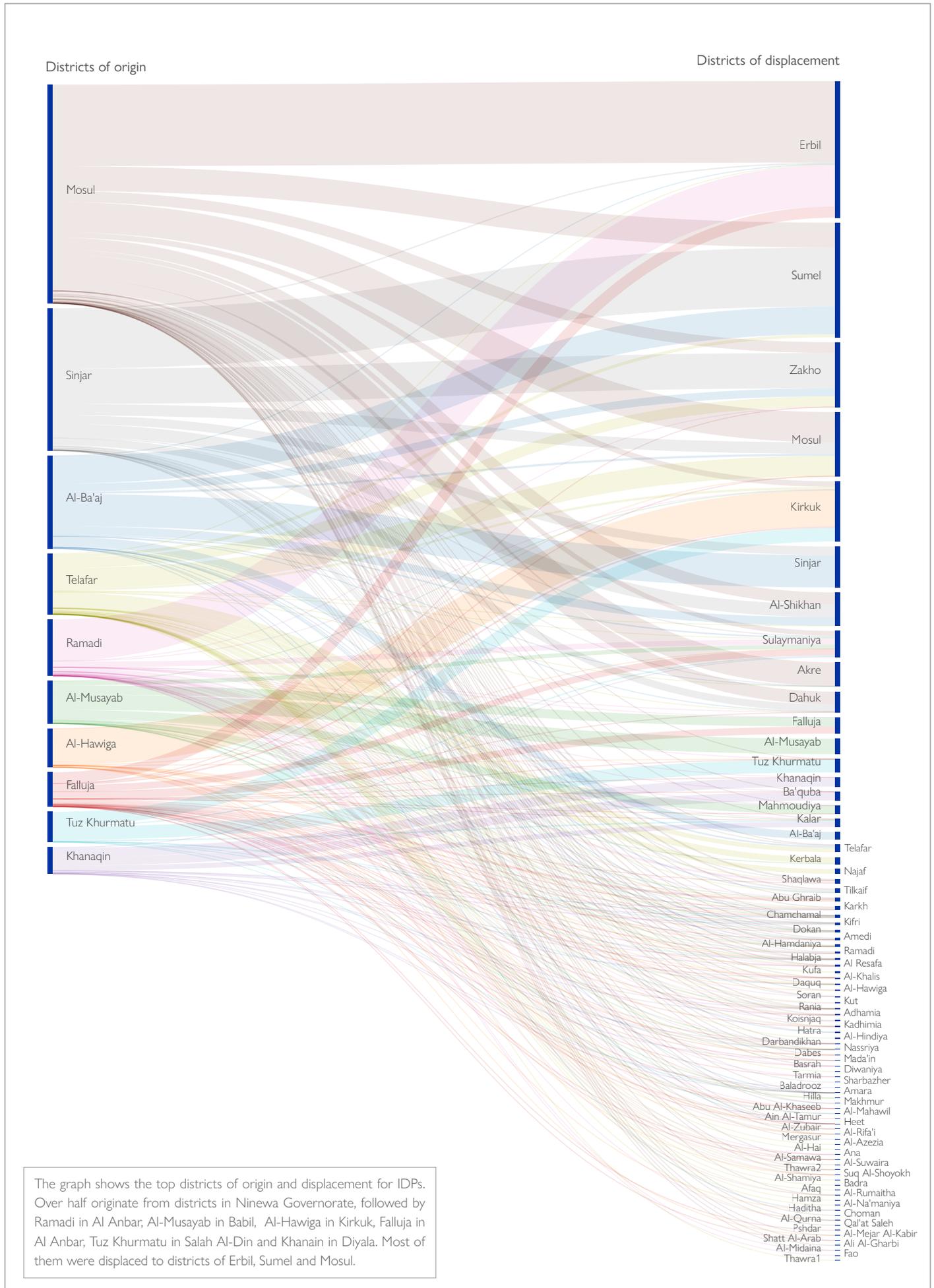
The graphs below show the eight governorates hosting the largest numbers of IDPs. They also indicate change in the number of IDPs since the last year, key districts where IDPs reside and top governorates of origin. For an overview of districts of displacement and returns across Iraq, please see the [IDP Background Map](#).

Figure 5: Top governorates of displacement, corresponding districts of displacement and governorates of origin as of December 2025



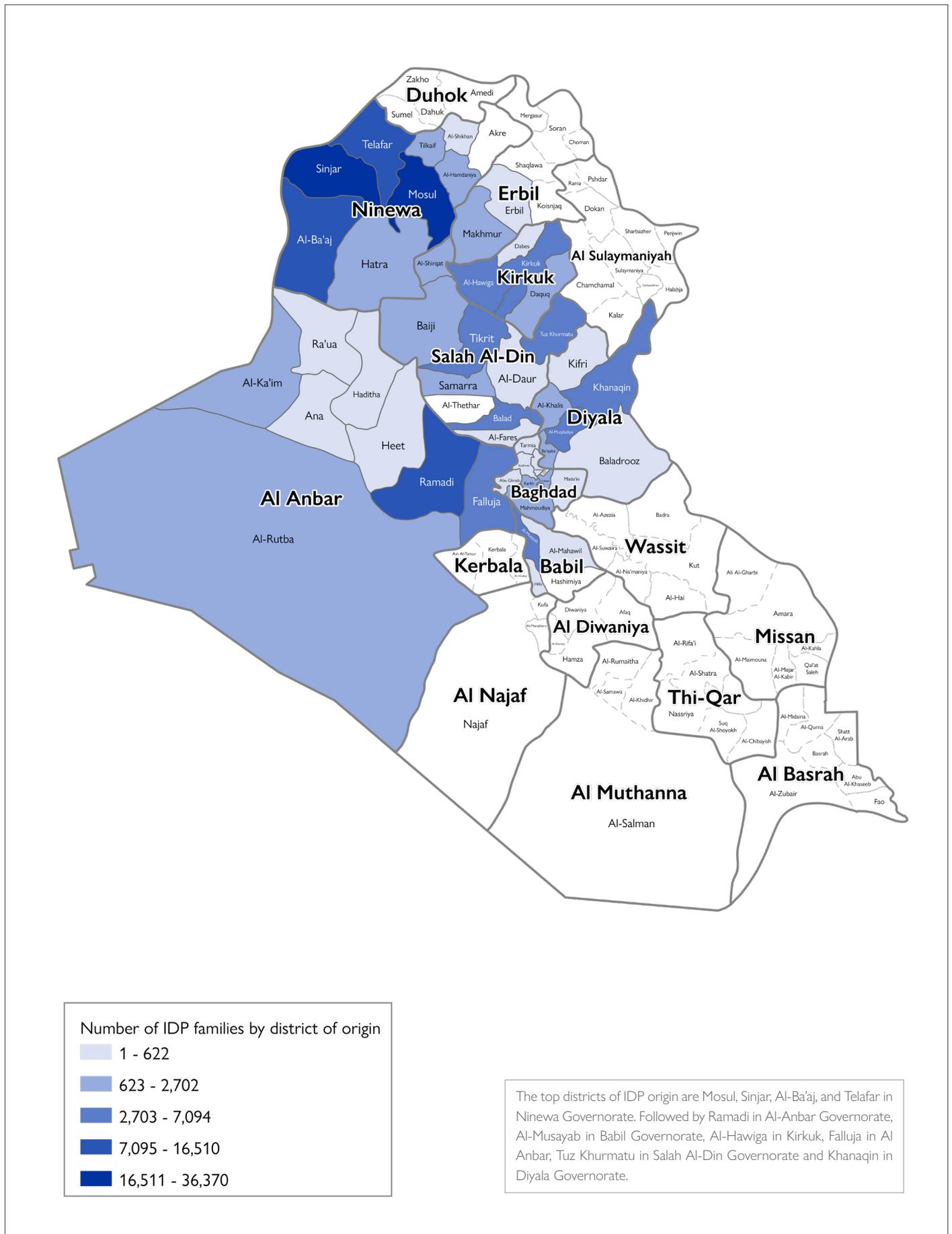
▼▲ Change since the last year

Figure 6: Top districts of origin and corresponding districts of displacement⁷

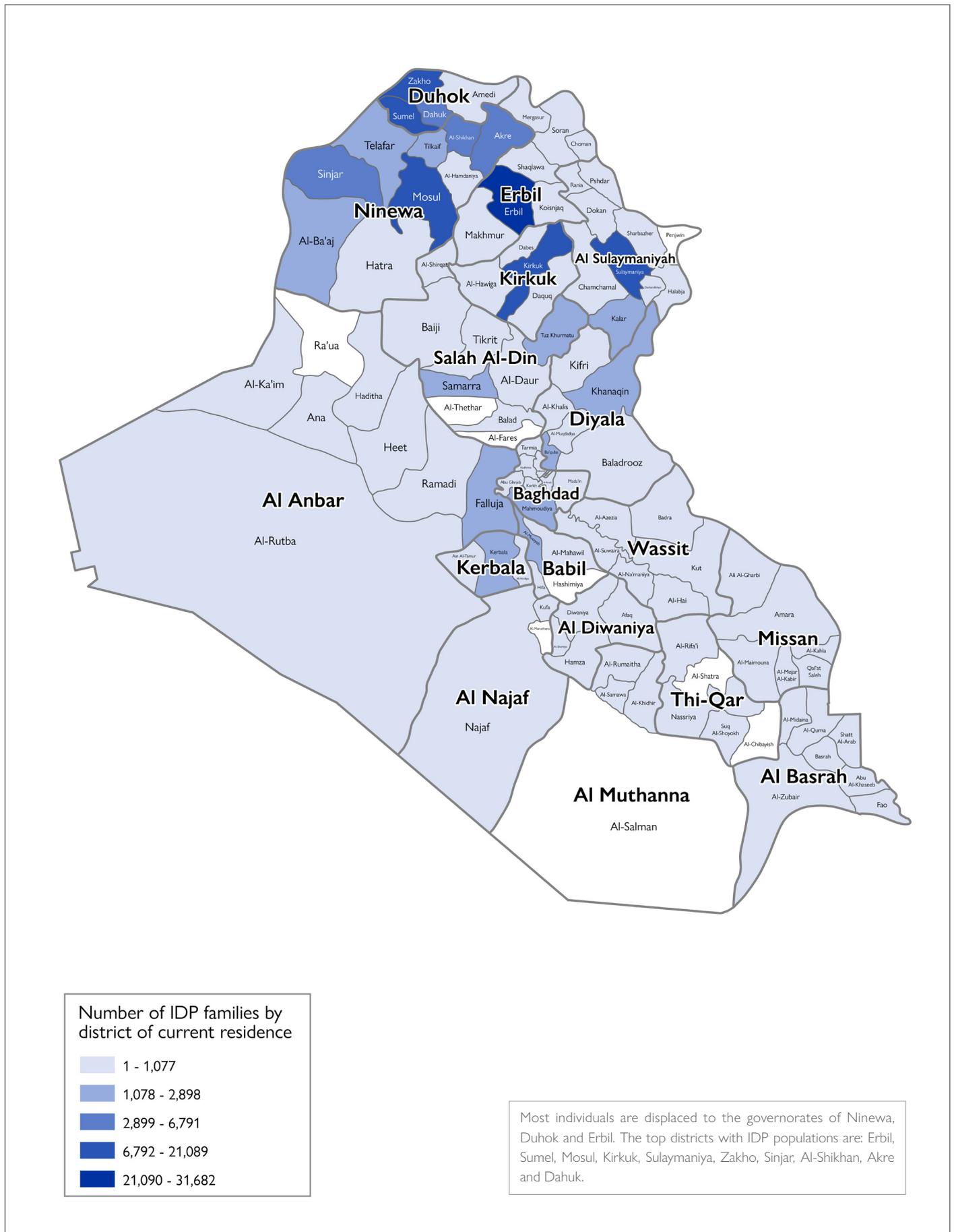


7. Only the top 5 districts of displacement per district of origin were reported.

Map 1: Districts of origin of the current IDP population as of December 2025

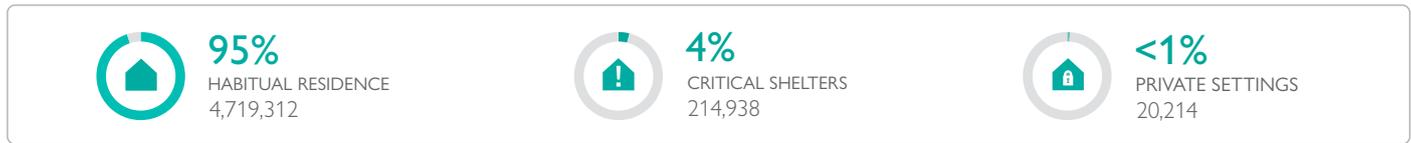


Map 2: Districts of displacement of the current IDP population as of December 2025



RETURN OVERVIEW

Figure 7: Returnee shelter types as of December 2025



OVERALL TRENDS

During Round 135, DTM identified 4,954,518 returnees (825,753 households). This marks the increase of 26,628 individuals compared to last year, Round 134 (September–December 2024). The country-wide return rate is 83 per cent, only one per cent increase compared to last year. However, the rate of return across top districts of origin is extremely variable, with lower rates observed in Al-Musayab District (5%) in Babil Governorate, Kirkuk District (25%) and Dabes District (42%) in Kirkuk Governorate, and Al-Ba’aj District (44%) and Sinjar District (51%) in Ninewa Governorate. In contrast, the highest return rates were recorded in Heet and Al-Haditha districts in Al-Anbar Governorate (98% and 97%, respectively), as well as in Al-Daur and Al-Shirqat districts in Salah Al-Din Governorate (98% and 97%, respectively).

RECENT RETURN MOVEMENTS

In this round Ninewa, Salah Al-Din and Al Anbar governorates have the highest increase in returnees. In Ninewa, the largest increase was recorded in Al-Hamdaniya District (8,046 individuals) and Mosul District (6,630). In Salah Al-Din, Al-Fares District witnessed the highest increase (7,080). In Al Anbar, Heet District recorded an increase of 2,370 individuals, followed by Al-Ka’im District (2,340 individuals).

Al Anbar Governorate recorded the highest return rate (93%) during this reporting period. Significant increases were observed in Heet, Haditha, Ra’ua, Falluja, and Al-Ka’im districts, mainly driven by movements from camps.

Return rate was 88 per cent in Salah Al-Din Governorate. Returns were mainly to Tuzkhurmatu and Al-Fares districts, linked to improved services, housing rehabilitation, security clearances, and movements from camps and urban displacement locations.

Arrivals from camps

The number of returnees from camps decreased by 83 per cent compared to the previous year (1,482 versus 43,818), mainly due to the halt of financial grants supporting returns, with no current allocations for IDPs as funding decisions remain pending the formation of a new government and the allocation of funds to MoMD.

The key districts of return this round were Sinjar (474 individuals) and Al-Hamdanyia (366) in Ninewa Governorate. Most of the returnees in Al-Hamdanyia are from Khazir camps in Ninewa Governorate.

Locations of no return

As of December 2025, there are 293 locations of no return, defined as locations where displacement during or since the 2014–2017 conflict with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) was recorded but that have either not recorded any returns or where all returnees have subsequently re-displaced.

Since last year, 21 locations have been added to the list. Most of them (16 locations) in Hatra District (Ninewa Governorate), where drought was reported as the main reason of no return. Additionally, 3 locations in Kirkuk District (Kirkuk Governorate) and 2 locations in Mosul and Sinjar districts (Ninewa Governorate) were added as locations of no return, where lack of services was the main reason of no return.

Furthermore, 20 locations witnessed returns in this round compared to round 134 and were removed from the list of locations of no return. These locations were in Makhmur District in Erbil Governorate (17 locations), Al-Muqdadiya and Khanaqin districts in Diyala Governorate (2 locations) and one location in Al-Ba’aj District in Ninewa Governorate.

Security concerns were reported as the primary barrier to return in most locations (90 locations), with the majority being in Ninewa, Erbil and Kirkuk governorates (47%, 29% and 16%, respectively). Additionally, residential destruction prevented returns in 60 locations, mostly in Diyala and Ninewa governorates (67% and 32%). Drought was the main factor preventing returns in 54 locations, all of which were in Ninewa. Furthermore, security forces blocked returns in 42 locations, largely in Salah Al-Din, Babil, Ninewa and Al Anbar governorates.

Other reasons recorded, but in smaller numbers, included lack of services, tribal and ethno-religious tensions, lack of clearance to return, limited employment opportunities, concerns regarding ISIL reprisal due to perceived affiliation and presence of mines.

8. For more details check: IOM DTM Iraq, *Camp Movements, 1 April – 30 December, 2024*, Baghdad, 2024.

Failed returns

The number of failed returns in this round was 1,512 individuals who were displaced again after returning to their area of origin. The failed returns were mainly driven by climate-related factors and limited livelihood opportunities caused by drought. The majority of these failed returns were reported among individuals originally from Ninewa governorate (1,326 individuals), 120 individuals from Salah Al-Din Governorate and 30 individuals from Al Anbar Governorate.

Most failed returns were mainly in Hatra and Al-Ba'aj districts in Ninewa Governorate (936, 390 respectively). These failed returns were mainly driven by the lack of job opportunities in the area of return, followed by environmental factors such as water scarcity, floods, increased temperatures, and changing rainfall patterns.

In Salah al-Din Governorate, failed returns of 120 individuals were reported across several districts. The highest number was recorded in Balad District (90 individuals), followed by Al-Fares (12 individuals), while Al-Shirqat, Baiji, and Samarra districts each reported 6 individuals. These failed returns were mainly due to the lack of job opportunities in the return area, followed by the lack of public services.

In Al Anbar Governorate, failed returns were reported in Falluja District (24 individuals) and Al-Ka'im District (6 individuals). These failed returns were mainly due to the lack of job opportunities in the return area, followed by the lack of public services.

In Baghdad Governorate, failed returns were recorded in Abu Ghraib District (12 individuals), while Al-Resafa and Karkh districts each reported

6 individuals. These failed returns were mainly due to the lack of job opportunities in the return area, followed by the lack of public services.

In Diyala Governorate, failed returns were reported in Ba'quba District (12 individuals). These failed returns were mainly due to the lack of job opportunities in the return area.

SHELTER TYPES

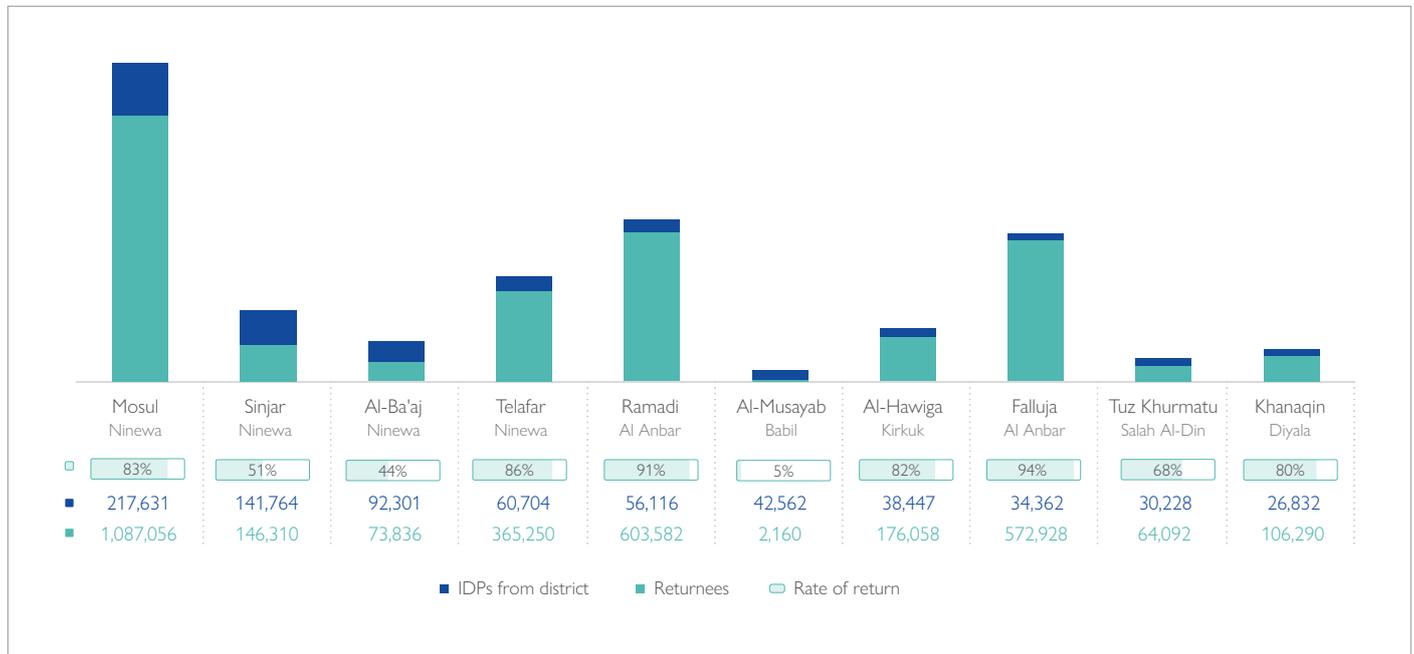
Most returnees (95%) reside in their residence of origin, while roughly 4 per cent live in critical shelters.

Critical shelters⁶

Across governorates, Salah al-Din continued to see a decrease in the number of returnees residing in critical shelters since last year (-3,342 individuals), largely within Al-Fares, and Tikrit districts. Ninewa Governorate reported the highest net increase in returnees in critical shelters (486) mostly in Al-Hamdaniya and Mosul districts.

In Tuz Khurmatu district in Salah al-Din Governorate witnessed an increase in returnees living in critical shelters, primarily driven by the high cost of living and rent in Markaz Tuz Khurmatu, Sulayman Beg, and Amerli sub-districts. In Al-Hamdaniya and Mosul in Ninewa Governorate, despite the improvements in services in areas of origin, many returnees (including those from Al-Amal Center) were living in critical shelters, primarily due to the financial hardship and the high cost of rent, which prevented them from affording rent for adequate housing.

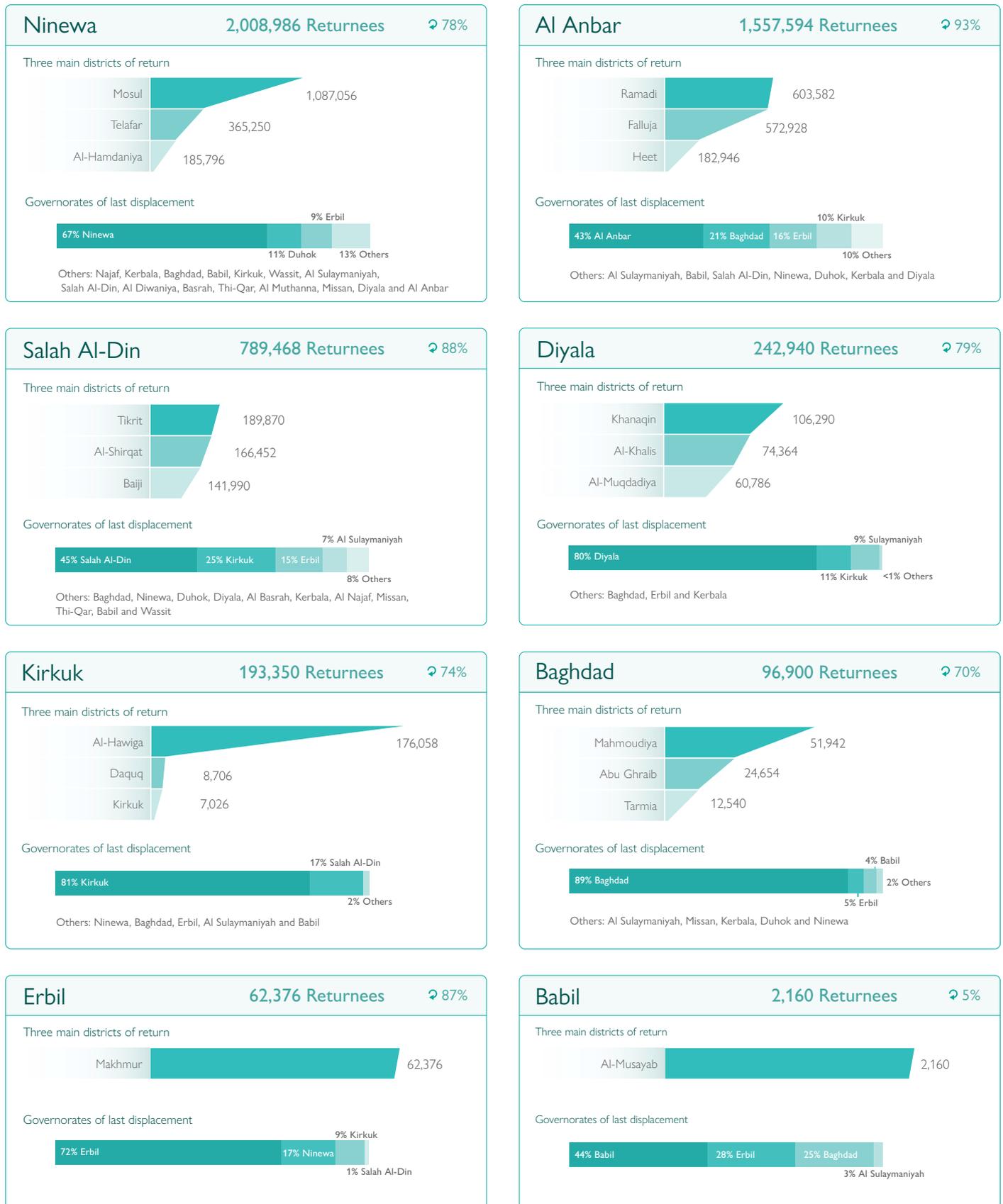
Figure 8: Rate of return in top 10 districts of origin as of December 2025



6. For returnees, critical shelters include uninhabitable residences of origin; tents, caravans, makeshift shelters, mud or brick houses; unfinished or abandoned buildings; public buildings or collective shelters; religious buildings or school buildings.

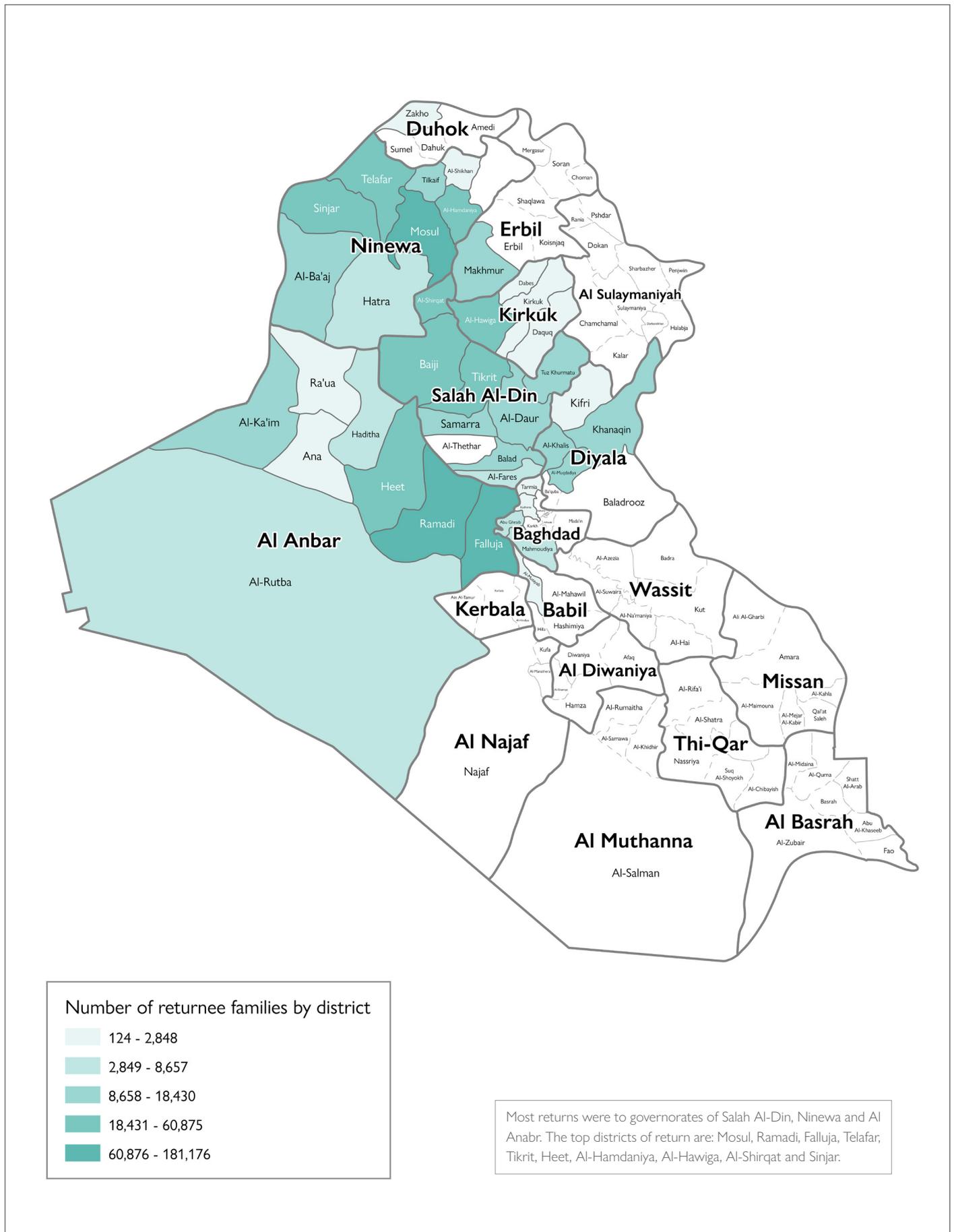
The graphs below show: 1) the number of returnees in all governorates, 2) the main districts where returnees reside, 3) the rate of return per governorate and 4) the governorates where returnees were last displaced. For an overview of districts of returns across Iraq, please see the [Returnee Background Map](#).

Figure 9: Top governorates of return, corresponding districts of return and governorates of last displacement as of December 2025

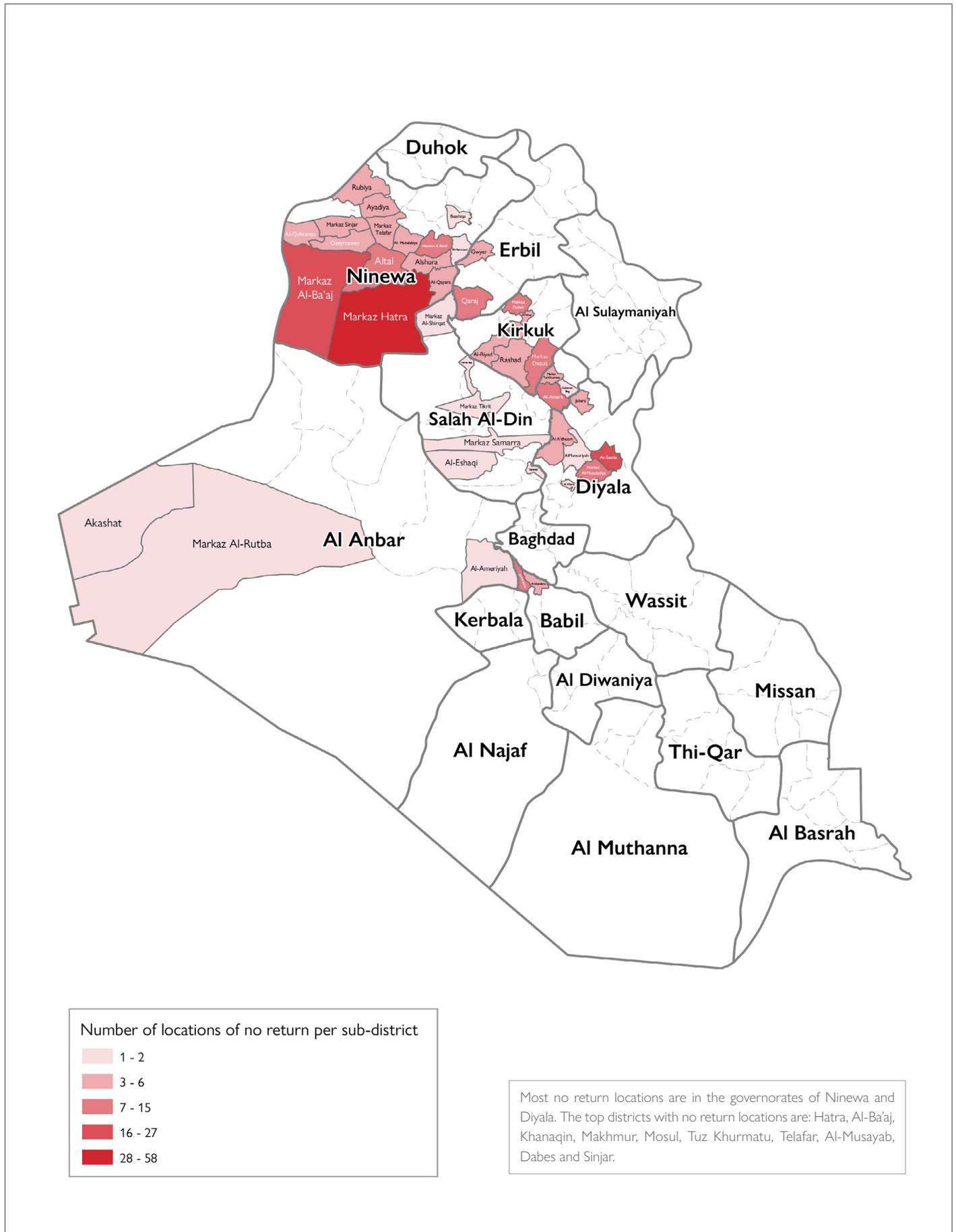


↻ Rate of return

Map 3: Districts of return as of December 2025



Map 4: Areas of no return as of December 2025



METHODOLOGY

IOM's DTM monitors displacement and provides information on the IDP and returnee populations in Iraq. Data are collected through IOM's RARTs, composed of over 58 staff members deployed across Iraq (18% of enumerators are female). Data collection for Round 135 took place between September and December 2025 across 18 governorates.

Data from the IDP Master List and Returnee Master List are gathered through a well-established large network of over 2,000 key informants that includes community leaders, mukhtars, local authorities and security forces. Additional information is gathered from government registration data and partner agencies.

IOM RARTs collect Master List data on a continuous basis and report it every four months (however, due to funding constraints, DTM conducted this reporting only once in 2025). However, limited access due to security issues and other operational constraints can affect information-gathering activities. The variation in displacement figures observed between different reporting periods, in addition to true variation of the population figures, may be influenced by other factors such as the continuous identification of previously displaced groups and the inclusion of data on secondary displacements within Iraq.

The displaced populations are identified through a process of collection, verification, triangulation and validation of data. IOM continues to closely coordinate with federal, regional and local authorities to maintain a shared and accurate understanding of displacement across Iraq.

CALCULATIONS USED TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS

The number of individuals is calculated by multiplying the number of households by six, the average size of an Iraqi household as per governmental statistics, for all out-of-camp IDPs and returnees. Since the July-August 2020 period (Round 117),

the number of individuals for in-camp IDPs has been calculated by multiplying the number of households by five,¹¹ which is the average camp household size according to the Iraq CCCM Cluster since 2018.

RATE OF CHANGE BETWEEN IDP AND RETURNEE CASELOADS

The rate of change of the IDP caseload and that of the returnee caseload may differ due to several factors. Firstly, DTM continues to record families who are displaced for the first time, families arriving from other locations of displacement (secondary displacement) and families who become displaced after returning (failed returns). Additionally, because DTM counts IDPs and returnees at the family level, marriage and other changes within the family can influence the size of the caseload. Furthermore, some families may be counted in both caseloads if: a) part of the family remains displaced while others have returned or b) families may move back and forth between their area of displacement and return. Finally, IDPs living in inaccessible areas may not be counted due to security concerns; upon their return, however, they may be included in the returnee caseload.

DIFFERING LENGTHS OF REPORTING PERIODS

The Master List is produced on a tri-annual basis. Previous reports were published on a quarterly basis. Additionally, since January 2021, three reports (120, 121 and 123) covered a two-month period. The changing length of the reporting period may impact comparison between rounds.

CHANGES TO SHELTER TERMINOLOGY

Since Round 122, DTM made changes to the shelter terminology to align with the Iraq CCCM Cluster's *Technical Note on Informal Sites Definition for Iraq* (September 2020). Please find shelter definitions in the glossary below.

11. Prior to Round 117, DTM calculated the number of in-camp IDPs by multiplying the number of families by six.

GLOSSARY

Critical shelter	<p>For returnees, critical shelters includes the following shelter types: residences of origin (uninhabitable), tents/caravans/makeshift shelters/mud or brick houses, unfinished/abandoned buildings, public buildings or collective shelters, religious buildings or school buildings.</p> <p>For IDPs, critical shelters include those listed above for returnees except residences of origin, as well as apartments/houses that are not owned or are uninhabitable.</p>
Failed return	Individuals arriving from their area of origin after a failed attempt at return.
Internally displaced persons (IDPs)	For the purposes of the DTM assessments, all Iraqis who were forced to flee from 1 January 2014 onwards and are still displaced within national borders at the moment of the assessment.
Location	An area that corresponds either to a village for rural areas or a neighbourhood for urban areas (i.e. fourth official administrative division).
Location of no return	A location that recorded displacement during or since the 2014-2017 conflict with ISIL but has either not recorded any returns or have subsequently recorded that all returnees have redisplaced.
Private settings	For returnees and IDPs, includes hotels/motels, houses of host families or apartments/houses that are not owned. For IDPs, it also includes their own property.
Protracted displacement	Displacement that has lasted for longer than three years. As displacement data are collected in 'waves' of displacement that cover a period of several months, displacement that occurred before January 2021 is considered to be protracted.
Rate of return	Used to estimate the proportion of returns in a district of origin and computed as the ratio of returnees to a district to the total number of returnees and IDPs originally from the same district.
Relocation	Individuals who moved from one location of displacement to another location due to such factors as better conditions, safety, aid availability or family ties.
Residence of origin	For returnees only, refers to their residence prior to displacement.
Returnees	For the purposes of the DTM assessments, all those displaced since January 2014 who have returned to their location of origin, irrespective of whether they have returned to their former residence or to another shelter type. The definition of returnees is not related to the criteria of returning in safety and dignity, nor with a defined strategy for ensuring durable solutions.
Secondary displacement	Individuals who were forced to move from one location of displacement to another location due to such factors as camp closures, safety concerns, or environmental challenges.

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