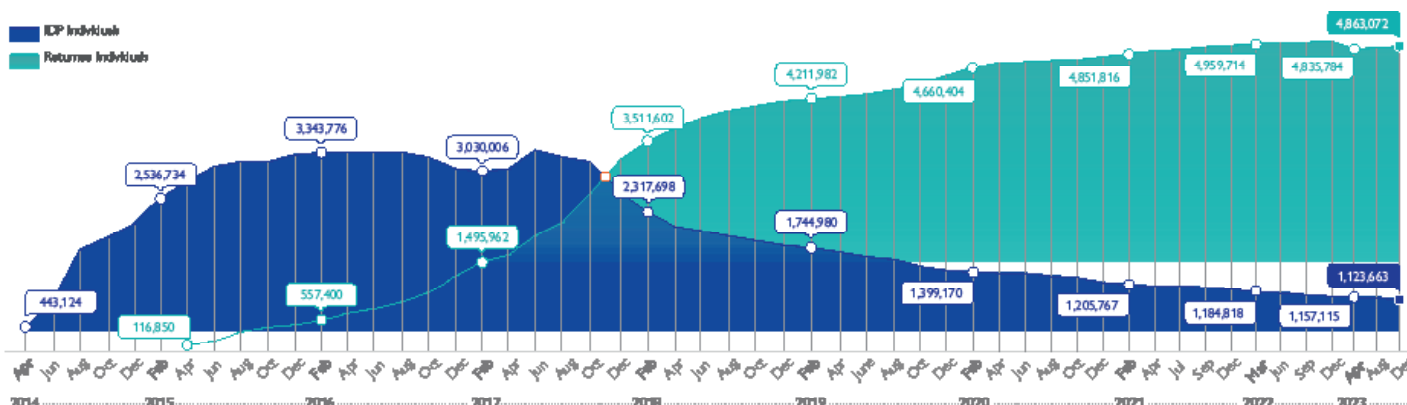



## HIGHLIGHTS


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.<sup>1</sup> Data for this round were collected from 1 September to 31 December 2023.


IDPs
1,123,663
▼ -18,351


- As of 31 December 2023, DTM identified **1,123,663** individual IDPs (192,665 households).
- Decrease of **18,351** individual IDPs since the previous round (-1.6%).<sup>2</sup>
- The decrease in IDPs is noted in multiple districts. **Erbil** in Erbil Governorate, and **Sumel** and **Zakho** in Dahuk Governorate, had the highest decrease. Some families left the displacement area due to the **high cost of living** and **lack of job opportunities** or after **securing a job** or **security clearance in the area of origin**. Additionally, IOM's Facilitated Voluntary Movements Programme (FVM) enabled some Yazidi families to return to Sinjar District and Al-Qahtaniya subdistrict.
- During this round of data collection (September – December), there were **6,394 new IDP movements**. This includes 5,952 secondary displacements, 406 failed returns and 36 new displacements.
- The number of IDPs living in critical shelters fell by **-3,474** individuals compared to the previous round (-3.5%).




**192,665**  
Households  
▼ -3,215



**2,610**  
Locations  
▼ -35




**18**  
Governorates




**104**  
Districts


▼▲ Change since the last round


Returnees
4,863,072
▲ +17,010


- As of 31 December 2023, DTM identified **4,863,072** individual returnees (810,512 households).
- Increase of **17,010** individual returnees since previous round (0.4%).
- The highest increase in the returnees was observed in districts of **Baiji** in Salah a-Din and **Al-Ba'aj** in Ninewa. Improvements in the security situation in Al-Sinyah in Baiji encouraged families to renovate their houses and return. In Al-Ba'aj, families returned from Jedda-1 Camp or Bahrka Camp.
- This round, **3,702** individuals **returned from camps**, with the majority residing in Ninewa (84%).
- The number of returnees residing in **critical shelters** increased by **4,308** compared to the previous round (2%).




**810,512**  
Households  
▲ +2,835



**2,189**  
Locations  
▲ +17



**9**  
Governorates



**39**  
Districts

▼▲ Change since the last round

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



## OVERALL TRENDS

During Round 131, DTM identified 1,123,663 IDPs (192,665 households). This is a decrease of 18,351 individuals compared to the May-August 2023 period (-1.6%). The slow decline in IDPs may be related to the large share living in protracted displacement (98%).

At the district level, the most significant **decreases** in IDPs were recorded in Districts of Erbil (-3,162 individuals) in Erbil Governorate, Sumel (-2,367) and Zakho (-1,905) in Duhok Governorate and Tikrit District in Salah al-Din (-1,776). The slight decline in IDPs in these districts partially reflects new returns and internal movements. Most of the IDPs in Erbil Governorate reported that the expenses of the winter season prompted them to move to other areas to reduce their heating bills.

## RECENT IDP MOVEMENTS

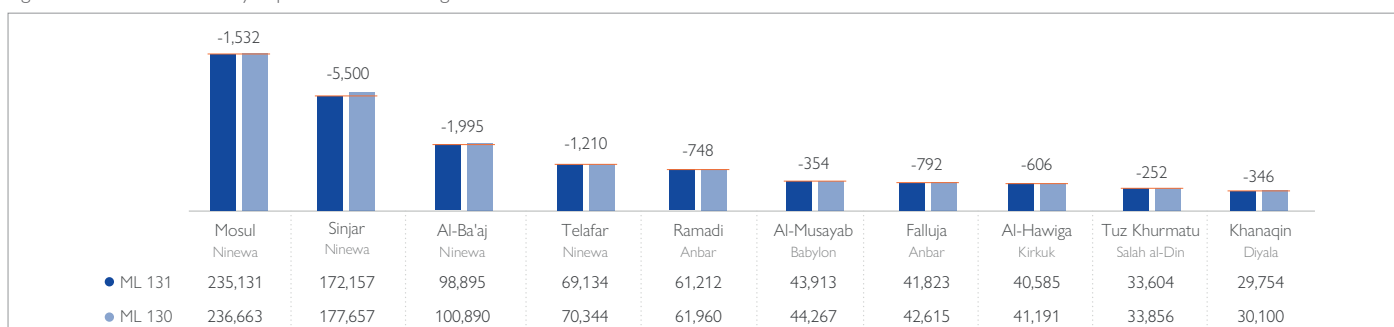
Despite the overall decrease in IDPs across the country, 6,394 (individual) new IDP movements were observed during Round 131 (1% of caseload). Most of these movements involve IDPs pushed into secondary displacement (93%). Additionally, 406 failed returns were recorded this round. Failed returns was primarily experienced by individuals who are from Sinjar, Falluja and Al-Ba'aj districts. The main factors driving failed returns are a lack of public services, job opportunities and financial means to remain in the area. In this round of data collection, 36 individuals from Salah al-Din, Anbar and Diyala were displaced for the first time to Sulaymaniyah. Their main displacement drivers were security problems, lack of job opportunities in their area of origin and inefficient public services. Furthermore, a family in Baquba subdistrict in Diyala Governorate was reportedly displaced because of tribal tensions.

The majority of those who underwent secondary displacement (5,952 individuals) reside in Sulaymaniyah in Sulaymaniyah Governorate (36%), Zakho (13%) and Sumil (12%) in Dahok Governorate and Sinjar (8%) in Ninewa Governorate. Key informants from the three governorates mentioned that the primary pull factors for secondary displacement are better living conditions (housing, services, livelihoods) followed by the presence of extended family members and safety and security reasons in the subsequent location.

Table 1: Top three districts recording recent movement

District, Governorate	Displaced for the first time	Secondary displacement	Failed returns
Sulaymaniyah, Sulaymaniyah	18	2,126	48
Dahuk, Zakho	0	744	97
Dahuk, Sumel	0	715	75

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



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).

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.

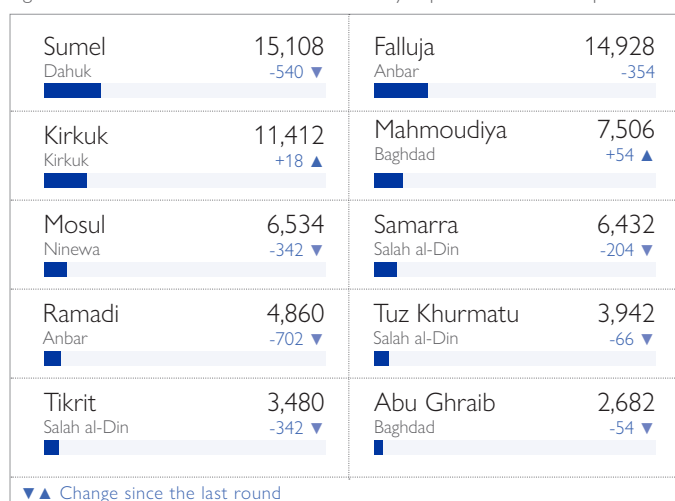
## SHELTER TYPES

Consistent with the previous round, just over three quarters of IDPs individuals reside in private settings (77%; 864,462), followed by (14%; 161,635) in camps and (9%; 96,804) in critical shelters. In Round 131, the number of IDPs living in private settings decreased by (-1%; 10,182), followed by a slight decrease among those residing in camps (-3%; 4,695).

### Critical Shelters<sup>4</sup>

IDPs living in critical shelters may face challenges such as limited access to livelihoods and basic services. Since the previous round, the number of IDPs residing in critical shelters has decreased in districts such as Ramadi (-702 individuals), Sumel (-540) and Sinjar (-402). On the other hand, the population residing in critical shelters increased in Mahmoudiya (+54), Al-Shamiya (+18), and Kirkuk (+18).

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



## IDP AREAS OF ORIGIN

Slightly more than half (56%) of IDPs originate from Ninewa Governorate, in particular Mosul (21%), Sinjar (15%), Al-Ba'aj (9%) and Telfar (6%) districts. A further 22 per cent of IDPs originate from Anbar or Salah al-Din governorates (11% each).

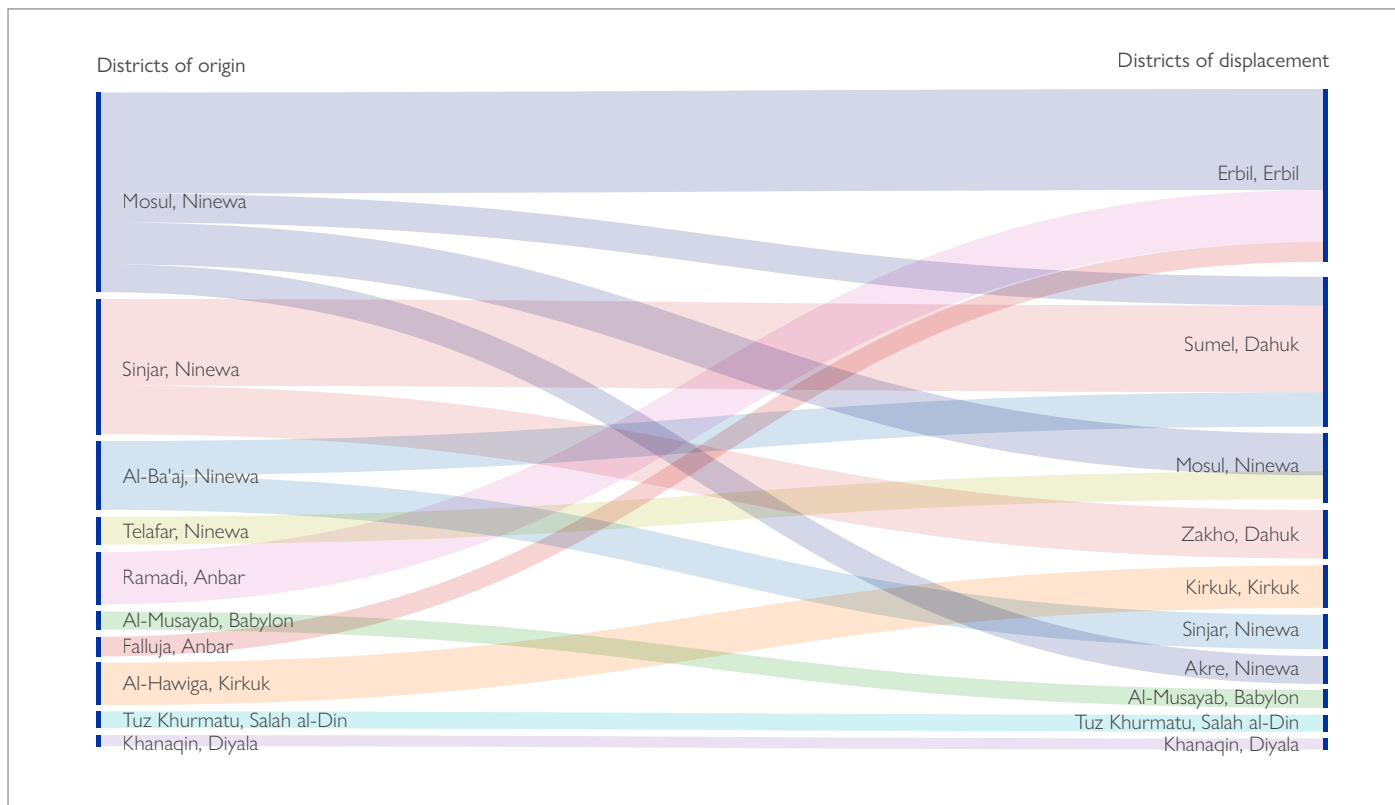
The graphs below show the eight governorates hosting the largest numbers of IDPs. They also indicate the change in the number of IDPs since the last round, key districts where IDPs reside and top governorates of origin. For an overview of districts of displacement and returns across Iraq, please see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

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

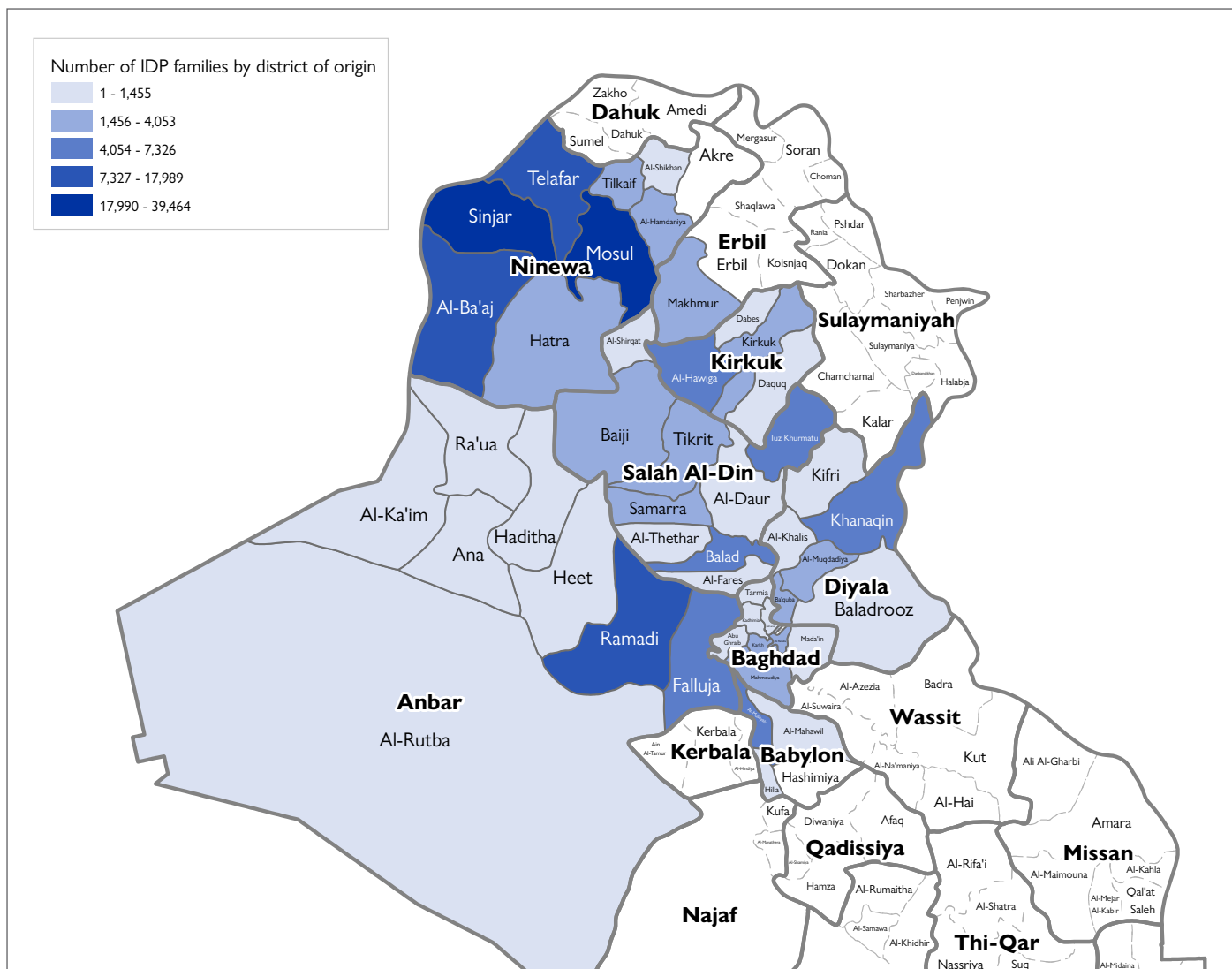


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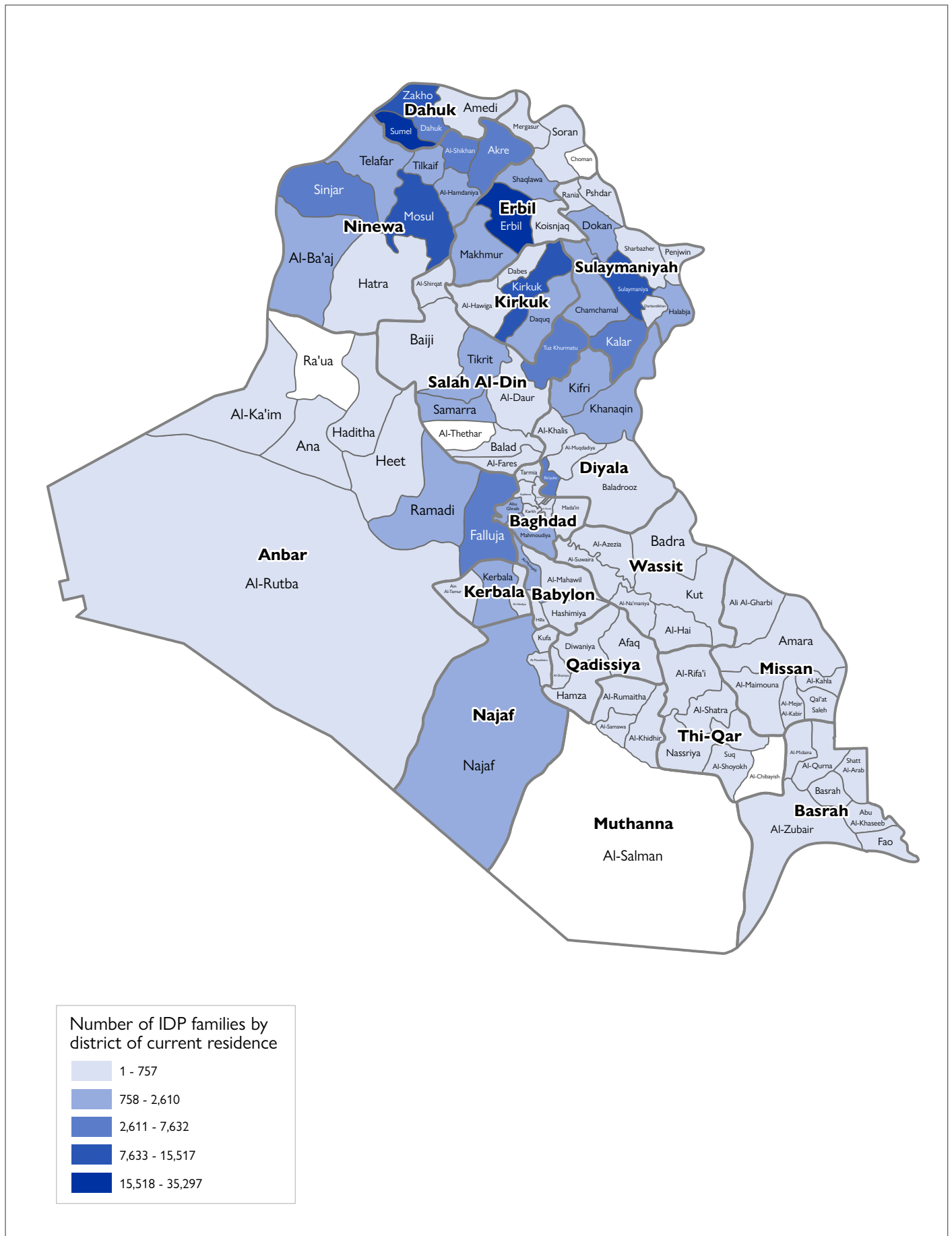
Figure 6: Top districts of origin and corresponding districts of displacement



Map 1: Districts of origin of current IDP population

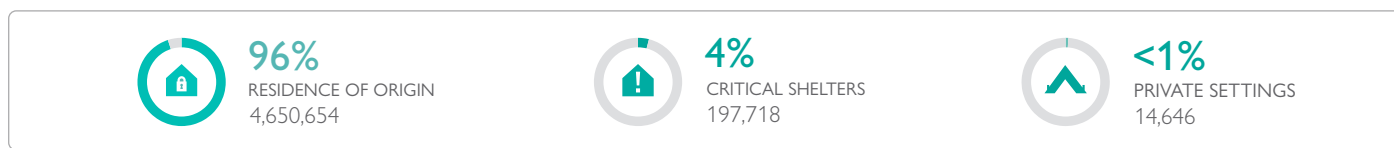


Map 2: Districts of displacement of current IDP population



# RETURN OVERVIEW

Figure 7: Returnee shelter types



## OVERALL TRENDS

During Round 131, DTM identified 4,863,072 returnees (810,512 households). This is an increase of 2,835 individuals compared to May-August 2023 period (+0.4%). The slow return can be explained by a lack of livelihood opportunities and housing in areas of origin, as well as better safety and security in areas of displacement.<sup>5</sup> The country-wide rate of return<sup>6</sup> stands at 81 per cent.

## RECENT RETURN MOVEMENTS

At the district level, **Baiji** (+5,784 individuals), **Sinjar** (+2,352) and **Al-Ba'aj** (+2,172) districts reported the highest increase in returnees compared to the previous round. Improvements in the security situation in areas of return encouraged IDPs to renovate their houses in their areas of origin and look for jobs. Other key drivers of return included a lack of financial means to remain in locations of displacement, challenges linked to protracted displacement and emotional connections to areas of origin. In contrast to the previous round, no districts witnessed a decrease in the number of returnees during the reporting period.

### Arrivals from camps

The number of returnees who arrived from camps during Round 131 decreased compared to Round 130 (3,702 individuals vs. 5,466). Key districts reporting arrivals from camps include Sinjar (1,956 individuals), Al-Hamdaniya (678) and Al-Ba'aj (426) districts in Ninewa Governorate. Most families leaving Jeddah 1 camp came to Ninewa Governorate. Additionally, some families from Bahrka Camp returned to Al-Ba'aj District in Ninewa due to their emotional ties to their area of origin and challenges finding employment in areas of displacement. Moreover, some IDPs in Al-Khazir camp returned to Al-Hamdaniya District after receiving security clearance.

### Locations of no return

In Round 131, DTM identified 310 locations which have not experienced any lasting returns. Factors driving the lack of returns to these locations include security

concerns, stemming largely from attacks by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the blocking of returns by Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) and the ISF and the Peshmerga and tribal or ethno-religious tensions. The severity of living conditions in these areas have also contributed to the lack of returns, given the destruction of housing, limited public services and difficult financial situations of families in these locations. Between September and December 2023, families returned to 10 new locations. This includes eight locations in Ninewa, one in Al-Hawiga district in Kirkuk Governorate and one location in Makhmur District, Erbil Governorate. Prior to these movements, the locations had not witnessed any lasting returns.

### Failed returns

Failed returns decreased considerably between Round 131 and 130 (406 individuals vs. 1,303, respectively, -69%). Over half of the recent failed returns occurred in Sinjar District, Ninewa Governorate (58%), followed by Fallujah district in Anbar Governorate (25%). The main drivers of failed returns include a lack of public services, limited job opportunities and housing destruction in the locations of origin.

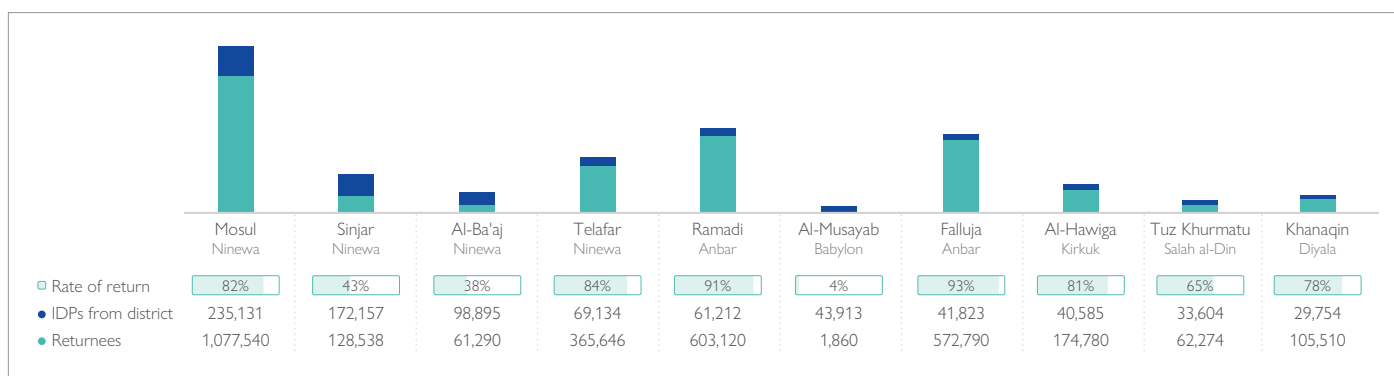
## SHELTER TYPES

Most returnees (96%) reside in their residence of origin, while the rest live primarily in critical shelters. Compared to the previous round, the number of returnees living in critical shelters slightly increased slightly (+2%).

### Critical shelters<sup>7</sup>

Across governorates, Salah al-Din reported the highest net increase in returnees living in critical shelters since the previous round (+3,222 individuals), largely within Baiji, Al-Fares and Tuz Khurmatu districts. Ninewa Governorate reported the second highest net increase in returnees in critical shelters (+1,314) concentrated in Al-Hamdaniya and Al-Ba'aj. On the other hand, the number of returnees in critical shelters fell in the districts of Heet (-216 individuals) and Falluja (-60) in Anbar Governorate, as well as Telfar (-138) in Ninewa Governorate and Al-Hawiga (-114) in Kirkuk Governorate.

Figure 8: Rate of return in top 10 districts of origin



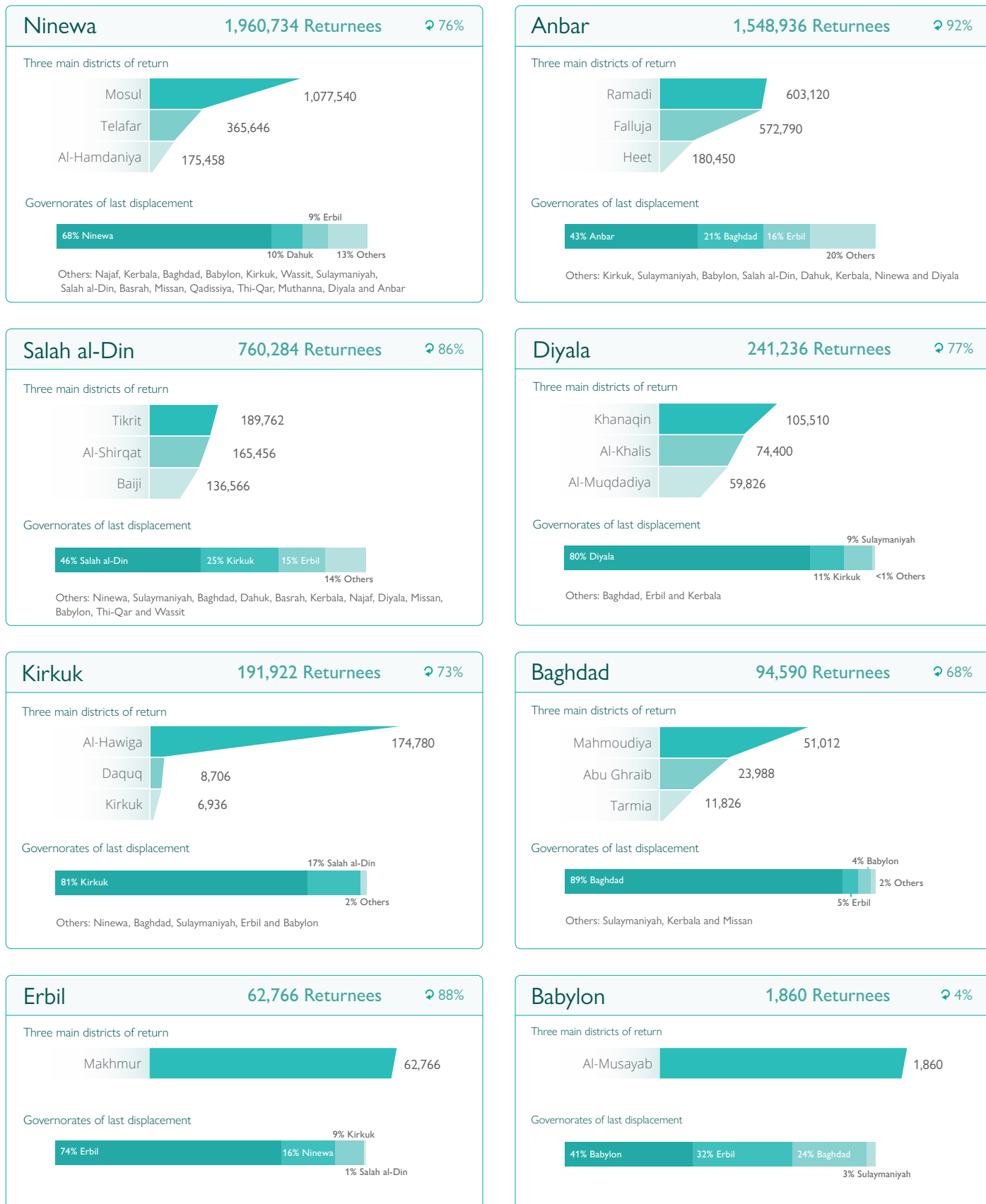
5. IOM, Iraq – DTM Integrated Location Assessment VII Dataset (Baghdad, July 2022).

6. The rate of return divides the number of returnees per governorate by the total number of returnees and IDPs originating from that governorate.

7. 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.

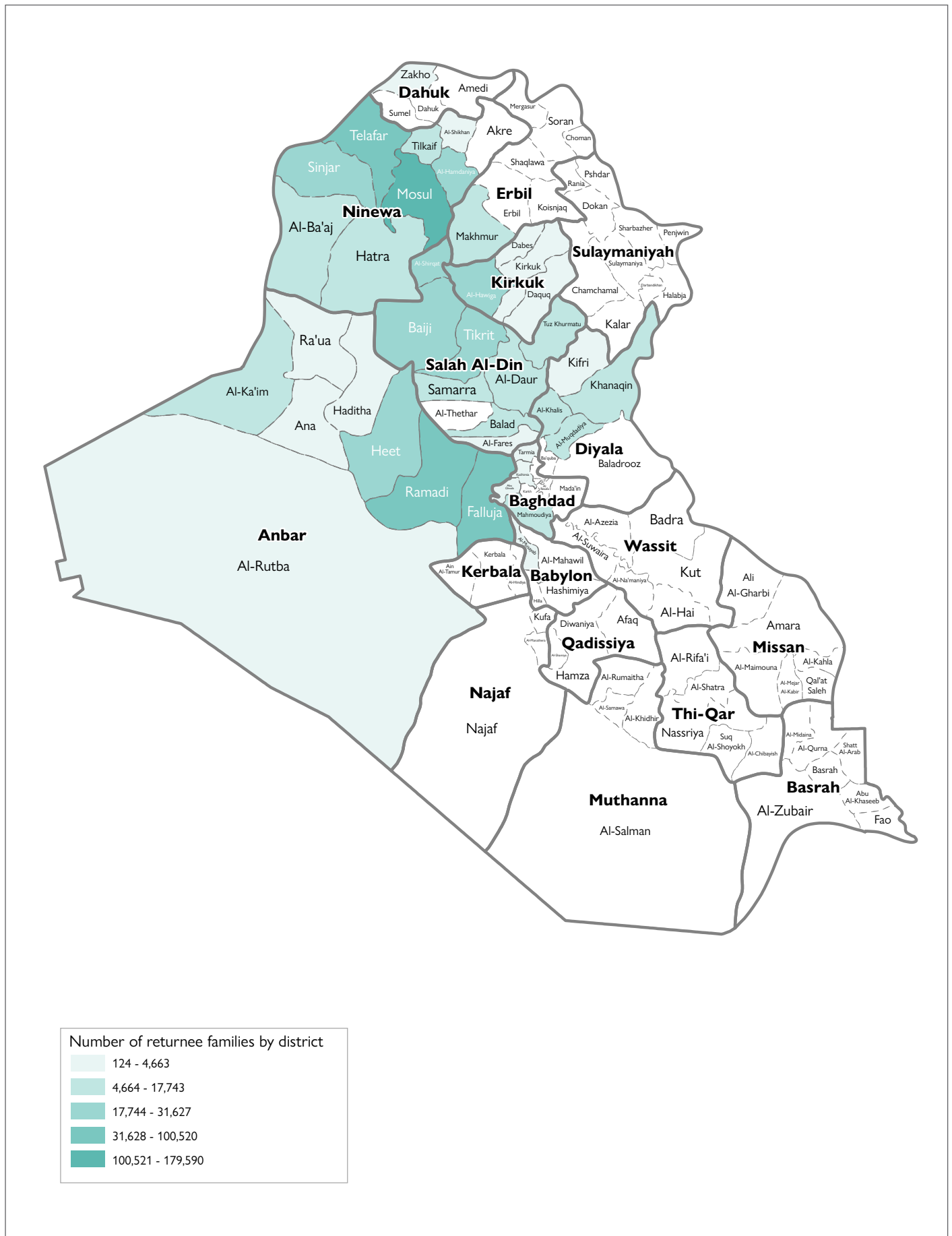
The graphs below show: 1) the number of returnees in all governorates, 2) the main districts where returnees reside, 3) the rate of return per governorate and 4) the governorates where returnees were last displaced. For an overview of districts of returns across Iraq, please see the [Returnee Background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

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



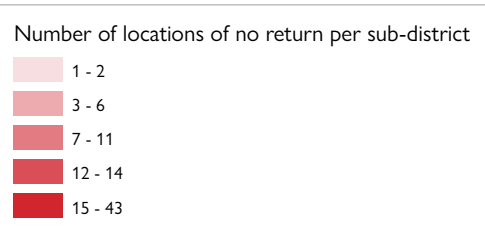
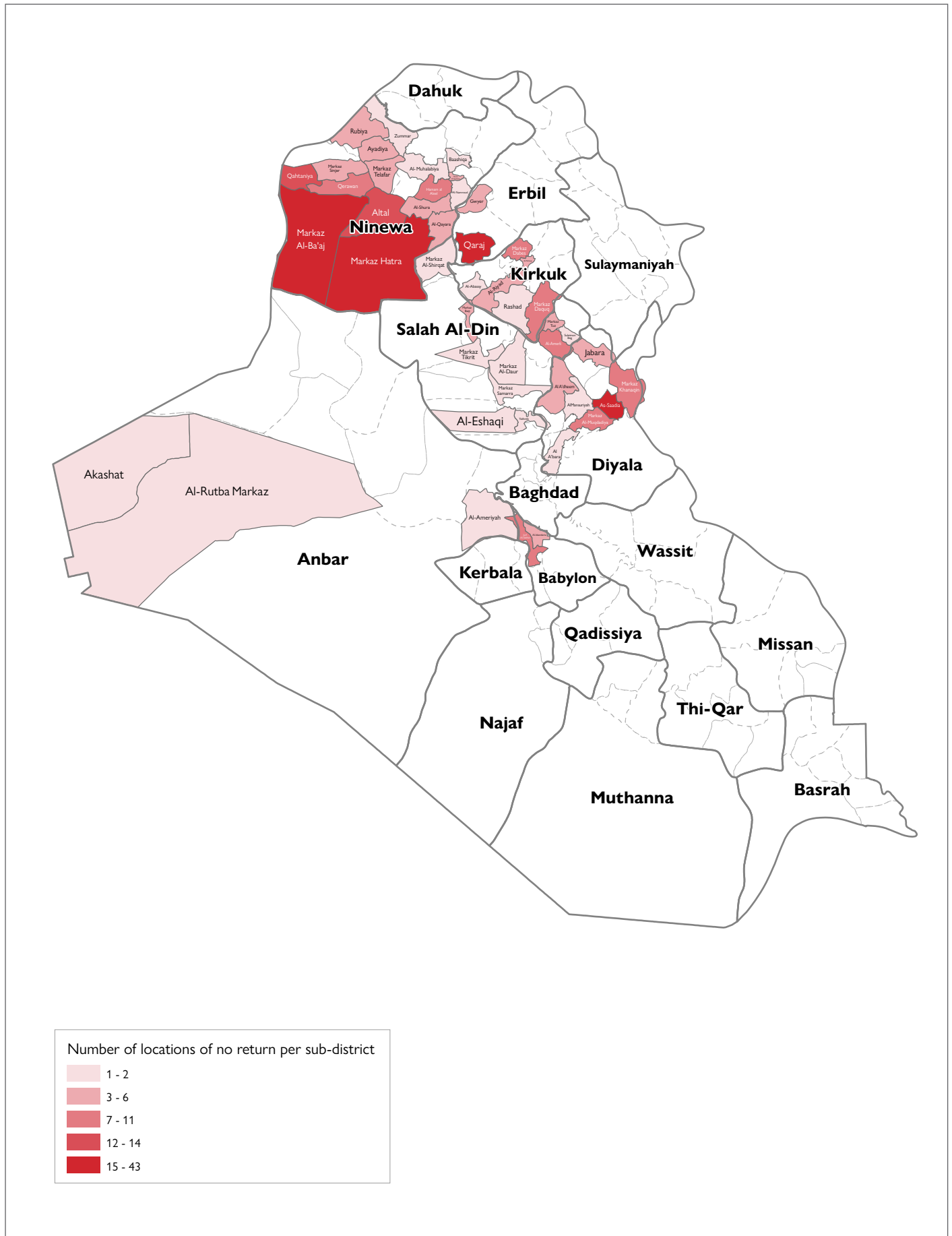
📍 Rate of return

Map 3: Districts of return





Map 4: Areas of no return



## 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 73 staff members deployed across Iraq (20% of enumerators are female). Data collection for Round 131 took place between September and December 2023 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 continuously and report it every four months. 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,<sup>8</sup> 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.

8. 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 2020 is considered to be protracted. <sup>9</sup>
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.
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 displaced more than one time and arriving from another location of displacement.

9. Since the beginning of the crisis, IOM DTM has been collecting data on displacement based on 'waves' of movement that occurred in response to significant events. Wave 9 covers the period January–December 2019; therefore, all IDPs that were displaced between January 2014 and December 2019 are considered to be in protracted displacement for the purpose of this report. However, the actual number will be higher, as some IDPs who were displaced during Wave 10 covering the period January–December 2020 are also in protracted displacement.

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