

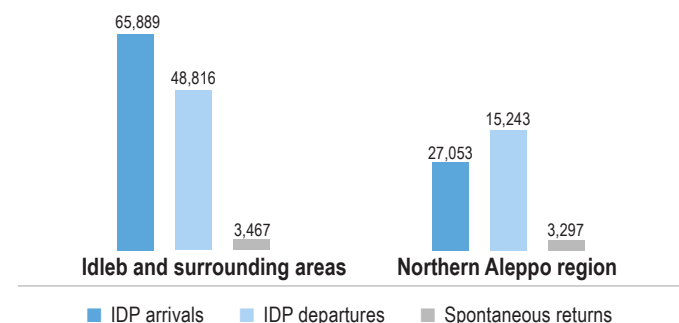
IDP Situation Monitoring Initiative (ISMI)

Monthly Overview of IDP Movements and Spontaneous Returns in north-west Syria, March 2019

Summary of Findings

Communities assessed:	669
Total IDP arrivals: ¹	92,942 (+11%) ²
Total IDP departures: ³	64,059 (+47%)
Total spontaneous returns (SRs): ⁴	6,764 (+50%)

Total IDP arrivals, IDP departures and SRs by region:

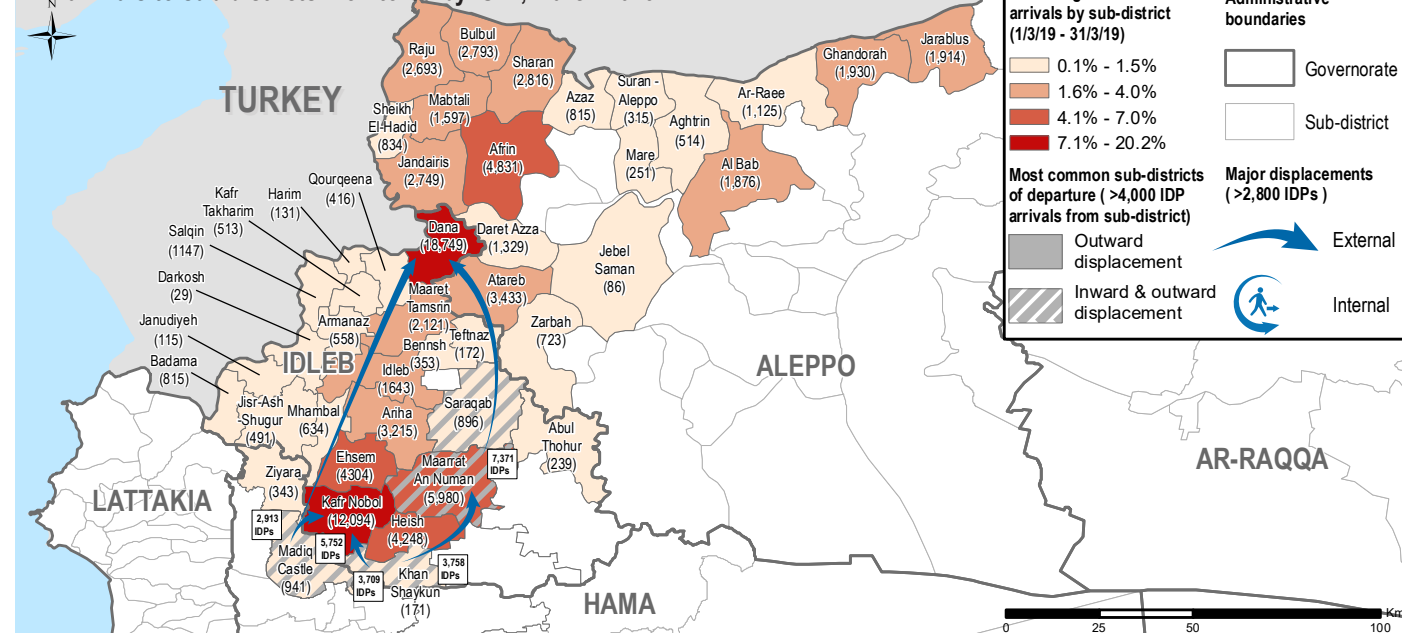


In March, assessed communities in north-west Syria witnessed a total of **92,942 IDP arrivals**. Both regions continued to see **hostility between Government of Syria (GoS)-allied forces and armed opposition groups (AOGs)**, as well as **inter-AOG violence** throughout the reporting period despite the announcement of a so-called demilitarised zone (DMZ).⁵

Idleb and surrounding areas witnessed **48,816 IDP departures**, a significant decrease of 57% compared to February, which saw an upsurge in aerial bombardments on communities in southern Idleb and northern Hama governorates since mid-January. Nevertheless March IDP departures continued to remain notably high compared to the end of 2018, in particular from **Madiq Castle (27,916) sub-district** following continued aerial bombardments and shelling on the area.

The northern Aleppo region witnessed **27,053 IDP arrivals**, more than half (59%) of which were to Afrin district, likely indicating a perceived stability in comparison to areas closer to conflict lines.

IDP arrivals to sub-districts monitored by ISMI, March 2019



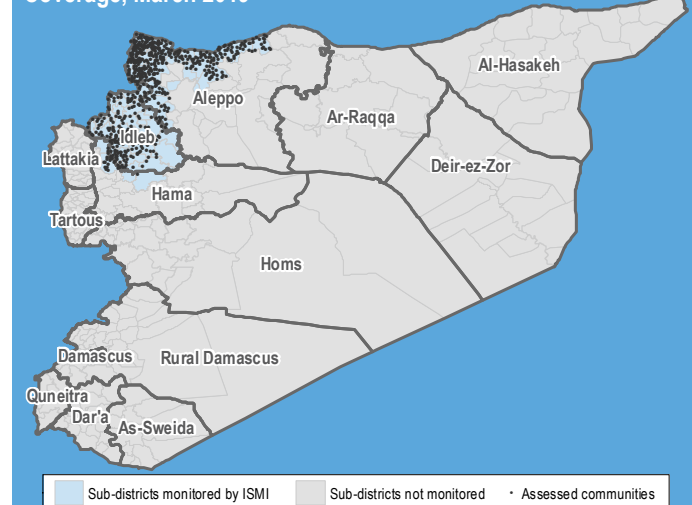
About ISMI & This Factsheet

The IDP Situation Monitoring Initiative (ISMI) is an initiative of the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster, implemented by REACH and supported by cluster members.

Following a baseline assessment conducted at the end of 2016, weekly, bi-weekly and now monthly data collection cycles were initiated. This factsheet presents an overview of reported inward and outward movements of IDPs from 1 to 31 March 2019. Such displacements were reported in 669 communities in sub-districts monitored by ISMI. The coverage map in this section shows the sub-districts that were monitored for the most recent round of data collection, as well as the communities reporting movements. ISMI monitoring coverage varies over time depending on access. Displacements are identified through an extensive key informant (KI) network, either from alerts initiated by KIs or from follow-up by enumerators. At least two KIs are interviewed in each assessed community, and collected information is further triangulated through other sources, including CCCM member data and humanitarian updates. This approach allows for regular updates on IDP movements at the community level across sub-districts monitored by ISMI in north-west Syria.

The data used for this product was collected, triangulated and verified based on submissions from ISMI's network and select CCCM cluster members following the ISMI methodology. Due to differences in methodology and coverage, figures presented in this output may differ from official CCCM Cluster or UNHCR data. All data is for humanitarian use only.

Coverage, March 2019



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IDLEB & SURROUNDING AREAS⁶

Key Figures

Communities assessed: 269

Total IDP arrivals: 65,889 (+16%)

Sub-districts with most arrivals (# IDPs):

Dana	18,749
Kafr Nobol	12,094
Ma'arrat An Nu'man	5,980
Ehsem	4,304
Hesih	4,248

Total IDP departures: 48,816 (+57%)

Sub-districts with most departures (# IDPs):

Madiq Castle	27,916
Ma'arrat An Nu'man	5,410
Zarbah	3,968
Kafr Nobol	3,712
Khan Shaykun	2,241

Total SRs: 3,467 (+121%)

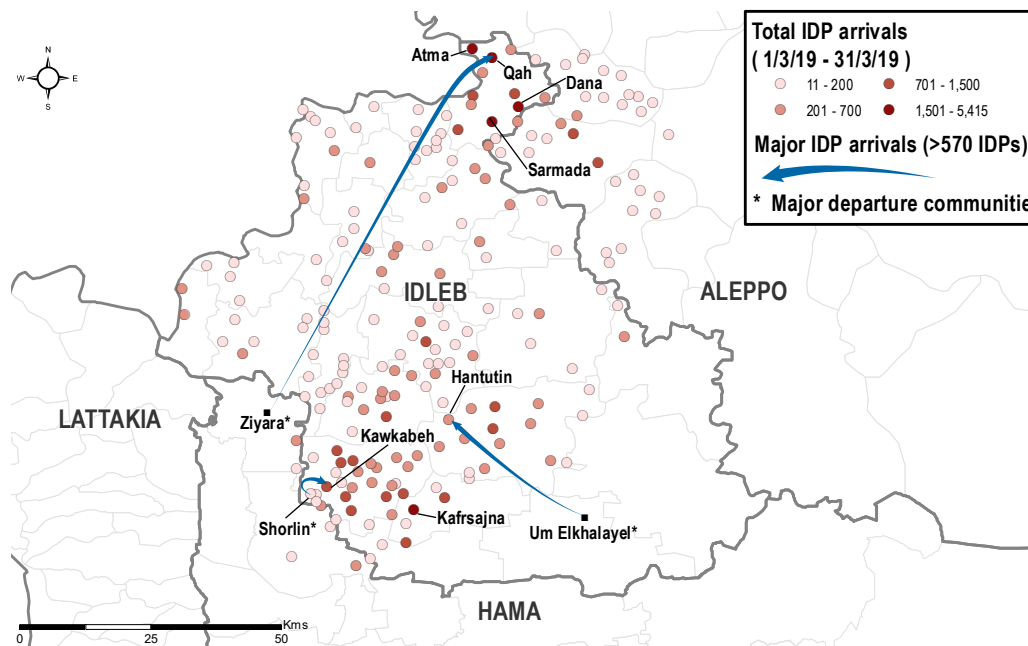
Sub-districts with most SRs:

Saraqab	1,140
Ma'arrat An Nu'man	1,140
Kafr Nobol	427
Zarbah	314
Madiq Castle	228

Overview

Despite the announcement of a so-called DMZ on 17 September 2018, spanning some 15 to 20 kilometres along conflict lines, **persistent clashes between GoS-allied forces and AOGs, inter-AOG hostilities, as well as aerial bombardments** have led to hundreds of civilian casualties and large-scale displacement waves from Idlib and surrounding areas in recent months.⁷ Critical civilian infrastructure

IDP arrivals to assessed communities in Idlib and surrounding areas⁸



has been damaged or destroyed, including schools, hospitals and markets.⁹ This trend was also seen in February, significantly preventing children from attending school, preventing people from accessing life-saving medical assistance, as well as limiting people's ability to buy basic food items.¹⁰

Following patterns seen in February, the **security situation and living conditions of civilians have continued to deteriorate in opposition-held areas** of Idlib, western Aleppo and northern Hama governorates in March following continued aerial bombardments throughout the reporting period.

In March, Idlib and surrounding areas witnessed a total of **65,889 IDP arrivals, 48,816**

IDP departures and 3,467 SRs. The number of SRs has increased compared to February, but many people are likely to be displaced again in the near future as heightened insecurity persists within the region.

IDP Departures

More than half (57%) of all IDP departures in March from assessed communities in Idlib and surrounding areas were from **Madiq Castle (27,916) sub-district**, of which 79% were primary displacements following a rapid escalation in aerial bombardments on the sub-district during the first half of the month. Many of these residents reportedly left their communities

of origin in **Jamasa Odayat - Alshareeah (6,829) and eastern Huweiz (5,113).**

Many IDPs also left from other areas along conflict lines in southern Idlib and northern Hama governorates, in particular **Ma'arrat An Nu'man (5,410), Kafr Nobol (3,712) and Khan Shaykun (2,241) sub-districts.**

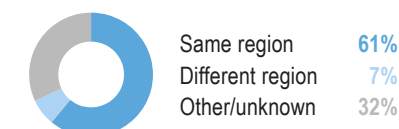
Type of IDP departures:



Southern Idlib and northern Hama governorates witnessed **continuously high levels of aerial bombardments and shelling in the first half of March**, with thousands of civilians perpetually bearing the brunt of the conflict, many of whom feared an escalation in military developments as reported by KIs. **More than 300 schools in the region were reportedly closed following aerial bombardments, leaving some 80,000 children without the right to education.**¹¹

Between 1 and 31 March, civilian casualties and injuries continued to be reported amidst continuing clashes and hostilities. At least 90 casualties were reported throughout the month, half of whom were children.¹²

Intended destinations of departures:

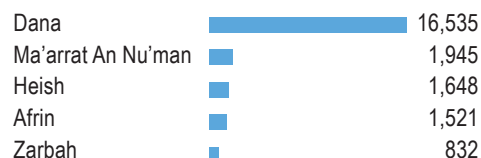


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An anticipation of future conflict escalation was most commonly reported by KIs as a push factor for resident and IDP departures. KIs also reported that residents left their communities of origin due to an escalation in ground-based conflict and aerial bombardments, whereas KIs mentioned that IDPs most commonly left communities due to reduced access to humanitarian assistance, as well as a loss of income.

Top intended destination sub-districts (# IDPs):



On a community level, many IDPs reportedly intended to move to **Atma (3,848)**, **Qah (1,802)**, **Deir Hassan - Darhashan (1,511)** and **Sarmada (948)**. Many IDPs departing from Ma'arrat An Nu'man (1,027) sub-district reportedly intended to move to other areas within the sub-district, in particular from Ma'arrat An Nu'man (855), Maar Shurin (86) and Kafruma (86) communities to Jarjaz community.

IDP Arrivals

More than half (55%) of all IDP arrivals in March to assessed communities in Idleb and surrounding areas were to **Dana (18,749)**, **Kafr Nobol (12,094)** and **Ma'arrat An Nu'man (5,980)** sub-districts.

Vulnerable groups among IDP arrivals:¹³



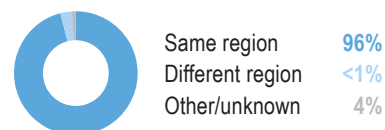
On a community level, many IDPs arrived to **Qah (5,415)**, **Sarmada (3,306)**, **Atmeh camp (2,565)** and **Dana (2,280)** in Dana sub-district, along Idleb's north-western border with Turkey. This has likely **compounded the humanitarian situation in several communities due to limited availability of resources and shelter**. As of 30 November 2018, Dana sub-district was home to one of the largest populations in north-west Syria with some 378,000 people, including a very high proportion of IDPs.¹⁴

Top 3 shelter types of IDP arrivals:

(1) Solid/finished house	26,672 IDPs
(2) Managed camp	9,146 IDPs
(3) Unfinished/damaged building	8,758 IDPs

Within the region, **9,146 IDPs reportedly arrived to managed camps**, placing additional pressure on the provision of services. In March, certain camps and informal sites in northern Idleb governorate were hit by **torrential rains, which led to severe flooding**, in particular in Atmeh camp.¹⁵ Many people's homes were destroyed as tents were swept away. The rain also led to movement restrictions as several roads were flooded, preventing people from accessing critical services.

Last place of departure of IDP arrivals:



Safety and security, access to shelter or shelter support, as well as family ties or relationships with the host community were reported by KIs as the most common pull factors for IDP arrivals.

NORTHERN ALEPPO¹⁶

Key Figures

Communities assessed: **400**

Total IDP arrivals: **27,053 (↑24%)**

Sub-districts with most arrivals (# IDPs):

Afrin	4,831
Sharan	2,816
Bulbul	2,793
Jandairis	2,749
Raju	2,693

Total IDP departures: **15,243 (↑116%)**

Sub-districts with most departures (# IDPs):

Al Bab	5,445
Bulbul	1,462
Ghandorah	1,162
Jandairis	1,062
Afrin	1,013

Total SRs: **3,297 (↑13%)**

Sub-districts with most SRs:

Ma'bтали	680
Afrin	669
Raju	404
Sharan	309
Jarabulus	245

Overview

Between 1 and 31 March, KIs reported that the northern Aleppo region continued to witness **general insecurity and inter-AOG violence**. Nevertheless, the region witnessed fewer security related incidents than neighbouring Idleb and surrounding areas throughout the reporting period.

Despite the establishment of a so-called

DMZ, many people living in communities of northern Aleppo governorate, neighbouring north-eastern Idleb governorate, continued to be exposed to several protection related concerns. Following trends seen in February, **KIs reported continued incidents involving improvised explosive devices, resulting in several civilian casualties**.

In March, the northern Aleppo region witnessed a total of **27,053 IDP arrivals, 15,243 IDP departures and 3,297 SRs**.

IDP Arrivals

More than half (59%) of all IDP arrivals in March to assessed communities in the northern Aleppo region were to Afrin district in north-western Aleppo governorate, in particular **Afrin (4,831)**, **Sharan (2,816)**, **Bulbul (2,793)**, **Jandairis (2,749)** and **Raju (2,693)** sub-districts.

Most common pull factors of IDP arrivals:¹⁷

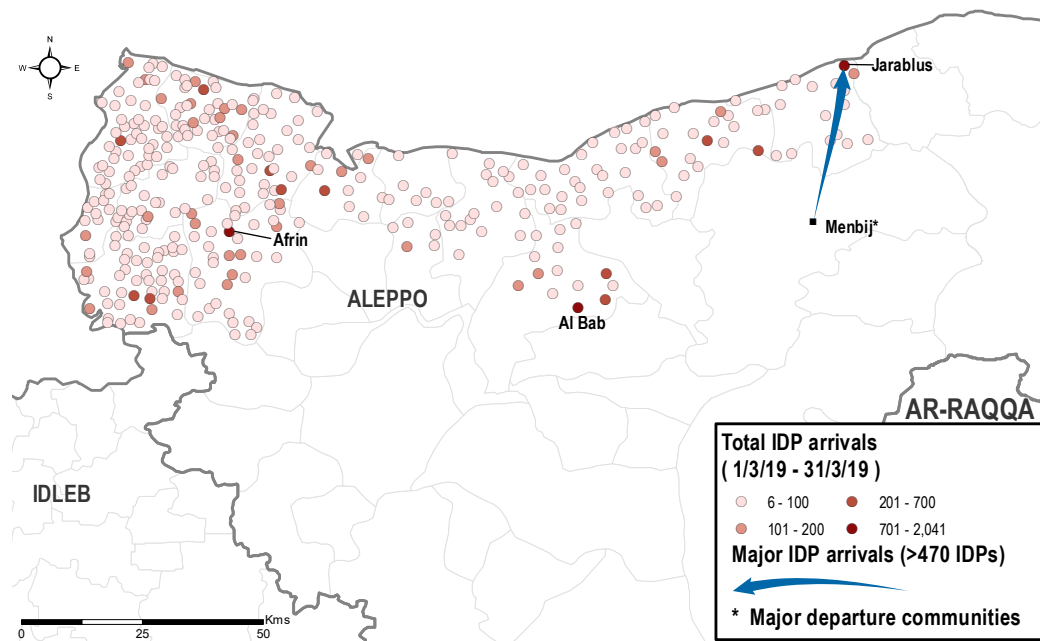
	1st	2nd	3rd
Safety and security situation	213	32	4
Access to income/employment	47	120	44
Access to shelter/shelter support	22	74	62
Access to humanitarian assistance	11	53	57
Access to food	2	39	30

In line with patterns seen in February, almost half (46%) of all IDPs reportedly arrived from Idleb and surrounding areas, many of whom from **Idleb (1,481)** and **Ma'arrat An Nu'man (1,471)** sub-districts following aerial bombardments, which forcibly displaced many from the area. Many IDPs also arrived from Menbij (1,323) sub-district, many of whom moved to Jarabulus (638) sub-district.

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IDP arrivals to assessed communities in northern Aleppo¹⁸



IDP Departures

More than one third (36%) of all IDP departures in March from assessed communities in the northern Aleppo region were from **Al Bab (5,445) sub-district**, the majority (95%) of which were secondary displacements. **Reduced access to humanitarian assistance and reduced access to healthcare services** were reported by KIs as the most common push factors for secondary IDP departures from Al Bab sub-district.

KIs reported that during the last week of March, **many people living in Al Bab sub-district were protesting against various issues, including a rise in bread prices.**

Top intended destination sub-districts (# IDPs):

Al Bab	1,785
Ghandorah	912
Afrin	451
Menbij	365
A'zaz	171

On a sub-district level, 1,648 IDPs from Al Bab sub-district reportedly intended to move to other communities within the sub-district, many of which will likely be short-term displacements. **Within Al Bab sub-district, 1,596 IDPs reportedly intended to move from Duyuf Al Sharqia camp to Al Bab city.**

Endnotes

- ¹ Some figures may be repeated displacements.
- ² CCCM/REACH, ISMI Monthly Displacement Summary, [February 2019](#).
- ³ IDP departure figures reflect aggregated departures of both IDP and resident/pre-conflict populations.
- ⁴ Spontaneous returns: Former IDPs and/or refugees who return to their community of origin, with the intention of staying for a prolonged period of time, but not necessarily to their places of habitual residence, and who do not necessarily enjoy the full spectrum of rights afforded to them prior to displacement.
- ⁵ United Nations, [Secretary-General Urgently Calls upon Warring Parties in Syria to Uphold Idlib Ceasefire, Protect Civilians, Forge Path towards Peace](#), 15 March 2019.
- ⁶ Idlib governorate's surrounding areas include communities in Atareb, Daret Azza, Haritan, Jebel Saman and Zarbah sub-districts in western Aleppo governorate, as well as in Kafr Zeita, Madiq Castle, Suran and Ziyara sub-districts in northern Hama. These sub-districts have been added to the larger Idlib and surrounding areas region as populations in these sub-districts demonstrate similar movement patterns and are served by the same cross-border responses.
- ⁷ CCCM/REACH, ISMI Monthly Displacement Summary, [September 2018](#); United Nations, [Secretary-General Urgently Calls upon Warring Parties in Syria to Uphold Idlib Ceasefire, Protect Civilians, Forge Path towards Peace](#), 15 March 2019.
- ⁸ Community markers also account for camps, informal settlements and other IDP sites when they are in close proximity to a community; Only major departure movements for known communities of origin are shown with regards to large IDP arrival movements.
- ⁹ People in Need, [Despite the Bombs, a Hunger for Education in Syria Persists](#), 26 March 2019; Amnesty International, [Syria: Unlawful attacks by government forces hit civilians and medical facilities in Idlib](#), 28 March 2019.
- ¹⁰ REACH, Southern Idlib and Northern Hama Rapid Needs Assessment, [February 2019](#).
- ¹¹ Union of Medical Care and Relief Organizations, [Fresh Wave of Airstrikes in Idlib, Syria, Kills Civilians and Damages Hospital](#), 14 March 2019.
- ¹² UN News, [As Syria conflict enters ninth year, humanitarian crisis 'far from over', Security Council hears](#), 27 March 2019.
- ¹³ Vulnerable groups: ♀ Female-headed households/Women travelling alone ♀♀ Child-headed households ♀X Orphans ♂ Elderly-headed households/Elderly travelling alone ♿ Disabled-headed households/Individuals with disabilities travelling alone.
- ¹⁴ CCCM/REACH, North-West Syria Population Overview, [November 2018](#).
- ¹⁵ The National, [Heavy rains flood displacements camps in northern Syria](#), 31 March 2019.
- ¹⁶ Figures for the northern Aleppo region include accessible communities in the following sub-districts: Afrin, Aghtarin, Al Bab, Ar-Ra'ee, A'zaz, Bulbul, Ghandorah, Jandairis, Jarablus, Ma'bтали, Mare', Raju, Sharan, Sheikh El-Hadid and Suran.
- ¹⁷ Number of accessible communities in which the most common push and/or pull factors for IDP arrivals/departures or SRs were reported by KIs.
- ¹⁸ Community markers also account for camps, informal settlements and other IDP sites when they are in close proximity to a community; Only major departure movements for known communities of origin are shown with regards to large IDP arrival movements.