



# SHELTER

In the context of the governmental policy prohibiting the establishment of formal refugee camps, most of the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon live in cities and villages. The remaining fraction lives in spontaneous informal tented settlements throughout the country. Refugees face harsh winters with sub-zero temperatures and flooding, particularly affecting those living in non-permanent and non-residential shelters. Throughout the years, the shelter sector under the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan has been massively underfunded, leaving a large proportion of Syrian refugees in inadequate shelter at a time of a deepening economic crisis and steep increases in rental costs.

Through VASyR, the physical conditions of these shelters were assessed, as were the occupancy agreements, rental costs and ability of families to pay rent. The mobility of households between places of residence, including for reasons of eviction, was also examined.

## KEY FINDINGS

- The distribution of Syrian refugee households across the main shelter types remained stable, with the majority (69 per cent) living in residential structures, 21 per cent in non-permanent shelters and 10 per cent in non-residential structures.
- Monthly rental costs have almost tripled since 2021, reaching an average of over LBP 800,000 nationally, up from LBP 312,000 in 2021.
- Geographical trends remained similar to previous years, with the highest rental costs reported in Beirut and the lowest in Baalbek-El Hermel.
- As in 2021, over half (58 per cent) of Syrian refugee households were living in shelters that were overcrowded, had conditions below humanitarian standards, and/or were in danger of collapse.
- A total of 13 per cent of households were living in shelters that were in danger of collapse, and another 36 per cent were living in shelters with substandard conditions.
- Almost a quarter of households (23 per cent) were living in overcrowded conditions of less than 4.5 m<sup>2</sup>/person, similarly to 2021.
- A total of 7 per cent of households were currently living under an eviction notice, and the majority were expected to leave within 1 month.
- More than half of households were behind on their rent payments. Of those families that were behind on rent payments, 28 per cent were 3 months behind or more.
- The percentage of households that had moved in the previous 12 months decreased from 15 per cent in 2021 to 11 per cent in 2022.

# SHELTER TYPE, RENT, AND OCCUPANCY AGREEMENTS

The types of shelters occupied by refugee households are classified into three categories, as per the table below.

Table 1: Types of shelters occupied by refugee households

Shelter type	
Residential	Apartment/house Concierge room in residential building Hotel room
Non-residential	Factory Workshop Farm Active construction site Shop Agricultural/engine/pump room Warehouse School
Non-permanent	Tent Prefab unit

As with previous years, most households (69 per cent) continued to live in residential structures, with 21 per cent residing in non-permanent shelters and 10 per cent in non-residential shelters. The largest proportions of households in non-permanent shelters were in Baalbek El-Hermel, Bekaa and Akkar.

Figure 1: Types of shelters occupied by refugee households, 2017–2022

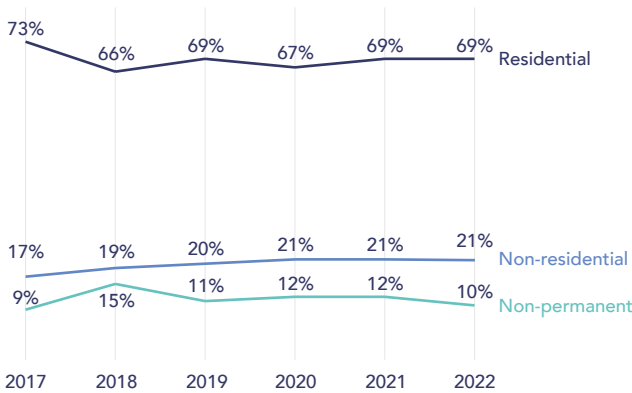
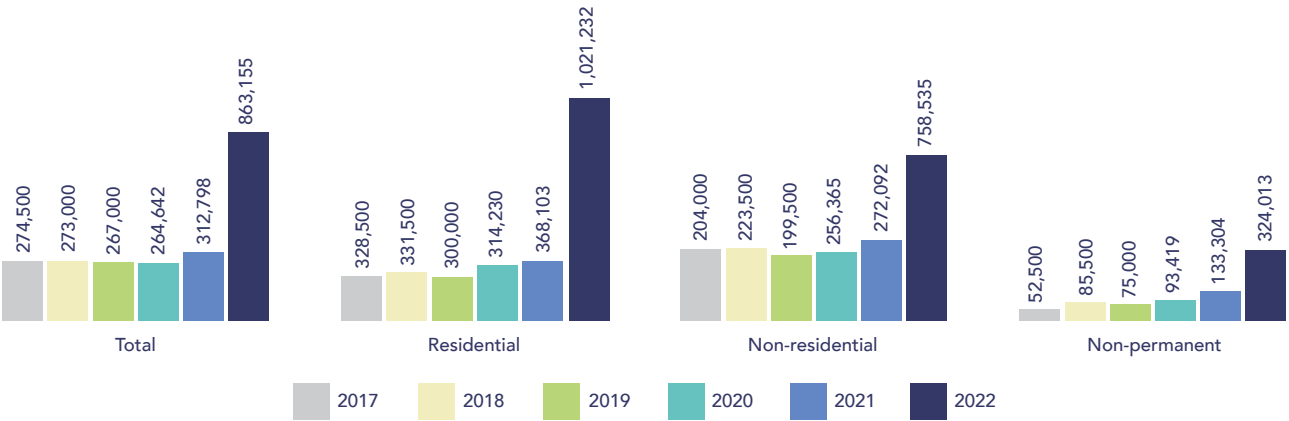


Table 2: Shelter types occupied by refugee households, by governorate

	Residential		Non-residential		Non-permanent	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
Total	69%	70%	9%	10%	22%	21%
Akkar	56%	62%	10%	12%	35%	27%
Baalbek-El Hermel	39%	38%	8%	6%	53%	57%
Beirut	96%	93%	4%	6%	1%	0.4%
Bekaa	46%	50%	9%	10%	45%	40%
El Nabatieh	84%	82%	8%	10%	8%	7%
Mount Lebanon	91%	91%	7%	8%	2%	2%
North	76%	75%	16%	14%	8%	11%
South	80%	81%	15%	11%	5%	8%

Average monthly rental costs increased by 176 per cent nationally, reaching just over LBP 860,000, up from around LBP 312,000 in 2021. Rental costs in residential (LBP 1,021,232), non-residential (LBP 758,535) and non-permanent (LBP 324,013) shelters increased by 178 per cent, 179 per cent, and 143 per cent respectively compared to 2021.

Figure 2: Average monthly rental costs, by shelter type, 2017–2022 (LBP)



Similarly to previous years, the highest rental rates were reported in Beirut (LBP 1,567,871) and Mount Lebanon (LBP1,156,322) governorates, and the lowest in Baalbek-El Hermel(LBP 412,934) and Akkar (LBP 516,661). Most households reported paying rent in Lebanese pounds, with 4 per cent stating that they had to pay rent in dollars. Reported rental costs were lower among female-headed households at LBP 713,684, compared to LBP 892,595 among male-headed households.

Table 3: Average monthly rental costs, by governorate

	National	Akkar	Baalbek-El Hermel	Beirut	Bekaa	El Nabatieh	Mount Lebanon	North	South
Rent 2021 (LBP)	312,798	209,505	168,621	540,235	238,532	317,214	402,553	361,582	364,084
Rent 2022 (LBP)	863,155	516,661	412,934	1,567,871	690,786	932,836	1,156,322	938,422	1,004,695
% change 2021–2022	176%	147%	145%	190%	190%	194%	187%	160%	176%
% of households that reported having to pay rent in dollars	4%	1%	4%	8%	5%	3%	5%	3%	<1%

On average, households were 3.2 months late in paying rent, and had around LBP 2,500,000 in unpaid rental debts. Over half (52 per cent) of households stated that they were late in paying their rent, with the majority being at least two months late. When asked about their last rental payment, households had paid, on average, only half of the requested value. Households in Akkar and Baalbek El-Hermel reported paying the least of their rental costs in the past payment, with households having paid 29 per cent and 37 per cent of their rental cost respectively. Only 5 per cent of households had written proof of rental payment.

Figure 3: Number of months households were late in paying rent

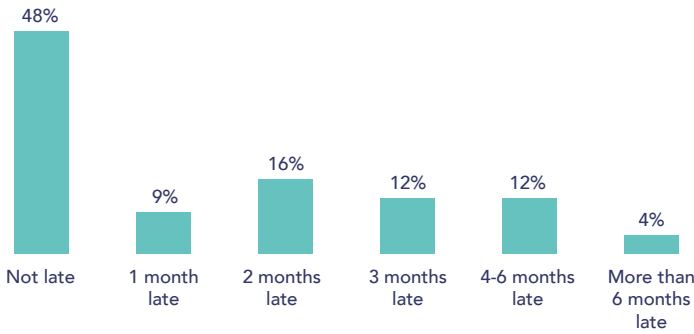
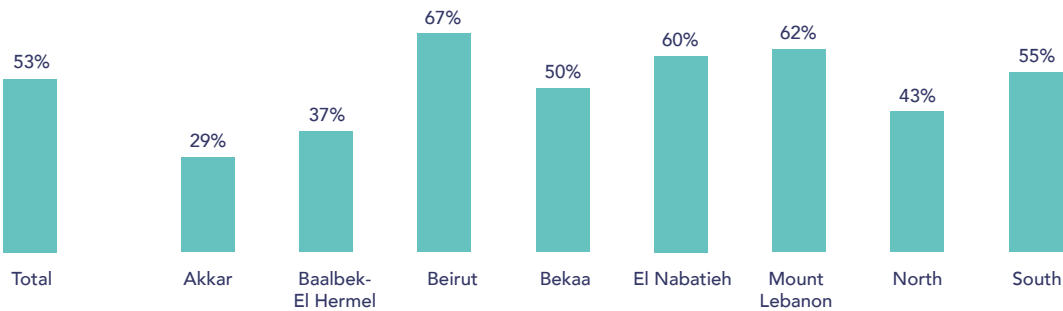


Figure 4: Average amount of rental payment paid in the previous 30 days, by governorate

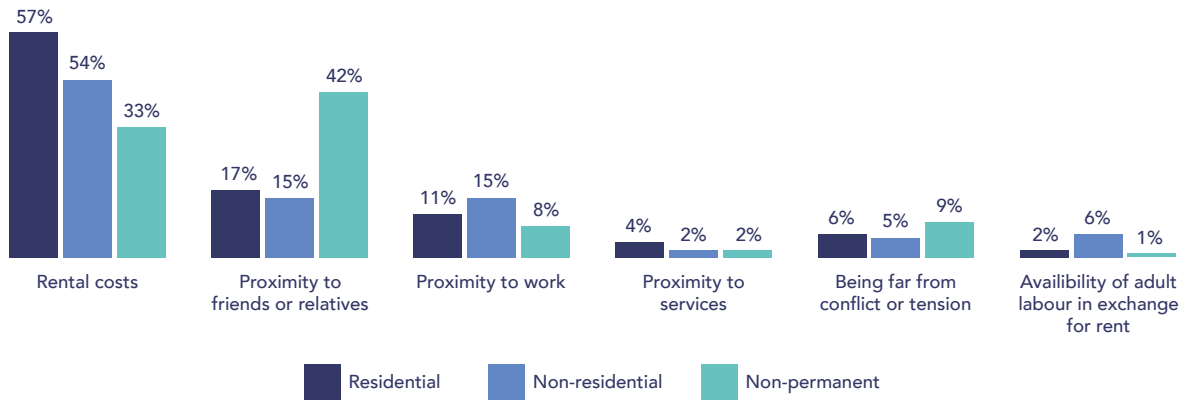




Regarding the type of occupancy, most households (84 per cent) paid rent directly to their landlord, while 6 per cent worked in exchange for their residency. A higher proportion of households (12 per cent) living in non-residential shelters were being hosted in exchange for work. A higher proportion of female-headed households were being hosted for free, compared to male-headed households (15 per cent versus 6 per cent). The vast majority of households that were renting had verbal agreements with their landlords (98 per cent) as opposed to written lease agreements. This lack of written documentation remains a major house, land and property issue, inducing a precarious form of displacement.

Similarly to 2021, half the population in residential and non-residential shelters cited rental costs as a primary determinant for their choice of accommodation, at a much higher rate than other reasons. Households residing in non-permanent structures mentioned the proximity of family members and friends (42 per cent), followed by the rental cost (33 per cent). In keeping with trends in previous years, a higher proportion of female-headed households cited being close to relatives as a primary factor in choosing accommodation compared to male-headed households (37 per cent versus 18 per cent).

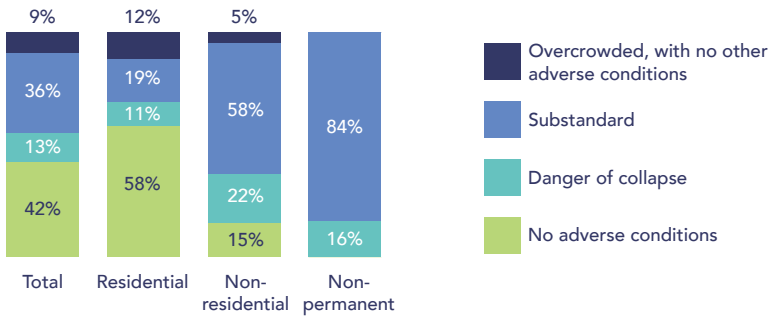
Figure 5: Primary reasons for choosing current accommodation, by shelter type



# SHELTER CONDITIONS

Similarly to previous years, over half (58 per cent) of Syrian refugee households were living in shelters that were overcrowded, had conditions below humanitarian standards, and/or were in danger of collapse.

Figure 6: Shelter conditions, by shelter type



## Overcrowding

Almost a quarter of households (23 per cent) were living in overcrowded conditions, defined as less than 4.5 m<sup>2</sup>/person. A higher proportion of households in non-permanent (32 per cent) and non-residential shelters (30 per cent) were living in overcrowded conditions, compared to households in residential shelters (19 per cent). The highest rates of overcrowding were found in Beirut (35 per cent) and Bekaa (30 per cent).

# Physical conditions

Shelter is considered to be below humanitarian standards depending on the number of issues per shelter type, as shown in the table below.

Table 4: Classification of shelter conditions by shelter type

Shelter conditions	Residential structures	Non-residential structures	Non-permanent structures
<u>Inadequate physical conditions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Windows/doors not sealed to natural elements</li><li>• Leaking roof, leakage/rot in walls/floors</li><li>• Water pipes not functional or not available</li><li>• Sanitation pipes not functional or not available</li><li>• Latrine/toilet not usable (damaged, full, no handwashing facilities etc.) or not available</li><li>• Bathing/washing facilities not usable (damaged, no privacy etc.) or not available</li><li>• Electricity installation/connection not adequately installed/not safe</li><li>• Damaged walls</li></ul>	Three conditions and above	One condition and above	All refugees living in non-permanent structures (informal settlements) are considered to be living in physical substandard conditions and are at higher risk of being affected by extreme weather, fires etc.
<u>Dangerous conditions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shelter structure in danger of collapse</li><li>• Damaged roof</li><li>• Damaged columns</li></ul>			

A total of 13 per cent of households were living in shelters that were in danger of collapse, with the highest rates in South Lebanon (25 per cent) and Mount Lebanon (19 per cent). Baalbek El-Hermel continued to have the highest rates of households living in substandard or dangerous conditions (66 per cent), followed by Bekaa (51 per cent). The vast majority of non-permanent shelters were in substandard conditions (84 per cent), a much higher rate than those of other shelter types. The highest proportion of shelters with no adverse conditions was among residential shelters (58 per cent), compared to 15 per cent in non-residential shelters.

Figure 7: Shelter conditions, by governorate

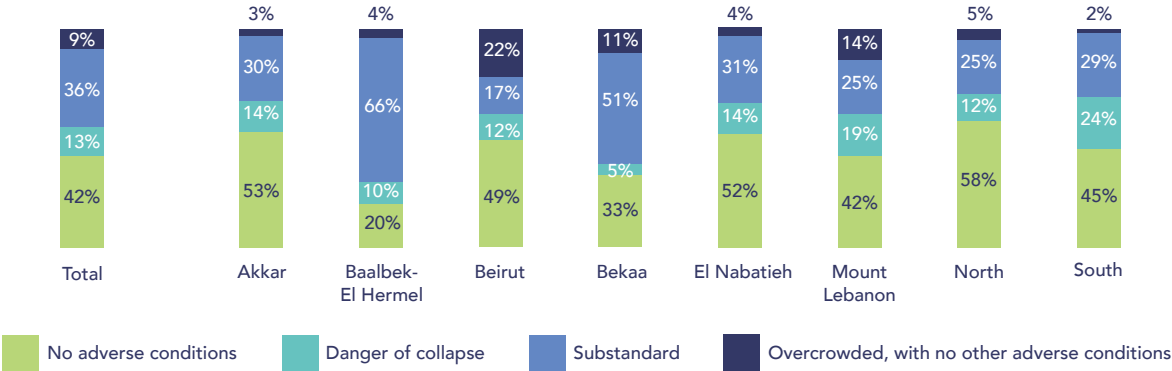
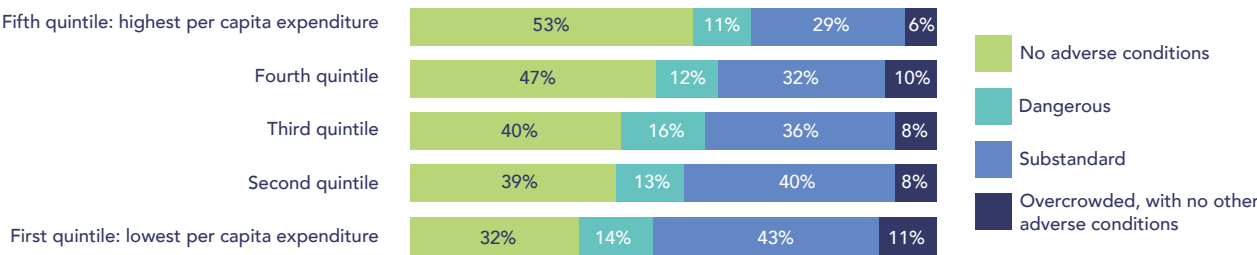


Figure 8: Shelter conditions, by household expenditure

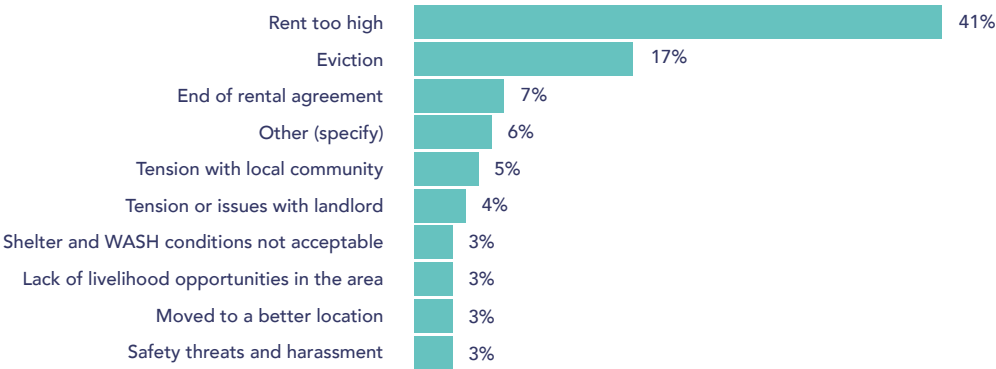


Regarding shelter type by household expenditure, a higher proportion of households with higher per capita expenditure live in shelters with better conditions, compared to those with lower expenditures. Over half (53 per cent) of households in the highest per capita expenditure quintile are living in shelters with no adverse conditions, compared to 32 per cent among households in the lowest expenditure quintile.

# Mobility and movement

A total of 11 per cent of households reported changing their accommodation in the previous 12 months (compared to 15 per cent in 2021), with higher rates for households currently living in residential (12 per cent) or non-residential (16 per cent) shelters, as compared to those in non-permanent shelters (6 per cent). Of these, three quarters changed accommodation once, with 12 per cent, 8 per cent and 3 per cent changing shelters two, three or more than three times in the previous year respectively.

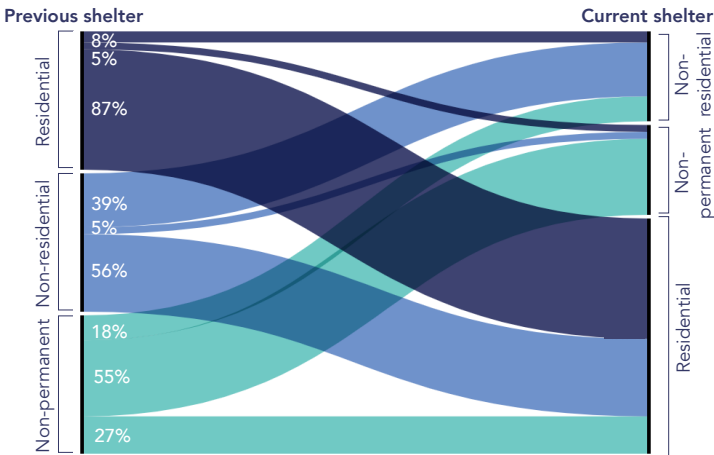
Figure 9: Reasons for changing accommodation in the previous 12 months



The most commonly cited reason for changing accommodation was rent being too high (41 per cent). A total of 18 per cent of households that moved in the previous 12 months did so because they were evicted. This rate was higher for households currently living in residential or non-residential shelters (18 per cent) compared to those in non-permanent shelter (11 per cent).<sup>1</sup> Of those, inability to pay rent was the most cited reason for evictions (68 per cent), followed by alternative use of the shelter by the landlord (13 per cent) and disputes with landlords (10 per cent).

The majority of families previously living in residential shelters moved to other residential shelters, with a small number moving to non-residential (8 per cent) and non-permanent shelters (5 per cent). Of families previously living in non-residential shelters, 56 per cent moved to residential shelters, 39 per cent to non-residential and 5 per cent to non-permanent shelters. Similarly, 55 per cent of families that had been in non-permanent shelters moved to other non-permanent shelters, while 27 per cent moved to residential and 18 per cent moved to non-residential shelters.

Figure 10: Previous and current shelter types, among those who moved in the previous 12 months

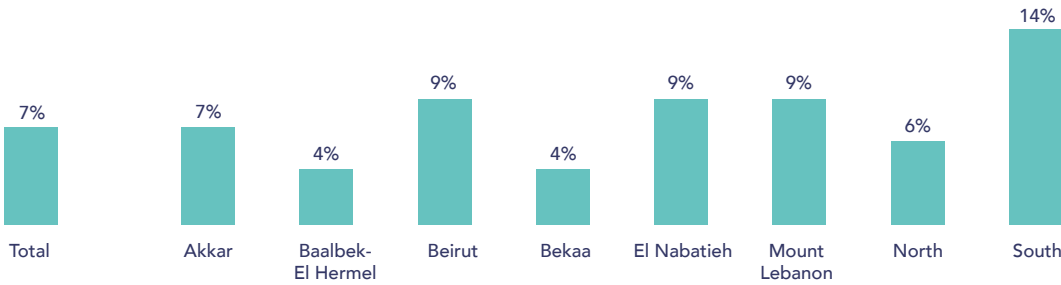


A total of 6 per cent of households were planning to move within the coming 6 months, with over a third of these mentioning the rent being too high as the reason for the planned move.

At the time of the survey, 7 per cent of households were living under an eviction notice (compared to 5 per cent in 2021), two

thirds of which were expected to leave within the coming month. For almost all under eviction notices, the notices were issued by the landlord. A smaller proportion of households living in non-permanent shelters (4 per cent) were living under eviction notices compared to those in residential (8 per cent) and non-residential (7 per cent) shelters.

Figure 11: Percentage of households living under an eviction threat, by governorate



<sup>1</sup> Percentages out of the households that reported changing accommodation in the previous 12 months

Annex 1: Type of housing and type of occupancy

	Type of housing			Occupancy type				Average rent
	Residential	Non-residential	Non-permanent	Owned	Rented	Hosted in exchange for work	Hosted for free	
<b>Total</b>	70%	10%	21%	1%	84%	6%	7%	LBP 863,155
<b>Governorate</b>								
Akkar	62%	11%	27%	1%	83%	3%	12%	LBP 516,661
Baalbek-El Hermel	37%	6%	57%	1%	83%	4%	9%	LBP 412,934
Beirut	93%	6%	0%	1%	73%	15%	9%	LBP 1,567,871
Bekaa	50%	10%	40%	0%	85%	4%	8%	LBP 690,786
El Nabatieh	82%	10%	7%	0%	82%	10%	7%	LBP 932,836
Mount Lebanon	91%	8%	2%	1%	86%	8%	4%	LBP 1,156,322
North	75%	14%	11%	1%	84%	6%	8%	LBP 938,422
South	81%	11%	8%	0%	81%	10%	8%	LBP 1,004,695
<b>Gender of the head of household</b>								
Female	63%	9%	28%	1%	79%	2%	15%	LBP 713,684
Male	71%	10%	19%	0%	85%	7%	6%	LBP 852,071
<b>Shelter type</b>								
Residential				1%	87%	5%	6%	LBP 1,021,232
Non-residential				0%	71%	14%	10%	LBP 758,535
Non-permanent				0%	79%	7%	11%	LBP 324,013

Annex 2: Shelter conditions

	Shelter conditions			
	No adverse conditions	Dangerous conditions	Substandard	Overcrowded with no adverse conditons
<b>Total</b>	42%	13%	36%	9%
<b>Governorate</b>				
Akkar	53%	14%	30%	3%
Baalbek-El Hermel	20%	10%	66%	4%
Beirut	49%	12%	17%	22%
Bekaa	33%	5%	51%	11%
El Nabatieh	52%	14%	31%	3%
Mount Lebanon	42%	19%	25%	14%
North	58%	12%	25%	5%
South	45%	24%	29%	2%
<b>Gender of the head of household</b>				
Female	37%	16%	37%	10%
Male	43%	13%	36%	8%
<b>Shelter type</b>				
Residential	58%	11%	19%	12%
Non-residential	15%	22%	58%	5%
Non-permanent	0%	16%	84%	0%