

Factsheet: Syrian Refugees

Background:

Since February 2012, when Assad regime bombardment of civilian neighborhoods began in earnest, Assad's forces have slaughtered more civilians than any other armed group in the world, including ISIS. At least 200,000 people are estimated have been killed since the uprising began, and the overwhelming majority of these died after February 2012. Furthermore, the death toll has not abated with time. In over 30 months of conflict, at least 100,000 of the casualties stem from the last 14 months.ⁱ

The Syria death toll is the equivalent of Akron, OH, Salt Lake City, UT or Knoxville, TN being wiped out.ⁱⁱ Half of the dead are believed to be civilians.ⁱⁱⁱ Reporting is not completely accurate; the true numbers are almost certainly higher, as counts by the UN and NGOs typically only catalogue violent deaths in which a name, date and location was available.^{iv} Therefore, commonly-cited death tolls do not account for deaths where names or dates, were unavailable, or cases in which disease, starvation, or other indirect causes of death claimed lives.

A Historic Humanitarian Crisis:

In the wake of such wide-scale regime killings of civilians, Syrians have fled the Assad regime's killing machine in historic fashion. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, has called the humanitarian crisis in Syria the "biggest humanitarian emergency of our era."

"Almost half of all Syrians have now been forced to abandon their homes and flee for their lives. One in every eight Syrians has fled across the border, fully a million more than a year ago. A further 6.5 million are displaced within Syria. Over half of those uprooted are children."^v

Roughly 43% of Syria's pre-war population of 22 million people are refugees, which equates to almost 10 million people.^{vi} That would be equivalent to 135 million Americans being forced to leave their homes.^{vii} On average, more than 100,000 Syrians register as refugees every month.^{viii}

In November 2014, the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) had registered 3,249,644 Syrians as refugees, with an additional 145,485 Syrians waiting to register.^{ix} It is estimated that by the beginning of 2015, there will be over of 3,600,000 Syrian refugees outside Syria.^x

Countries of the Region:

Turkey: As of November 1, 2014, Turkey had 1,065,902 Syrian refugees.^{xi}

Lebanon: Lebanon is sheltering 1,132,601 Syrian refugees.^{xii}

Iraq: Iraq houses 223,923 Syrian refugees.^{xiii}

Jordan: Jordan has 618,508 Syrian refugees, with over 80,000 living in the Za'atri refugee camp.^{xiv}

Egypt: Egypt has 140,289 Syrian refugees.^{xv}

The European Union: 150,000 Syrians have declared asylum in the EU, with future plans of settling around 28,000 people in Germany.^{xvi}

Child Refugees:

Of the estimated 10,000,000 people who have been displaced in and out of Syria, half are children.^{xvii} **An estimated 5,000,000 children have had to flee the safety of their homes.** At least half of the internally displaced refugees, as well as those Syrians seeking refuge abroad, are under the age of 18.^{xviii} Over 1.1 million children have registered as refugees, 75 per cent of whom are under the age of 12.^{xix}

End Notes:

i

Price, Megan, Anita Gohdes and Patrick Ball. 08/2014. Office of the UN Commissioner for Human Rights. ohchr.org. "Updated Statistical Analysis of Documentation of Killings in the Syrian Arab Republic." *Human Rights Data Analysis Group.*

-
- ii Population statistics come from 2010 U.S. Census data, reflecting 2013 estimates.
- iii 08/29/2014. Mercy Corps. mercy Corps.org. “Quick Facts: What you need to know about the Syrian Crisis.”
- iv Taub, Amanda. 08/28/2014. Vox. vox.com. “New UN report counts 191,369 Syrian-war deaths – but the truth is probably much, much worse.”
- v United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. 08/29/2014. UNHCR. “Needs soar as number of Syrian refugees tops 3 million.”
- vi Ibid.
- vii Friedman, Uri. 08/30/2014. The Atlantic. theatlantic.com. “Almost half of Syria’s population has been uprooted.”
- viii Huber, Chris, Kathryn Reid. 10/29/2014. World Vision. worldvision.org. “The War in Syria, Children and the Refugee Crisis.”
- ix From the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. 11/24/2014. Syrian Regional Refugee Response. Inter-Agency Information Sharing Portal.
- x Montgomery, Katerina. 11/25/2014. *Syria Deeply*. syriadeeply.org. “Syria: The Executive Summary, 11/25.”
- xi From the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. *Syrian Refugees in the Region, Nov. 1, 2014*. Inter-Agency Information Sharing Portal.
- xii

Ibid.

xiii

Ibid.

xiv

Ibid.

*

* There are also some 23,000 Syrian refugees residing in other countries in North Africa.

xv

Ibid.

xvi

From the Migration Policy Centre's resource dedicated to monitoring the Syrian refugee situation. "Syrian Refugee: A Snapshot of the Crisis – in the Middle East and Europe."

xvii

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. 08/29/2014. UNHCR. "Needs soar as number of Syrian refugees tops 3 million."

xviii

Friedman, Uri. 08/30/2014. The Atlantic. theatlantic.com. "Almost half of Syria's population has been uprooted."

xix

Guterrez, Antonio, Angelina Jolie. 06/06/2014. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. From the Executive Summary: "The Future of Syria: Refugee Children in Crisis."