

Guidance note

Following the fall of the Assad regime in December 2024, this document has been reviewed and updated. Please consult '[Interim Country Guidance: Syria \(2025\)](#)'

Guidance Note

Last update: April 2024

The current version of the document supersedes the one issued in February 2023 and introduces updates across most chapters of the analysis. This update is primarily based on country information concerning the period from 1 August 2022 to 30 November 2023.

The guidance note on Syria is produced by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) together with EU+ countries⁽³⁾ in accordance with [Article 11 of the EUAA Regulation](#). It is based on and summarises the conclusions of a comprehensive common analysis. The aim of the guidance note and the common analysis is to assist EU+ countries in the examination of applications for international protection. The guidance note and the common analysis are a pivotal tool in the roadmap to greater convergence in the Common European Asylum System.

The guidance note is part of the 'Country Guidance: Syria' and should be read in conjunction with the [Common analysis](#).

[The implications of leaving Syria](#) may be a relevant consideration in the examination of international protection needs.

The Government of Syria remains **a main actor of persecution and serious harm** in the country. In addition, a number of State and non-State actors continue to be active, including the Syrian Democratic Forces, the Asayish, the Syrian National Army, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), etc. See [3. Actors of persecution or serious harm](#).

Among the commonly encountered profiles of applicants for international protection, the following would be **highly likely to qualify for refugee status**:

- [4.1.2. Members of anti-government armed groups](#)
- [4.1.3. Political activists, opposition party members and protesters](#)
- [4.2.2. Draft evaders](#)
- [4.2.3. Military deserters and defectors](#)

- [4.3. Persons with perceived links to ISIL](#)
- [4.4. Members of and persons perceived to be collaborating with the SDF and YPG](#)
- [4.13. LGBTIQ persons.](#)

Further guidance is provided on **the risk-impacting circumstances which may affect the probability of granting refugee status** to profiles such as:

- [4.1.4. Civilians originating from areas associated with opposition to the government](#)
- [4.5. Persons perceived to be opposing the SDF/YPG](#)
- [4.6. Persons fearing forced or child recruitment by Kurdish forces](#)
- [4.7.1. Government of Syria officials, members of the SAA and pro-government armed groups](#)
- [4.7.2. Civilians perceived to be supporting the government](#)
- [4.8. Journalists, other media professionals and human rights activists](#)
- [4.9. Doctors, other medical personnel and civil defence volunteers](#)
- [4.10.1. Sunni Arabs](#)
- [4.10.2. Kurds](#)
- [4.10.3. Druze](#)
- [4.10.4. Alawites](#)
- [4.10.5. Christians](#)
- [4.10.6. Yazidis](#)
- [4.10.7. Palestinians](#)

- [4.11. Women and girls](#)
- [4.12. Children.](#)

Where refugee status has not been granted, Member States should proceed to consider the granting of **subsidiary protection**.

[Article 15\(a\) QD](#) may be relevant when there is a reasonable degree of likelihood of death penalty or execution by the Government of Syria or execution by other actors, such as extremist groups.

[Article 15\(b\) QD](#) may also apply, such as in the cases of healthcare facilities having been destroyed or damaged in targeted attacks and of the restriction of the supply of food, water and electricity as well as the entry of basic necessities in cases of sieges; in the case of harsh and life-threatening prison and detention conditions and ill-treatment in detention; and in the case of criminal violence due to a state of lawlessness in several governorates.

With regard to subsidiary protection under [Article 15\(c\) QD](#), it is assessed that the mere presence of a civilian in the governorates of [Aleppo](#), [Dar'a](#), [Deir Ez-Zor](#), [Hasaka](#) and [Idlib](#) would substantiate a real risk of serious harm. Additional personal circumstances should be taken into account in relation to the governorates of [Hama](#), [Homs](#), [Latakia](#), [Quneitra](#), [Raqqa](#), [Rural Damascus](#) and [Sweida](#). On the other hand, for the governorates of [Damascus](#) and [Tartous](#) **no real risk under Article 15(c) QD** would in general be substantiated.

The protection needs of Syrian applicants are further compounded by the general lack of protection in the country, with the Government of Syria not being considered an **actor of protection** in accordance with Article 7 QD and no other actors fulfilling these requirements. See [6. Actors of protection](#).

The possibility to substantiate [internal protection alternative](#) in accordance with Article 8 QD in Damascus city in individual cases also remains exceptional, taking into account the present safety risks, limitations to travel and admittance, and the continuously deteriorating economic situation, healthcare, and food security.

The case officer should be reminded that [exclusion](#) considerations may be relevant in a number of cases concerning applicants from Syria. Examples include members of the Government of Syria and associated armed groups, members of anti-government armed groups such as HTS, members of ISIL, Kurdish political actors (PYD) and security forces (SDF, YPG, Asayish), individuals involved in criminal activity and individuals having committed violence against women and children.