

SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

The conflict in Syria as we know it today was initiated by the Arab Spring. The Arab Spring refers to a series of protests throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Protesters were demanding democracy in their own countries. Syrians, discontent with the treatment from Bashar Al-Assad's regime, began peacefully protesting. Security forces responded harshly and opened fire on demonstrators. This created an even larger backlash and inspired hundreds of thousands to take to the streets. Those against President Assad began using weaponry against security forces. At first their purpose was simply to protect themselves, but they quickly started vying for control of different areas of Syria. Different rebel groups formed and the situation devolved into a civil war.

Rebel groups and government forces aren't the only ones fighting. Syrian Kurds have joined the fight in an attempt to free themselves from Assad's rule. The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has taken advantage of the chaos and taken control of parts of Syria. This has become a proxy war. Assad is Alawite, a sect of Shia Islam. The Syrian government is supported by Iran and Russia as well as Lebanon's Shia Islamist Hezbollah movement. Sunni led governments such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey and Jordan are supporting the opposition who are also majority Sunni. The opposition is also supported by some western nations including the United States, United Kingdom and France. Rebel groups, government forces, Syrian Kurds and ISIS all have some control of Syria and while they fight, the lives of civilians are being destroyed.

How many Syrian refugees have been displaced?

About 11 million refugees have been forced to flee their homes and about half of the country's pre-war population is in need of humanitarian assistance currently. (2016, October 16)

How many Syrians refugees have died since 2011?

About 450,000 Syrians have died in the war, mostly civilians, and including around 50,000 children. (2016, October 16)

Where has the refugee population gone?

According to the U.N. an estimated 6.1 million people are internally displaced within the country still, however large groups are fleeing to the borders of neighboring countries. Approximately 4.8 million refugees are located in surrounding countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq. (2016, October 16)

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Families Fleeing Violence

About 11 million Syrians are on the run, including some 4.8 million who have been forced to seek safety in neighboring countries. Inside Syria, more than 6.1 million people are displaced and 13.5 million are still in need of humanitarian assistance.



TURKEY 2,733,655

SYRIA
6,145,004 million people internally displaced

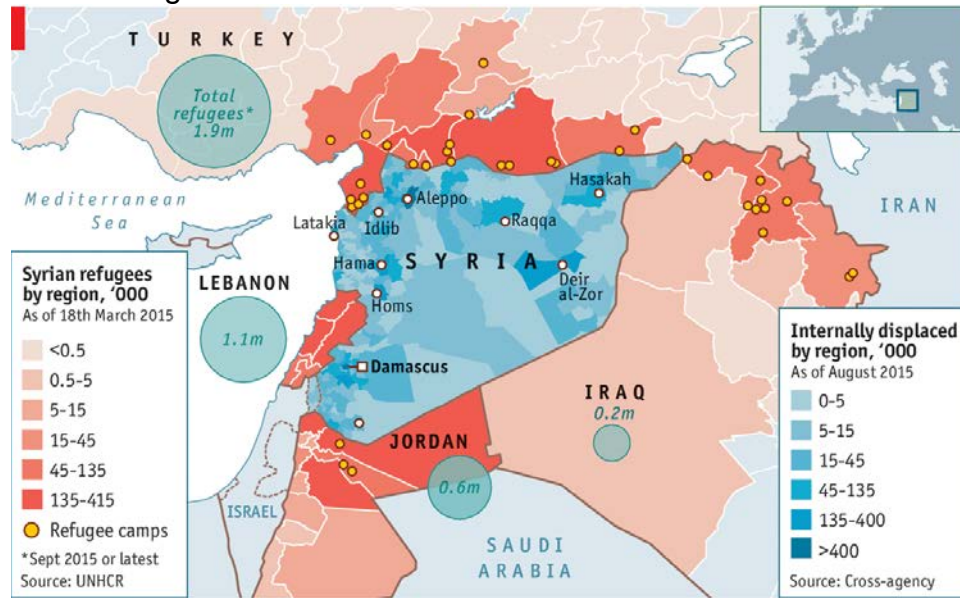
IRAQ
225,455

As of October 14, 2016
Sources: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>
UNOCHA.org/syria



Retrieved from mercy Corps.org

Useful Images:



Economist.com

Retrieved from bbc.com

UK, Russian and US-led strikes in Syria

US-led coalition air strikes

UK

☀ 12 Jan-18 Jan 2016

☀ 3 Dec 2015-11 Jan 2016

Other coalition forces

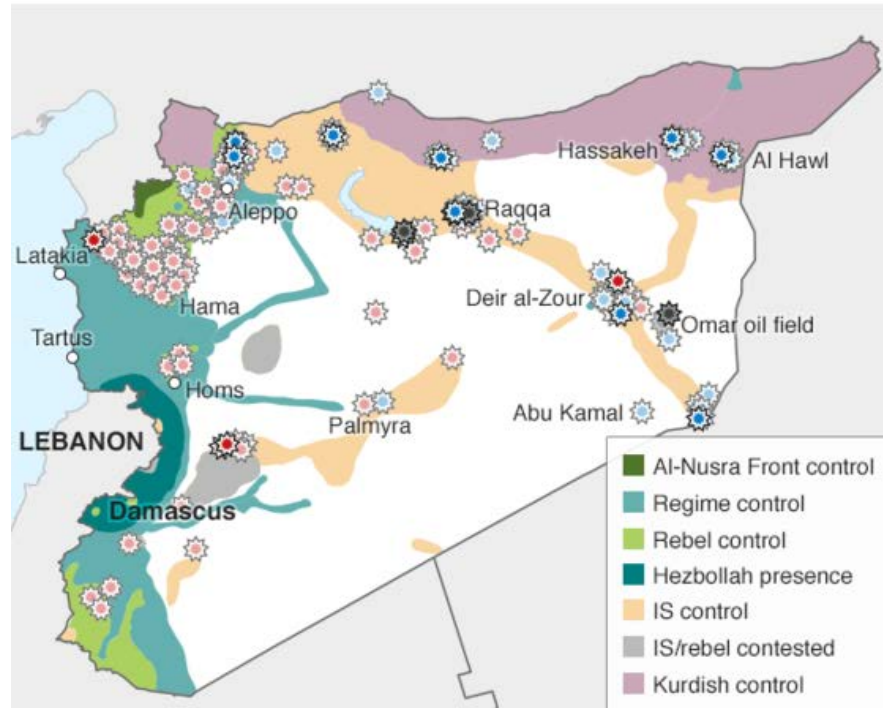
☀ 21-27 Jan 2016

☀ 30 Sep 2015-20 Jan 2016

Russian air & cruise missile strikes

☀ 15 Jan 2015-25 Jan 2016

☀ 30 Sep-14 Jan 2016

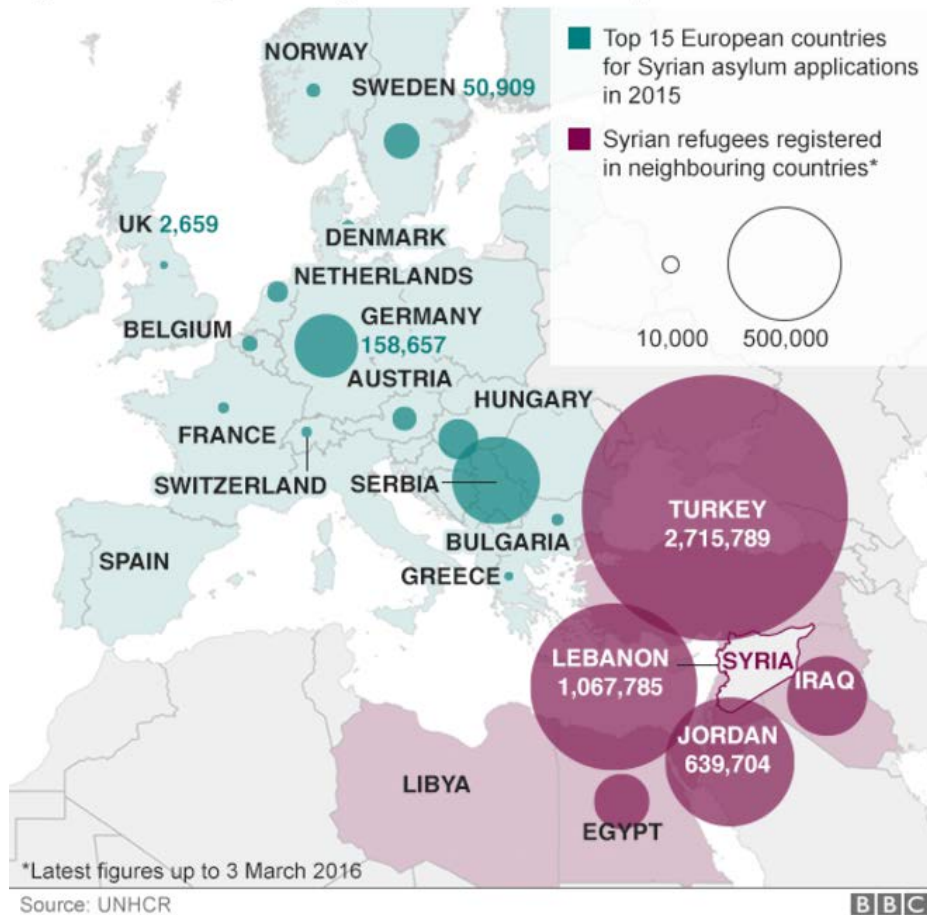


Source: Institute for the Study of War, US military, UK MoD, French Defence Ministry. Locations may have multiple strikes

BBC

Retrieved from bbc.com

Syrians in neighbouring countries and Europe



Retrieved from bbc.com

Useful Links:

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKb9GVU8bHE>
2. <http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2016/08/america-is-a-dream-country/497261/>
3. <https://www.mercycorps.org/articles/iraq-jordan-lebanon-syria-turkey/quick-facts-what-you-need-know-about-syria-crisis>
4. <http://refugees.org/news/pennsylvania-towns-refugee-community-on-the-rise/>
5. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26116868>
6. <http://www.iamsyria.org/death-tolls.html>

References:

- News, BBC. (2016, March 11). *Syria: The story of the conflict*. Retrieved December 07, 2016, from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26116868>
- Fallows, D. (2016, August 26). *America is a Dream Country*. Retrieved December 07, 2016, from <http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2016/08/america-is-a-dream-country/497261/>

Quick facts: What you need to know about the Syria crisis. (2016, October 16). Retrieved December 07, 2016, from <https://www.mercycorps.org/articles/iraq-jordan-lebanon-syria-turkey/quick-facts-what-you-need-know-about-syria-crisis>