

6. Actors of protection

COMMON ANALYSIS

Last update: June 2025

For general guidance on the country guidance approach to the assessment of actors of protection, see 'EUAA, '[Actors of Protection](#)' in *Country Guidance: Explained*, February 2025'

- The Transitional Administration

Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (DAANES, previously known as AANES)

The analysis below is primarily based on the following EUAA COI report: [Country Focus 2025 1.1, 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.4, 4.4](#). Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI. The section below should be read in conjunction with most recent COI available at the time of the examination.

Following the fall of the Assad regime, rebel forces under HTS rule struggled to gain control over the entire territory of Syria. At the time of writing, the Transitional Administration was still facing significant challenges, including escalating retaliatory violence and armed group activity across the country (see also [Recent developments in Syria](#)). It did not have full control over Syria, with large portions of the country under the control of various armed factions, some of which were supported by external actors, and Israel occupying eight villages in different governorates. Additionally, Kurdish forces maintained control over areas in the north and east of Syria (see [Syrian Democratic Forces \(SDF\)](#) and [Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria \(DAANES, previously known as AANES\)](#)).

No information was available regarding potential changes to the judicial system by the Transitional Administration. While HTS announced plans to address crimes committed under the Assad government through the formal judicial system, there have also been reports of extrajudicial killings of suspected former affiliates of the Assad regime, as well as Alawites.

Despite the Transitional Administration's public commitment to uphold minority rights, numerous incidents of sectarian and retaliatory violence against civilians have occurred, which it was unable to prevent (see also [Recent developments in Syria](#)).

While noting the declarations of the Transitional Administration claiming its willingness to protect certain individuals, there are still uncertainties regarding their actual implementation. Therefore, given the unreliable legal system as well as the volatile security situation, it can be concluded that, at the time of writing, the Transitional Administration does not have the capacity to offer protection. Therefore, the Transitional Administration cannot be considered as an actor of protection meeting the requirements of article 7 QD/ QR.

Besides the Transitional Administration, the Kurdish forces in northeast Syria are the only actor that may be considered to control substantial parts of the territory and could, therefore, be subject to analysis under Article 7(2) QD/QR.

The analysis below is primarily based on the following EUAA COI reports: [Country Focus 2025, 4.3](#); [Security Situation 2022](#), 1.4.3. Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI. The section below should be read in conjunction with most recent COI available at the time of the examination.

The SDF controls nearly one-third of Syria's territory, primarily in the north and east. Some regions west of the Euphrates, south of Al-Bab and Manbij, were contested between the SDF and SNA. During the insurgency, the SDF advanced into areas previously held by Assad forces. As of February and March 2025, SDF-held territories included most of Hasaka, about half of Raqqa (including Raqqa city), parts of Deir Ez-Zor and Aleppo east of the Euphrates River, and a narrow strip on Aleppo's western Euphrates bank, south of Lake Assad and near the Tishreen Dam. Concurrently, the Turkish-backed SNA launched operations in northern and eastern rural Aleppo, leading to heavy fighting between the SDF and the SNA.

In addition to the unstable security environment, the legislative and judicial systems of the DAANES differ from those in the rest of Syria. The legal system is not independent from the executive and is susceptible to interference by armed groups like PYD, YPG, and PKK. Moreover, there have been reports of civilians being killed or injured by SDF forces.

In March 2025, SDF leaders agreed to merge their armed forces and civilian institutions with the new Syrian government. However, at the time of writing, the future developments of this integration remain uncertain.

Taking into account the uncertainties of the current situation in Syria, the previous conclusion in 'EUAA, '[6.2. Parties or organisations](#)' in *Country Guidance: Syria, April 2024*', that DAANES does not qualify as an actor of protection appears to remain valid.