

Please cite as: EUAA, '2.6. Children' in *COI Report - Syria: Country Focus*, July 2025.

2.6. Children

For detailed information on children in Syria, see section 1.3.6. Children of the EUAA COI Report Syria: Country Focus (March 2025).

○ a) Impact of violence on children

According to UNICEF, more than 500 000 children under five were suffering from life-threatening malnutrition, while 2 million were on the verge of becoming malnourished. Also, at least 5 million children remained at risk from explosive remnants of war, with nearly 300 000 deadly devices scattered across the country.513 By 26 May 2025 at least 1 023 children and adults had been killed and injured by mines and other explosives remnants since December 2024.514 Additionally, Save the Children calculated that between December 2024 and February 2025, an average of two children a day have been killed or injured by landmine and ERWs, accounting for nearly one in three of these casualties.515 Since early 2025 to the end of May 2025, SOHR documented the death of 425 civilians, including 107 children, and the injury of 472 others, including 205 children, by explosions of war remnants.516

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) indicated that between 40 % and 50 % of children aged 6 to 15 did not attend school.517 More than 40 % of the nearly 20 000 schools in the country remained closed, leaving over 2.4 million children out of classrooms and over one million at risk of dropping out.518 The dire humanitarian situation heightened the risk of existing negative coping mechanisms such as child labour and early marriage519 as families struggled to meet basic needs.520

○ b) Forced recruitment by armed groups

SNHR documented in June 2025 continued cases of children being detained for transfer to Syrian Democratic Forces training camps without informing their families, indicating 'a pattern of forced child recruitment'.521 SJAC verified 49 cases of child recruitment between April 2024 and April 2025, indicating an increase compared to the same period in 2024. Nearly 69 % of those recruited were under 15 years old at the time of recruitment. Most cases occurred in Aleppo governorate (28 cases or 57 %), followed by Hasaka (15 cases or 31 %) and Raqqa (6 cases or 12 %), with all incidents attributed to Revolutionary Youth Movement (RYM). Recruited children were often transferred to training camps in other regions, hindering their return.522 According to ACLED data, between early March and early May 2025, at least 11 girls and young women were reportedly abducted in multiple incidents across northeastern and northern Syria, primarily for conscription, with most incidents attributed to PKK-affiliated groups and the YPG. In a separate incident reported around 29 April 2025, young women and men from Alawite and Druze communities were reportedly recruited in five SDF-affiliated camps in Raqqa under the pretext of employment. They were instead abducted and forcibly recruited into ideological and military training camps.523

○ c) Access to education

UNOCHA indicated that 2.45 million children remained out of school, with over a million at risk of dropping out, leaving them 'at higher risk of child protection issues, such as child marriage and child labour'.524 Damaged infrastructure and displacement severely disrupted access to education. 525Over half of Syria's education and healthcare facilities were no longer functional, while those still operating faced acute funding shortages.526 School infrastructure remained critically insufficient for local communities, with overcrowded classrooms, poor sanitation and unsafe learning environments discouraging school attendance. Increasing dropout rates among returnee students were reported. They also faced educational challenges such as curriculum gaps, language barriers and integration challenges, particularly affecting girls and children with disabilities.527

A shortage of educational staff was reported.528 Teachers worked under precarious conditions, often going unpaid for months, with an average monthly salary of USD 70 when paid.529 This resulted in high turnover rates that compromised the quality of education, which was further undermined by shortages of teaching materials.530 Other sources indicated that experienced teachers in Syria earned approximately 400 000 SPD (around USD 40), while inexperienced teachers earned about 300 000 SPD (around USD 30). 531An article by Enab Baladi in March 2025 also noted that schools were affected by a shortage of qualified teachers, overcrowded classrooms and lack of teaching aids. These conditions had led some parents to enrol their children in private schools, despite the high tuition fees, reportedly around 10 million SYP (approximately USD 1 000) per year.532 The GPC indicated that access to education remained limited in war-damaged areas.533

- 513

  UNICEF, As Syria’s children step out of the shadows of war, securing their future is more critical than ever, 25 March 2025, url

- 514

  Halo Trust (The), Syria Deaths and injuries in Syria since fall of the Assad regime, n.d., url

- 515

  Save the Children, Syria: More than 180 children killed or injured by explosive remnants of war in three months as thousands return home, 6 March 2025, url

- 516

  SOHR, Old ordnance | One child di*es and five injured in landmine explosion eastern of Deir Ezzor, 28 May 2025, url

- 517

  UNDP, The impact of the conflict in Syria, 20 February 2025, url, p.35

- 518

  UNICEF, As Syria’s children step out of the shadows of war, securing their future is more critical than ever, 25 March 2025, url

- 519

UNICEF, As Syria’s children step out of the shadows of war, securing their future is more critical than ever, 25 March 2025, url

- 520

NRC, Beyond return: Ensuring sustainable recovery & (re)-integration in Syria, May 2025, url, p.9

- 521

SNHR, SNHR’s Monthly Report on Arrests/Detentions in Syria, 4 June 2025, url

- 522

Syria Justice and Accountability Centre, Child Recruitment Practices Continue in Syria Before and After the Fall of Assad, 5 June 2025, url

- 523

EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Middle East, as of 6 June 2025, url

- 524

UNOCHA, Syrian Arab Republic: Humanitarian Response Priorities - January to March 2025 (January 2025), January 2025, url, p.30

- 525

NRC, Beyond return: Ensuring sustainable recovery & (re)-integration in Syria, May 2025, url, p.7

- 526

UNDP, The impact of the conflict in Syria, 20 February 2025, url, p.9

- 527

NRC, Beyond return: Ensuring sustainable recovery & (re)-integration in Syria, May 2025, url, p.7

- 528

Enab Baladi, Damascus schools: High costs and favouritism, 3 March 2025, url

- 529

NRC, Beyond return: Ensuring sustainable recovery & (re)-integration in Syria, May 2025, url, p. 2, 8

- 530

NRC, Beyond return: Ensuring sustainable recovery & (re)-integration in Syria, May 2025, url, p. 2, 8

- 531

  Enab Baladi, Damascus schools: High costs and favouritism, 3 March 2025, url

- 532

  Enab Baladi, Damascus schools: High costs and favouritism, 3 March 2025, url

- 533

  GPC, Protection Landscape in Syria – A Snapshot: March 2025, 3 April 2025, url, p. 5

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu