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# 3.4. Poverty

According to UNDP in February 2025, 90 % of population could no longer afford essential goods and 75 % depended on some form of humanitarian assistance, up from 5 % in the first year of the conflict. The same report indicated that 66 % of the population (equal to 15.8 million) lived in condition of extreme poverty and 60 % of the population (equal to 13.8 million) faced extreme food insecurity.621 Rising living costs and the depreciating SYP have increased Syrian's dependence on remittances, which exceeded both foreign direct investment (FDI) and humanitarian aid, averaging over 2 billion USD yearly in recent years.622

In Damascus, most restaurants experienced a low turnout during Eid al-Fitr, reflecting the difficult economic situation related to company closures and reduced job opportunities. The newspaper Enab Baladi, which monitored the activity of restaurants in the Mezzeh and Bab Touma areas of Damascus, noted that families interviewed indicated that visits to restaurants have become limited to ordering drinks, as meal prices had become unaffordable for households with limited incomes.623

The UNDP report highlighted that Syria's GDP per capita has fallen to levels nearly equal to the national poverty threshold, which stand at approximately USD 800 per year or USD 2.15 per day. 624 The report further noted that income inequalities have grown since the start of the conflict —reflected in the Gini coefficient625 that went from 33 in 2010 to 41 by 2024 — and made poverty pervasive across all regions and social groups.626

The Standard of Living Index compiled by the IOM, based in the assessment in 1 100 communities and neighbourhoods across all 14 governorates between March and April 2025, recorded an average score of 2.6 out of 5. This score, classified as 'challenging', reflected the limited availability of emergency and specialist health facilities, as well as inadequate access to safe water and sanitation.627 The Poverty and Equity Brief by the World Bank released in April 2025 indicated that the poverty incidence is heterogeneous across the country. Together Aleppo, Hama, and Deir Ez Zor are home to just 30 % of the country's total population, but account for more than 50 % of the population living in extreme poverty. Poverty rates are highest among female headed households and displaced households, while international remittances have been a critical lifeline.628 Regional disparities in living conditions persisted. Civil servants working in areas previously controlled by the Syrian government faced the most severe challenges, with wages covering only 5.6 % of basic needs. By contrast, public sector employees in DAANES areas were able to meet 24 % of the essential needs, while those in SIG & SSG areas managed to cover 33 %.629

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UNDP, The impact of the conflict in Syria, 20 February 2025, url, pp. 4, 8, 10

- 622

  Ispi, Challenges for Syria’s Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Process, 18 April 2025, url

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  Enab Baladi, Damascus: Weak turnout at restaurants during Eid, 2 April 2025, url

- 624

  UNDP, The impact of the conflict in Syria, 20 February 2025, url, p. 18

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  The Gini coefficient is based on the comparison of cumulative proportions of the population against cumulative proportions of income they receive. It ranges between 0 in the case of perfect equality (that is, each share of the population gets the same share of income), and 1 in the case of "perfect inequality" (that is, all income goes to the individual with the highest income). OECD, Income inequality, n.d., url

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  UNDP, The impact of the conflict in Syria, 20 February 2025, url, p. 18

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  IOM, Syrian Arab Republic — Communities of Return Index — Round 1 (15 March - 05 April 2025), url, p. 2

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  World Bank, Syrian Arab Republic Poverty and Equity Brief : April 2025, 30 April 2025, url

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  SCPR, Monthly Bulletin for Consumer Price Index and Inflation in Syria, Issue (2) – February 2025, 2 February 2025, url, p. 15

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