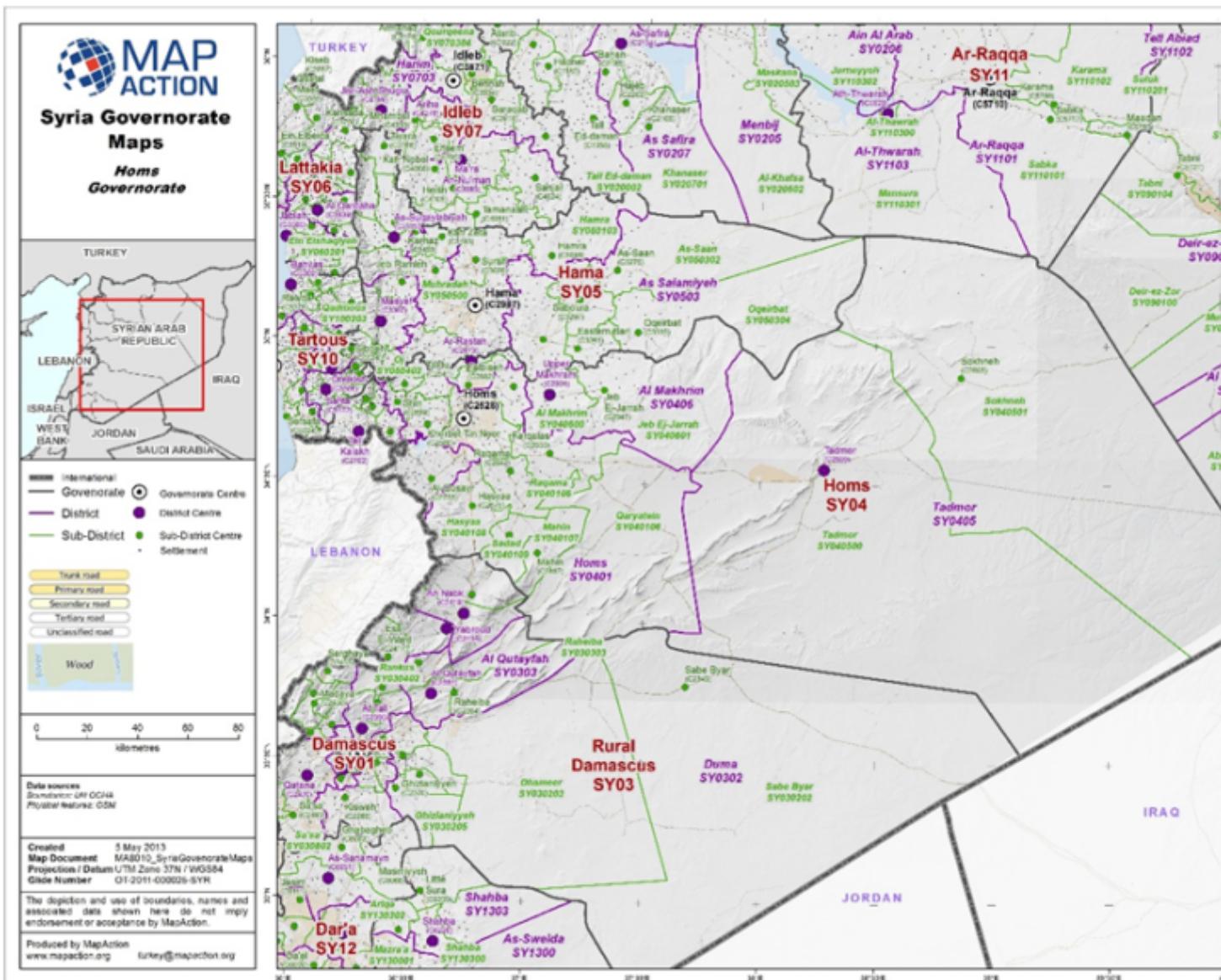


5.8.6. Homs governorate



Map 8: © MapAction, Homs governorate map.[1165](#)

(a) Administrative division and population estimates

Homs governorate is divided into six administrative districts, namely Al-Makhrim, Al-Qusayr, Ar-Rastan, Homs, Tadmor, and Tall Kalakh, which are further divided into a total of 23 sub-districts.[1166](#) The governorate's capital is Homs city,[1167](#) a religiously diverse city, with a Sunni majority and large Alawite, Christian and Shia minority communities.[1168](#) As of March 2025, the population of Homs governorate was 1 438 401, including residents, IDPs, and returnees from abroad, according to IOM estimates.[1169](#) In comparison, the WHO estimated the population at 1 505 561 as of March 2025.[1170](#) For further background information on Homs governorate, see section 2.6.1. of the [EUAA COI Report Syria – Security Situation](#)

[\(October 2024\).](#)

(b) Territorial control and main armed actors

As of 30 May 2025, a map by the ISW and CTP showed the western part of Homs governorate as well as a corridor linking that part of the governorate with the city of Deir Ez-Zor as being controlled by the HTS-led transitional administration. Adjacent to the so-called Al Tanf Deconfliction Zone along the border with Iraq and Jordan was an area shown as being controlled by unidentified opposition groups. That area extended until the above-mentioned Homs-Deir Ez-Zor corridor which is running across the centre of the governorate. In the vicinity of Homs city, ISW and CTP indicated the presence of pro-Assad insurgents.[1171](#)

ACLED noted that hostilities between pro-Assad non-state armed groups and security forces in the coastal region in early March 2025 also expanded to locations in Homs governorate,[1172](#) leading to widespread security operations and raids by the transitional administration's armed forces in rural Homs.[1173](#)

Saraya Ansar Al Sunnah, a militant Sunni group claimed responsibility for several targeted killings of Alawites and 'regime remnants' in Homs governorate during the reporting period.[1174](#) Israeli forces launched several airstrikes on – mostly military – targets in Homs governorate in March[1175](#) and April 2025.[1176](#)

(c) Security trends

Following the escalation of violence in the coastal region in early March 2025, as mentioned above, security forces and supporting armed groups launched security operations and raids in areas affected by the violence. The SNHR reported on incidents in rural Homs, where houses were raided and burnt down by security forces.[1177](#)

The International Crisis Group observed that, while the GSS had been able to quickly gain control over Damascus and other central cities and maintain public safety in these areas, they appeared to face more challenges in other areas such as Homs city and countryside. There, a series of revenge killings and kidnappings, often targeting Alawites, contributed to a general feeling of danger and undermined particularly the latter group's trust in the new authorities.[1178](#) Similarly, SJAC pointed to a 'pattern of violence' that had 'ebbed and flowed' since January 2025 – the apparently targeted killing of Alawite civilians. The source noted that, according to reports these killings seemed to be motivated by the presumed identification of this group with the Assad regime and appeared to be particularly prevalent in and around Homs city, potentially because of past acts of violence committed by the former regime against the Sunni population in that area.[1179](#)

Other sources also reported on persisting tensions between Alawites and other communities,[1180](#) incidents of 'reprisal discrimination',[1181](#) and an increase in kidnappings and killings in Homs city,[1182](#) often targeting religious minorities,[1183](#) such as the Al-Murshidi religious community,[1184](#) and, predominantly, Alawites,[1185](#) and/or persons affiliated with the former Assad government.[1186](#) As of March 2025, the civil society organisation 'Civil Peace Group' reportedly documented 86 cases of kidnappings and disappearances in Homs since 9 December 2024, with 23 of those individuals being executed and the fate of the others unknown.[1187](#) Killings were often perpetrated by unidentified gunmen on motorcycles,[1188](#) leading the GSS to announce in early May a ban on the use of motorcycles in Homs city after 7 pm.[1189](#) In April, the SNHR pointed to 'a surge in violent and unlawful killings' in Homs city, where at least 20 people were killed in the period 23 to 28 April 2025. Most of the killings occurred in predominantly Alawite neighbourhoods and most of the victims had been shot dead.[1190](#) Security forces reportedly established checkpoints across the city as well as at the Al-Zahra and Al-Nahda neighbourhoods, fencing these areas off from the rest of the city.[1191](#) At the end of May 2025, the ISW and CTP observed a 'decline in sectarian violence' in Homs and other major cities since mid-May 2025 and suggested that this might be related to security measures implemented by the transitional authorities including the nightly ban on motorcycles and the deployment of GSS forces.

Saraya Ansar al Sunnah Sunni militia claimed several attacks and killings of Alawites and/or former members of the Assad-government.[1193](#)

Israeli forces conducted several airstrikes against targets in Homs governorate: in March 2025, airstrikes included the Mukhayber Bridge in the Hosh Al-Sayyid Ali area near the border with Lebanon,[1194](#) military installations in Shinshar and Jdeidet Al-Sharqiyeh,[1195](#) the Al-Shairat Military Airport,[1196](#) and the Tadmur base in Palmyra.[1197](#) Moreover, airstrikes were launched against the Tiyas (or T4) airbase in March[1198](#) and April 2025,[1199](#) where Türkiye was reportedly planning to install air defence systems,[1200](#) and possibly already had transferred some equipment.[1201](#)

Several sources reported on the seizure of smuggled arms,[1202](#) and the raiding of arms depots used by insurgents.[1203](#) In May 2025, Etana Syria noted that GSS arrested several individuals suspected of having links to ISIL cells in Homs governorate.[1204](#)

(d) Security incidents

Between 9 December 2024 and 31 May 2025, ACLED recorded 379 security incidents in Homs governorate (see Figure 19). In the period between 1 March and 31 May 2025, ACLED recorded 180 security incidents (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians) in Homs governorate. Of these incidents, 14 were coded as battles, 53 as explosions/remote violence, and 113 as violence against civilians.[1205](#)

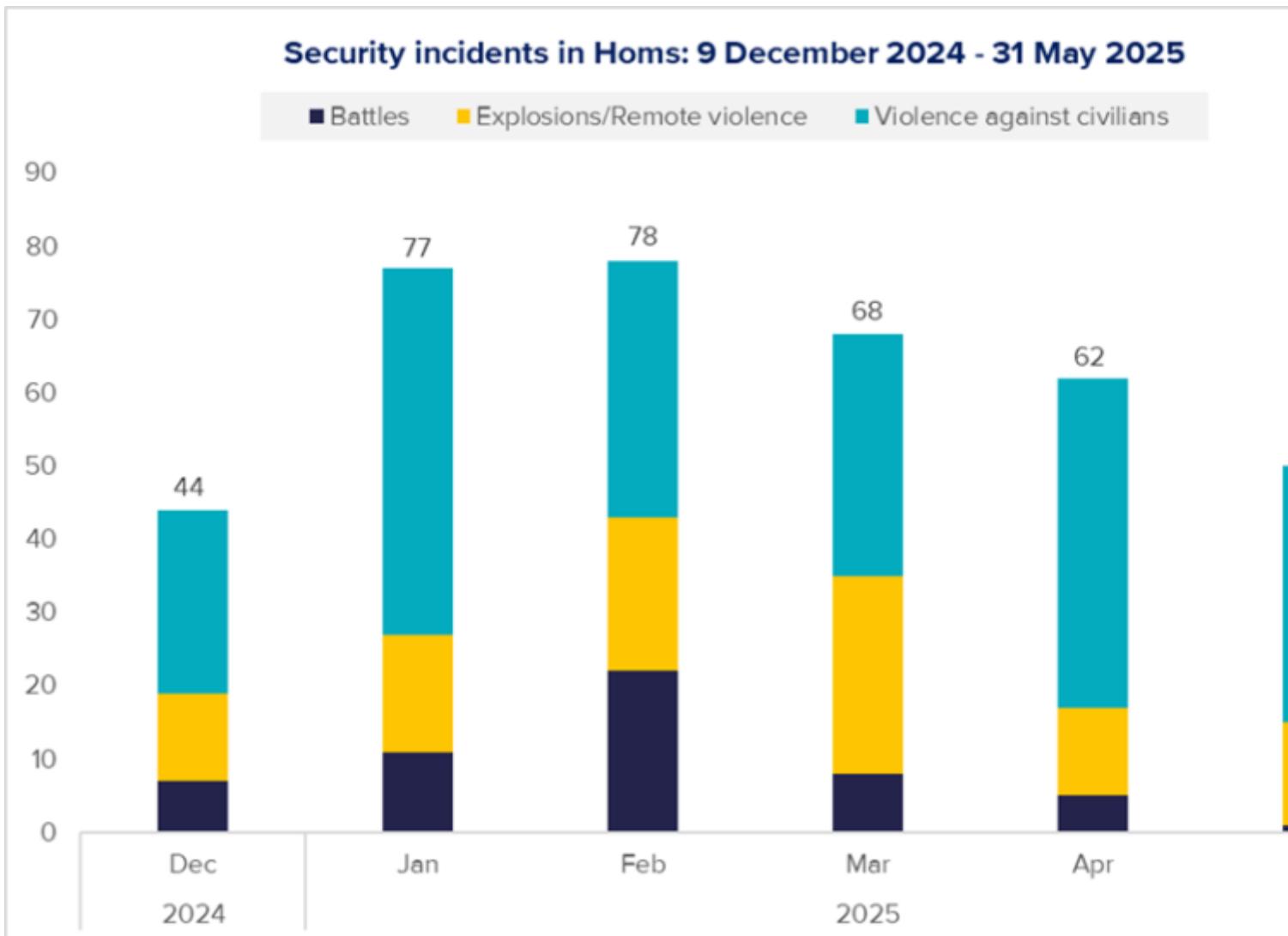


Figure 19: Evolution of security events coded ‘battles’, ‘explosions/remote violence’ and ‘violence against civilians’ in Homs governorate between 9 December 2024 and 31 May 2025, based on ACLED data.[1206](#)

During the reference period, security incidents were recorded in all six districts of Homs governorate. The highest number of such incidents was recorded in Homs district (102 security incidents), followed by Tadmor (30) and Al-Qusayr (27 incidents). The fewest incidents were recorded in Al-Makhrim and Ar-Rastan districts (3 security incidents each). According to ACLED data, unidentified armed groups were involved as a main actor (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) in slightly more than 73 % of all security incidents recorded during the reference period, particularly in incidents coded as ‘violence against civilians’ and ‘explosions/remote violence’, where in most cases civilians were also involved.

‘Forces of Syria’, including military and police forces, were involved in around 29 % of all security incidents, particularly in incidents coded as ‘violence against civilians’ and ‘explosions/remote violence’, where Israeli forces were often involved as another actor (conducting airstrikes on Syrian positions).[1207](#)

(e) Civilian casualties

SNHR documented the killing of 48 civilians across Homs governorate in March 2025.[1208](#) A similar number of civilian fatalities was recorded in April 2025 (47), most of them killed by unidentified parties.[1209](#) In May 2025, SNHR recorded the killing of 24 civilians, again, most of them killed by unidentified parties.[1210](#) SNHR does not provide more detailed information on these fatalities. For the period between March and May 2025, UCDP recorded 136 civilian fatalities in Homs governorate.[1211](#)

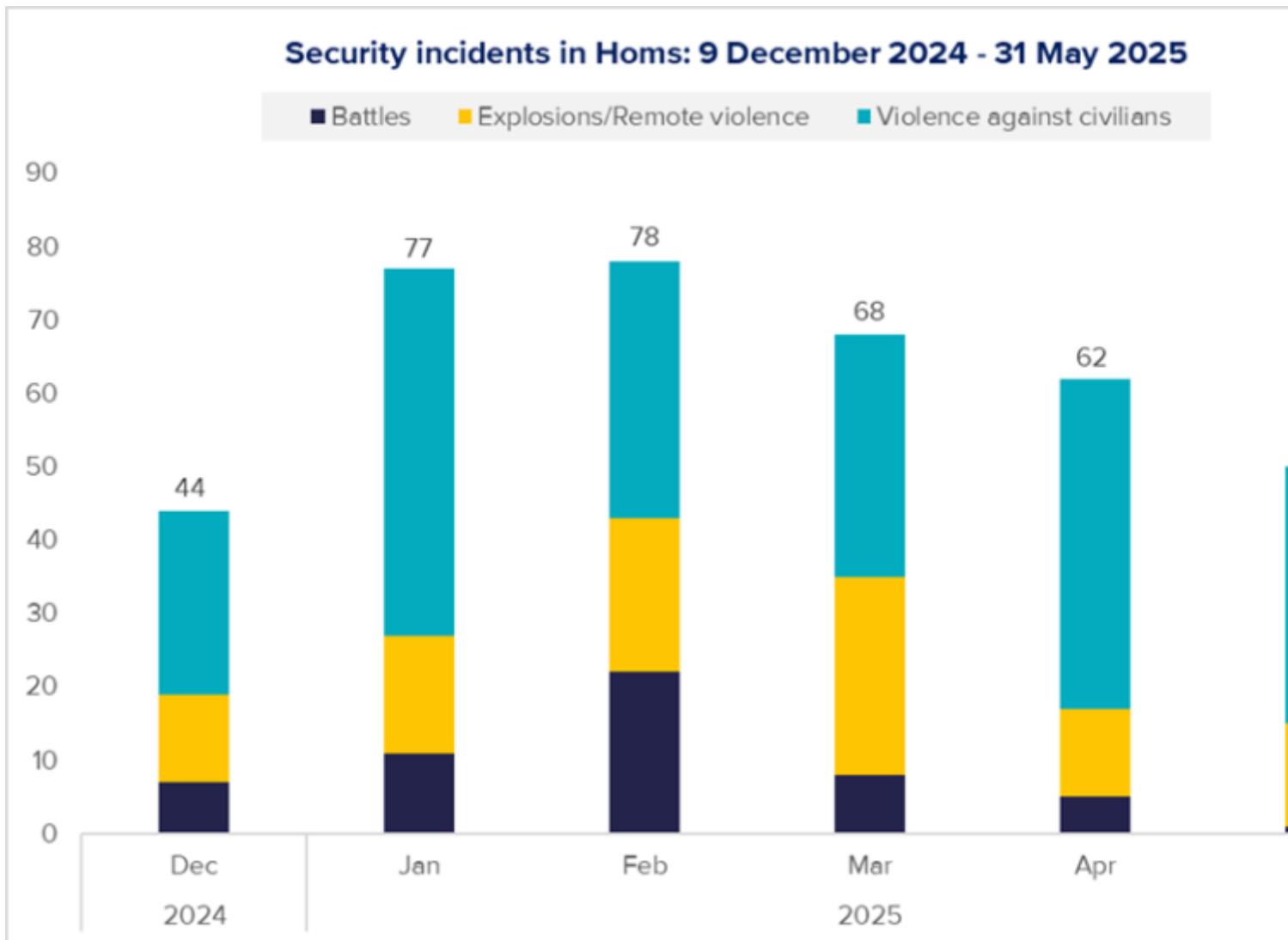


Figure 20: Civilian fatalities in Homs governorate between March and May 2025. Monthly breakdown based on SNHR data.[1212](#)

- (f) Conflict-related infrastructure damage and explosive remnants of war

Several sources have reported that civilians have been killed or injured by landmines and other ERW near Palmyra[1213](#) and in areas of eastern rural Homs.[1214](#) Enab Baladi noted that, according to the Syrian Civil Defence, Homs was one of the areas where most incidents involving war remnants occurred between 27 November 2024 and 14 March 2025.[1215](#)

Civilian property was reportedly damaged in an IED attack by Saraya Ansar al Sunnah Sunni fighters on an Alawite neighbourhood in Homs city on 10 April 2025.[1216](#) The Ein Al-Tannour Water Station in Al-Qsair city in western Homs was damaged by a missile attack, presumably by Hezbollah on 17 March 2025.[1217](#)

- (g) Conflict-induced displacement and return

According to UNHCR estimates, as of 12 June 2025, there were 283 779 IDPs living in Homs governorate, as well as 159 516 individuals who had returned to areas of the governorate from internal displacement since 27 November 2024.[1218](#) UNHCR further estimated that a total of 86 533 returnees who had returned from abroad since the beginning of 2024 were living in the governorate by 15 May 2025, with the majority of them (64 598) returning to Homs district, followed by Al-Qusayr (10 911 individuals). Since 8 December 2024, 65 843 individuals had returned to Homs governorate from abroad, predominantly to Homs city.[1219](#)

[1165](#)

MapAction, Homs Governorate, 29 July 2016, [url](#)

[1166](#)

UNOCHA, Humanitarian Needs Overview 2024: Syrian Arab Republic, 3 March 2024, [url](#), p. 108

[1167](#)

UN Geospatial, Syrian Arab Republic [Map], August 2022, [url](#)

[1168](#)

New Arab (The), Lawlessness festers in Homs as Syria struggles to rebuild, 28 April 2025, [url](#)

[1169](#)

IOM, Syrian Arab Republic: Population Mobility and Baseline Assessment Round 2 – March 2025, 7 April 2025, [url](#), p. 8

[1170](#)

WHO, Health Sector Syria - Health Sector Bulletin - March 2025, 2 April 2025, [url](#), p. 7

[1171](#)

ISW and CTP, Iran Update May 30, 2025 [Map], 30 May 2025, [url](#), p. 7. The Al-Tanf Deconfliction Zone is a 55km zone controlled by the Free Syrian Army and US forces based in Al Tanf Garrison. ISW and CTP, Interactive Map: Assessed Control of Terrain in Syria, 2025, [url](#)

[1172](#)

ACLED, Q&A: What happened in the coastal region of Syria last week?, 14 March 2025, [url](#)

[1173](#)

SNHR, Preliminary Report on the Violations that Took Place in the Wake of the Attacks Carried Out by Non-State Armed Groups Linked to the Assad Regime, Mostly in the Governorates of Latakia, Tartus, and Hama, 11 March 2025, [url](#), p. 11

[1174](#)

BBC Monitoring, Briefing: New Syria jihadist group claims ongoing attacks on Alawites, 21 April 2025, [url](#); ISW and CTP, Iran Update May 9, 2025, 9 May 2025, [url](#), p. 8

[1175](#)

Etana Syria, Syria Update #21: 8 March 2025, 8 March 2025, [url](#); International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Syria: March 2025 – May 2025, n.d., [url](#); Shafaq, Israel strikes Syrian airbases in Homs, 25 March 2025, [url](#)

[1176](#)

Arab Weekly (The), Israel strikes Hama and Homs military bases, infrastructure in Syria, 3 April 2025, [url](#); Agenzia Nova, New Israeli airstrikes in Syria: military infrastructures hit in Hama, Homs and Damascus, 2 April 2025, [url](#)

[1178](#)

International Crisis Group, Finding a Path through a Perilous Moment for Post-Assad Syria, 10 March 2025, [url](#)

[1179](#)

SJAC, The Syrian Government Must Investigate the Targeting of Alawite Civilians in Homs, 13 May 2025, [url](#)

[1180](#)

Forestier, M., Rebuilding the Syrian Nation: Impression from the Ground, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 23 April 2025, [url](#)

[1181](#)

GPC, Protection Landscape in Syria – A Snapshot: March 2025, 3 April 2025, [url](#), p. 3

1182

New Lines Magazine, Sectarian Violence Simmers in Homs, 10 March 2025, [url](#); GPC, Protection Landscape in Syria – A Snapshot: March 2025, 3 April 2025, [url](#), p. 2

1183

New Lines Magazine, Sectarian Violence Simmers in Homs, 10 March 2025, [url](#); New Arab (The), Damascus may be relatively safe but cities like Homs are emerging as a microcosm of post-Assad lawlessness, 31 March 2025, [url](#)

1184

CSW, Three members of religious minority community shot and killed in Homs, 23 April 2025, [url](#)

1185

International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Syria: March 2025 – May 2025, n.d., [url](#); Syria Justice and Accountability Centre, The Syrian Government Must Investigate the Targeting of Alawite Civilians in Homs, 13 May 2025, [url](#); Syria Direct, Extrajudicial killings of Alawites plague Homs city, 9 May 2025, [url](#); ISW and CTP, Iran Update May 5, 2025, 5 May 2025, [url](#), p. 10; Arab News, At least 10 people dead in Syria as gunmen target civilians in Tartus and Homs, 31 March 2025, [url](#)

1186

NPA, Former pro-regime militia leader assassinated in Syria's Homs, 10 May 2025, [url](#); ISW and CTP, Iran Update May 2, 2025, 2 May 2025, [url](#), pp. 7-8; ISW and CTP, Iran Update April 23, 2025, 23 April 2025, [url](#), p. 6

1187

New Arab (The), Damascus may be relatively safe but cities like Homs are emerging as a microcosm of post-Assad lawlessness, 31 March 2025, [url](#)

1188

Syria Justice and Accountability Centre, The Syrian Government Must Investigate the Targeting of Alawite Civilians in Homs, 13 May 2025, [url](#)

1189

ISW and CTP, Iran Update May 6, 2025, 6 May 2025, [url](#), p. 6

1190

SNHR, No Fewer than 20 Civilians Extrajudicial Killed in Homs City Between April 23-28, 2025, 30 April 2025, [url](#), p. 1

1192

ISW and CTP, Iran Update 28 May, 2025, 28 May 2025, [url](#), p. 11

[1193](#)

ISW and CTP, Iran Update May 9, 2025, 9 May 2025, [url](#), p. 8; ISW and CTP, Iran Update April 8, 2025, 8 April 2025, [url](#), p. 4; ISW and CTP, Iran Update April 7, 2025, 7 April 2025, [url](#), p. 8

[1194](#)

Etana Syria, Syria Update #23: 31 March 2025, 31 March 2025, [url](#)

[1195](#)

Etana Syria, Syria Update 22: 24 March 2025, 24 March 2025, [url](#)

[1196](#)

Etana Syria, Syria Update #21: 8 March 2025, 8 March 2025, [url](#)

[1197](#)

New Arab (The), Israel strikes two military bases in central Syria, 22 March 2025, [url](#)

[1198](#)

Shafaq, Israel strikes Syrian airbases in Homs, 25 March 2025, [url](#); ISW and CTP, Iran Update March 25, 2025, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 4

[1200](#)

Agenzia Nova, New Israeli airstrikes in Syria: military infrastructures hit in Hama, Homs and Damascus, 2 April 2025, [url](#)

[1201](#)

BBC News, Israeli strikes in Syria a challenge to Türkiye , 4 April 2025, [url](#)

[1202](#)

ISW and CTP, Iran Update May 6, 2025, 6 May 2025, [url](#), p. 6; ISW and CTP, Iran Update March 21, 2025, 21 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10; SOHR, Heading to Hezbollah militiamen | Internal Security Forces seize truck carrying weapons in western Homs countryside, 13 March 2025, [url](#)

[1203](#)

ISW and CTP, Iran Update March 31, 2025, 31 March 2025, [url](#), p. 11; MEMO, Syria seizes weapons warehouse in Homs, 10 March 2025, [url](#)

[1204](#)

[1205](#)

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

[1206](#)

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

[1207](#)

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

[1208](#)

SNHR, 1,562 Deaths, Including 102 Children and 99 Women, as well as 33 Medical Personnel, Recorded in March 2025 in Syria, 9 April 2025, [url](#), p. 9

[1209](#)

SNHR, The Death of 174 Civilian Including 23 Children and 13 Women, and 5 Deaths due to Torture Recorded in April 2025 in Syria, 2 May 2025, [url](#), p. 3

[1210](#)

SNHR, The Death of 157 Civilian Including 20 Children and 11 Women, and One Death due to Torture Recorded in May 2025, 1 June 2025, [url](#), p. 4

[1211](#)

EUAA analysis based on UCDP data. UCDP, data covering from 1 March to 31 May 2025 provided by courtesy of UCDP in an email, 12 June 2025.

[1212](#)

SNHR, The Death of 157 Civilian Including 20 Children and 11 Women, and One Death due to Torture Recorded in May 2025, 1 June 2025, [url](#), p. 4; SNHR, The Death of 174 Civilian Including 23 Children and 13 Women, and 5 Deaths due to Torture Recorded in April 2025 in Syria, 2 May 2025, [url](#), p. 3; SNHR, 1,562 Deaths, Including 102 Children and 99 Women, as well as 33 Medical Personnel, Recorded in March 2025 in Syria, 9 April 2025, [url](#), p. 9

[1213](#)

SOHR, Old ordnance | Four civilians including two children injured in Homs, 9 May 2025, [url](#)

1214

SNHR, Woman killed, five others injured by a landmine in Homs, April 22, 2025, 26 April 2025, [url](#); Welat TV, Two civilians killed by landmine explosions in Hama and Homs, 10 March 2025, [url](#); SNHR, Three men killed by a landmine of unidentified source in E. Homs, March 9, 2025, 11 March 2025, [url](#)

1215

Enab Baladi, Syria: 80 civilians killed by war remnants in four months, 15 March 2025, [url](#)

1216

ISW and CTP, Iran Update April 11, 2025, 11 April 2025, [url](#), p. 9

1217

SNHR, 1,562 Deaths, Including 102 Children and 99 Women, as well as 33 Medical Personnel, Recorded in March 2025 in Syria, 9 April 2025, [url](#), p. 13

1218

UNHCR, Syrian Arab Republic: Syria governorates IDPs and IDP returnees overview [Map], 12 June 2025, [url](#)

1219

UNHCR, Syrian returnees' figures by sub-districts - data 15 May 2025, 15 May 2025, [url](#)