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## 5.8.6. Homs governorate

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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](#)

ACLEED 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.[1192](#)

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](#)

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**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](#)

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**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](#)

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