Please cite as: EUAA, '5.1. Article 15(a) QD/QR: death penalty or execution' in *Country Guidance: Syria*, December 2025.

5.1. Article 15(a) QD/QR: death penalty or execution

COMMON ANALYSIS | Last update: December 2025

For general guidance on the country guidance approach to this section, see 'EUAA, 'Article 15(a) QD/QR: death penalty or execution' in *Country Guidance: Explained*, February 2025'.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI report: COI Update, 4., 5.; Country Focus July 2025, 1.1., 1.2., 2.1., 2.3., 2.4.2., 2.5., 5.8.4., 5.8.5.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

The Transitional Government announced the dissolution of the Counter-Terrorism Courts and has referred 87 of its judges for investigation. Under the Assad regime, these courts were responsible for imposing numerous death penalties.

The Transitional Government has granted amnesty to some high-level figures associated with the Assad regime, while simultaneously launching extensive campaigns to apprehend others, claiming these campaigns targeted individuals who committed crimes on behalf of the Assad regime. Nearly 300 individuals were detained in one week alone across Damascus, Latakia, Tartous, Homs, Hama, and Deir Ez-Zor, including former regime informants, pro-Iranian fighters, and lower-ranking military officers. Some detainees accused of having provided intelligence to the Assad regime were reportedly executed immediately after their arrest. In late January 2025, fighters affiliated to the Transitional Government reportedly carried out 35 summary executions, primarily targeting Assad-era officers. In July 2025, they carried out executions of Druze civilians.

The Syrian National Army (SNA) was reported to be responsible for significant human rights violations, including summary executions, in December 2024. Reportedly, 15 persons belonging to the SDF/YPG, or the Forces of the Internal Police of DAANES (Asayish) were executed. In March and April 2025 reports emerge of ‘sectarian attacks, execution-style killings and other violations against civilians’ by factions nominally affiliated with the Transitional Government security forces, including in Latakia city, in the town of Saqoubin, and in the vicinity of Masaytara. In May 2025, General Security Services (GSS) reportedly arrested and executed two alleged ISIL members accused of killing a MoD officer.

According to an Amnesty International report covering 2024, Syria retained the death penalty and continued to use it, although, at the time of writing, no information on the retention or use of the death penalty by the Transitional Government was available.

While, at the time of writing, there is no information on the use of the death penalty by the Transitional Government, executions have been reported in the recent months. Therefore, some profiles of applicants from Syria may be at risk of execution such as 4.1. Persons associated with the former Government of Syria, 4.9.2. Kurds, and 4.9.4. Alawites. In some cases, this risk would be connected to a reason for persecution and therefore, refugee status would be applicable. In cases where there is no nexus to a Convention ground, the need for subsidiary protection under Article 15 (a) QD/QR should be examined.



In some cases, the death penalty would have been imposed on the applicant for a serious crime committed, or other acts falling within the exclusion grounds (Article 17 QD/QR). Therefore, although the criteria of Article 15(a) QD/QR would be met, exclusion considerations should be examined (see 8. Exclusion).

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