

Atlas Syria – Sources

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2/ **Map 9 “Syria – Ethnic / Linguistic Groups”**

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1. Map 8 “Syria – Religious and Sectarian Groups”:

1.1. Comments

There are few official figures concerning religious groups in Syria. According to CIA-Factbook the official figure of the Muslim population is 87 percent of the total Syrian population. These 87 percent include Sunnis, Alawites, Ismailis and Shiites. According to CIA-Factbook there are 74 percent Sunni, the remaining 13 percent include Alawites, Ismailis and Shiites. Christians amount to 10 percent and Druzes to 3 percent. According to Fritz Edlinger/Tyma Kraitt (2013) the Alawites amount to 10-13 percent, the Druzes to 2 percent and the Ismailis to 1 percent. Germany’s Auswärtiges Amt states slightly different figures: 71 percent Sunnites, 12 percent Alawites, 10 percent Christians, 4 percent Druzes, 2 percent Shiite Muslims, 1 percent Ismaili and some Jews.

The Syrian population is very heterogeneously in terms of religious and sectarian diversity. Due to this and because of the partly inconsistent sources this map shows only approximately where main settlement areas of religious groups are, respectively used to be prior to March 2011. Especially in urban centers the religious composition may differ significantly from the religious composition in rural surroundings and it is not possible to show this heterogeneity on this type of map.

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2. Map 9 “Syria – Ethnic / Linguistic Groups”:

2.1. Comments

There are no official figures concerning ethnic groups in Syria. According to CIA-Factbook 90.3 percent of the Syrian population are ethnic Arabs. The remaining 9.7 percent are mainly Kurds and Armenians. Michael Martens estimates that about 10 percent of the Syrian population is Kurdish. According to Michael Izady 8.9 percent of the Syrian population are Kurds, 1.9 percent are Armenians, 0.7 percent are Turkmen and 0.5 percent are Circassians. It follows from this source that about 89 percent are ethnic Arabs. Furthermore, there are Aramaic, and Assyrian groups as well as Palestinian refugees.

The Syrian population is very heterogeneously in terms of ethnic and linguistic diversity. Due to this and because of partly inconsistent sources this map shows only approximately where main settlement areas of ethnic / linguistic groups are, respectively used to be prior to March 2011. Especially in urban centers the ethnic / linguistic composition may differ significantly from the rural surroundings and it is not possible to show this heterogeneity on this type of map.

Arabic is the only official language in Syria. In part, the various minorities have adapted linguistically and are speaking Arabic as a second language.

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3. Map 10 “Kurds in Syria”:

3.1. Comments

There are no official figures concerning ethnic groups in Syria. According to CIA-Factbook 90.3 percent of the Syrian population are ethnic Arabs. The remaining 9.7 percent are mainly Kurds and Armenians. Michael Martens estimates that about 10 percent of the Syrian population is Kurdish.

The Syrian population is very heterogeneously in terms of ethnic diversity. Due to this and because of partly inconsistent sources this map shows only approximately where main settlement areas of Kurds are, respectively used to be prior to March 2011. Especially in urban centers the ethnic composition may differ significantly from the rural surroundings and it is not possible to show this heterogeneity on this type of map.

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