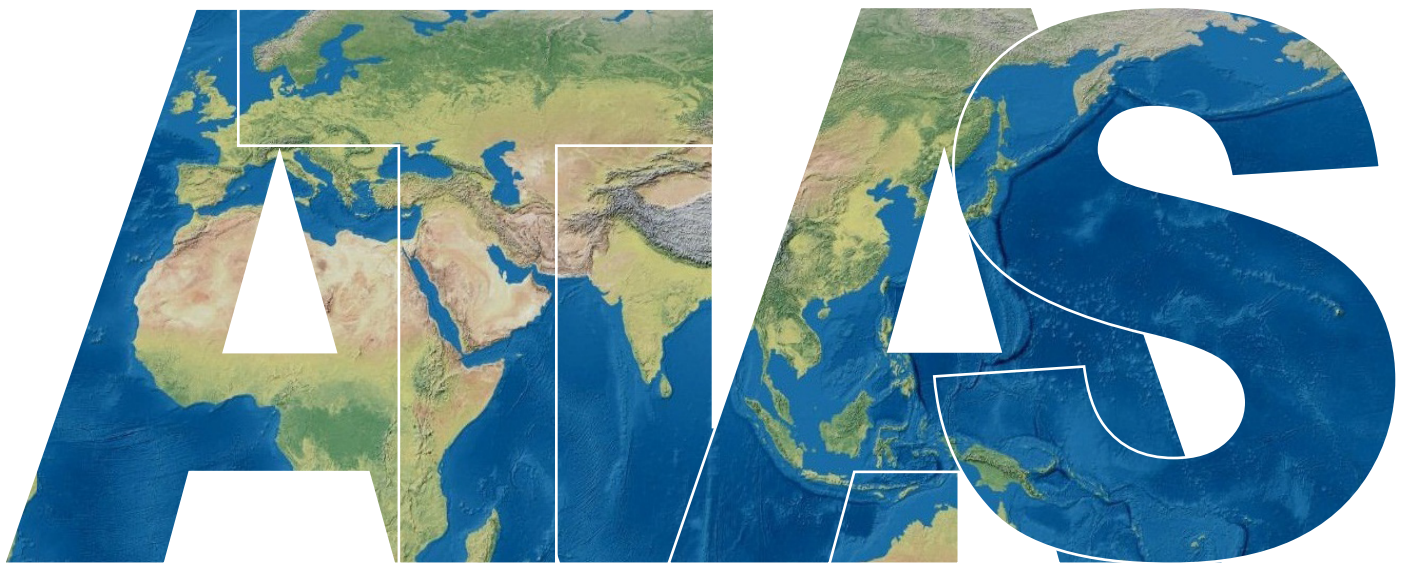


S Y R I A



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Imprint

Published by

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Map: Made with Natural Earth. Free vector and raster map data @ naturalearthdata.com

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Foreword



The civil war in Syria is certainly one of the gravest humanitarian crises of our times. Having a severe regional impact, refugees fleeing from war and persecution are also applying for asylum in Europe. Austria has responded to this with a resettlement initiative in cooperation with UNHCR to grant asylum to the most vulnerable victims of war. On the EU level we are working on the “Save Lives” initiative with our European partners, aiming to protect those attempting to enter the EU via the Mediterranean

Sea or the Western Balkans at the mercy of traffickers.

While the Country of Origin Information Unit of the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum is monitoring the humanitarian situation in Syria closely, cooperation with the Austrian Ministry of Defence and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) made it possible to enhance the analytical framework and visualize the according data in this ATLAS.

The publication is a further step towards understanding Syria, particularly regarding the ethno-linguistic and religious composition of the population predating the beginning of the unrest, the security situation as well as refugee flows. Considering the situation in the region and the ongoing flows of refugees, an in-depth analysis of the situation on the ground is paramount to maintain the high quality standards of our asylum procedures and an informed policy debate.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Mikl-Leitner'.

Johanna Mikl-Leitner

Austrian Federal Minister of the Interior

Foreword



Mass migration and waves of refugees are currently one of the biggest challenges for security in Europe. From top level international news agency reports to everyday discussions in the coffee houses of Vienna, the difficulties of refugees, especially those of Syria, have dominated all other topics.

Who are these people? Why are they fleeing? What is their background?

Their ethnicities? Religion? Language? Not all of these questions can

be answered. This atlas, which is a comprehensive product including 14 separate theme maps based on excellent interdepartmental cooperation, covers these topics. The explicitly selected combination of subject maps helps us to better understand the circumstances of the Syria crisis, the outcome of which greatly will influence our everyday lives in terms of economy, politics and security.

“Knowledge is Power” is supposedly a quote by Francis Bacon (1561-1626). This quote still holds true, because for every mission or operation conducted a clear understanding of the overall situation in the area is necessary. Geo-related information, such as this Atlas, is at the core of every decision-making process at both the strategic and the interdisciplinary levels. If we want to succeed in providing security in Europe and Austria in particular, we need to comprehend all essential aspects and apply a comprehensive approach. This Atlas in combination with other supporting products provides the crucial background information about Syria for the decision makers. As a result the best possible decisions can be made.

In this way, the Atlas is an excellent resource and prime example for interdepartmental cooperation of highly competent offices pertaining to the Ministry of the Interior with two innovative institutes within my Ministry, the Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management (IFK) of the National Defence Academy (LVAK) and the Institute for Military Geography (IMG) of the HQ, Command and Support Centre (FüUZ).



Gerald Klug

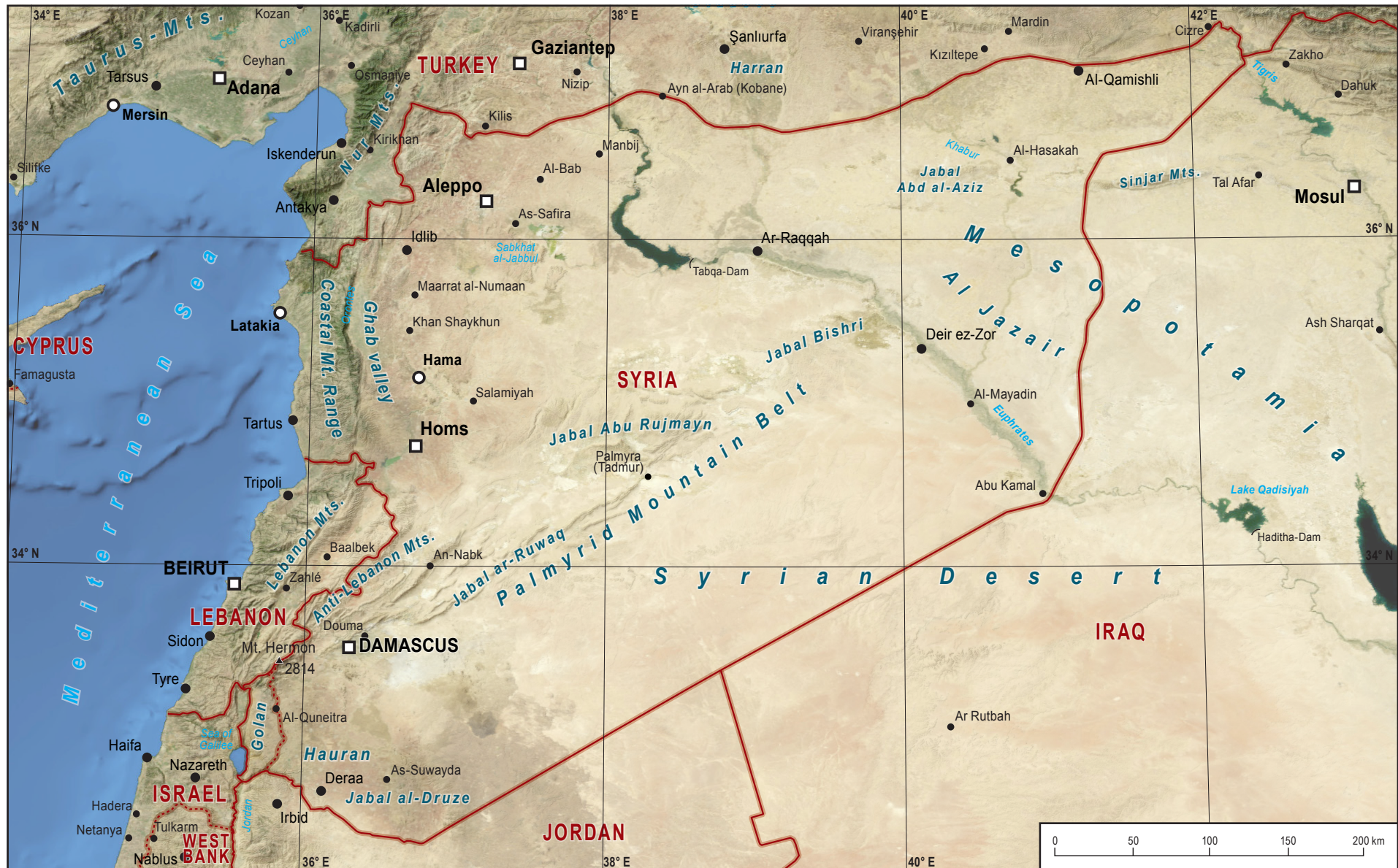
Austrian Federal Ministry of Defence and Sport

This is a detailed political and geographical map of the Middle East and surrounding regions. The map shows countries including Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Cyprus, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, and parts of Bulgaria, Greece, and Kazakhstan. Major cities like Istanbul, Ankara, Damascus, Baghdad, Tehran, and Cairo are marked. The map also displays the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Caspian Sea, Persian Gulf, and Red Sea. A scale bar at the bottom right indicates distances from 0 to 500 km.

7

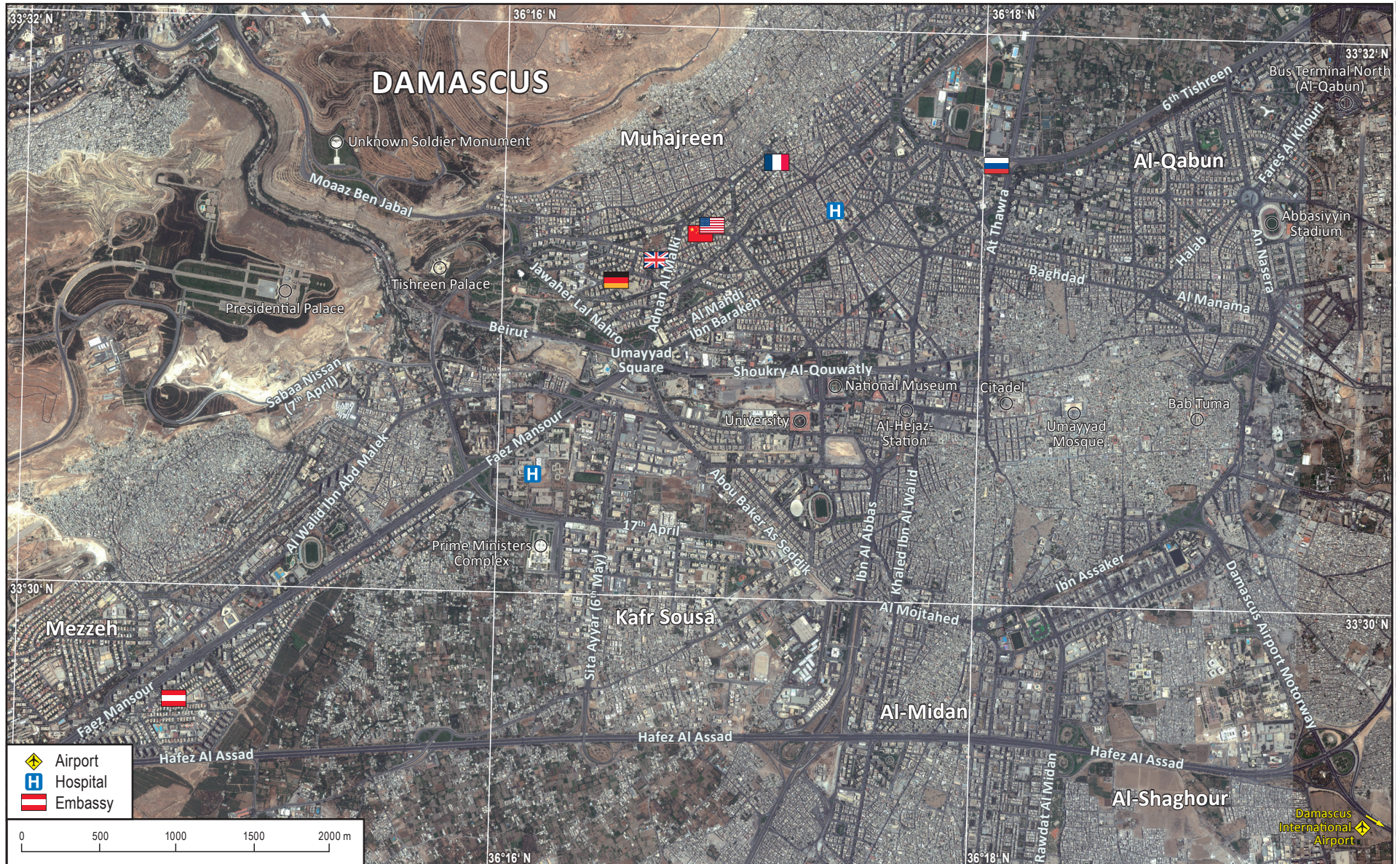
This map illustrates the geographical context of Syria, showing its borders with Turkey to the north, Iraq to the east, Jordan to the south, and Lebanon and Israel to the southwest. Major Syrian cities such as Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and Damascus are clearly marked. The map also depicts the Mediterranean Sea, the Euphrates River, and various international borders. A scale bar at the bottom right provides a reference for distances in kilometers.

Syria: Physiography



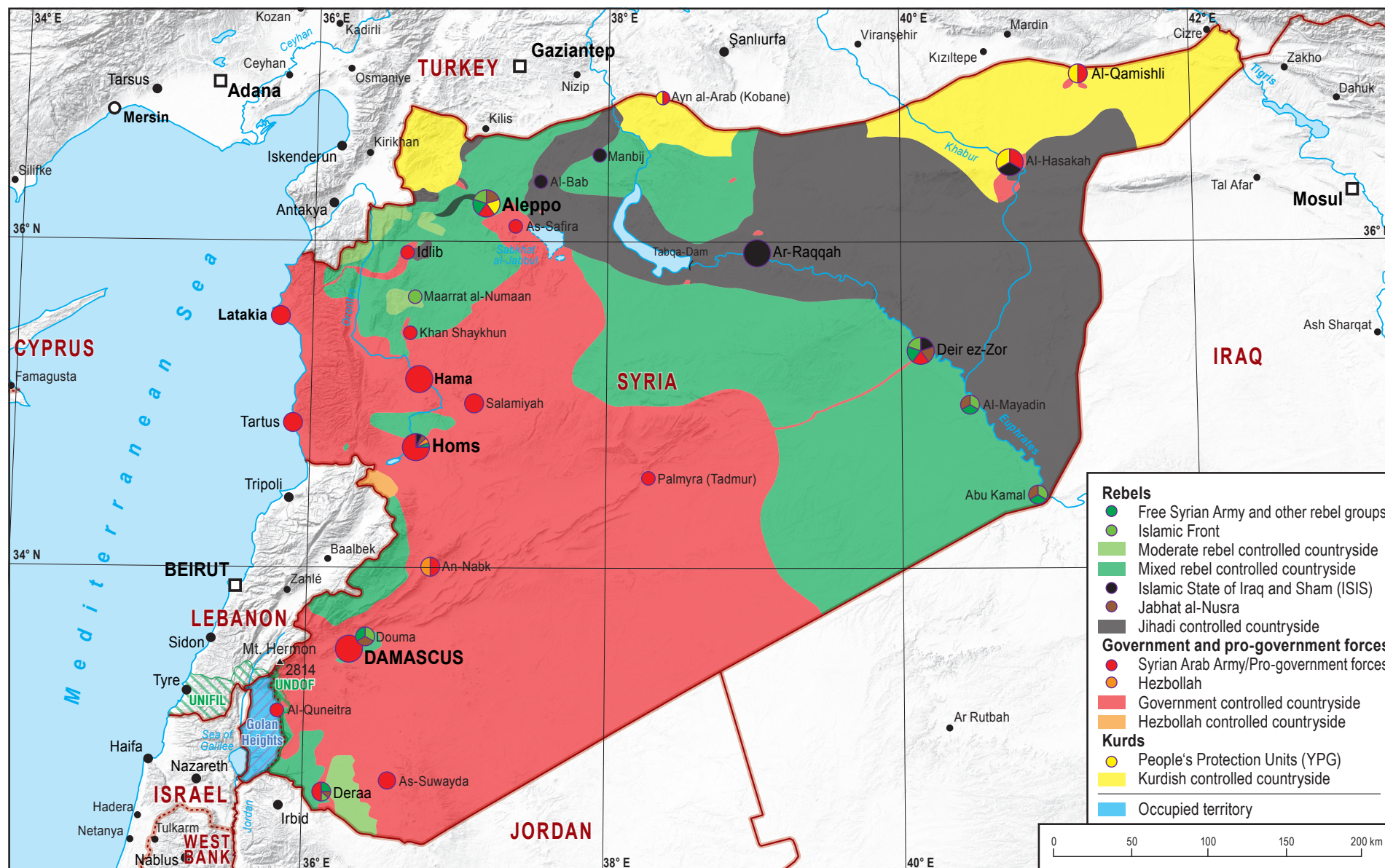
Source: NASA Blue Marble Next Generation, Shuttle Radar Topography Mission

Damascus: Satellite image map



Source: OpenStreetMap

Syria: Control of territory *January 2014*

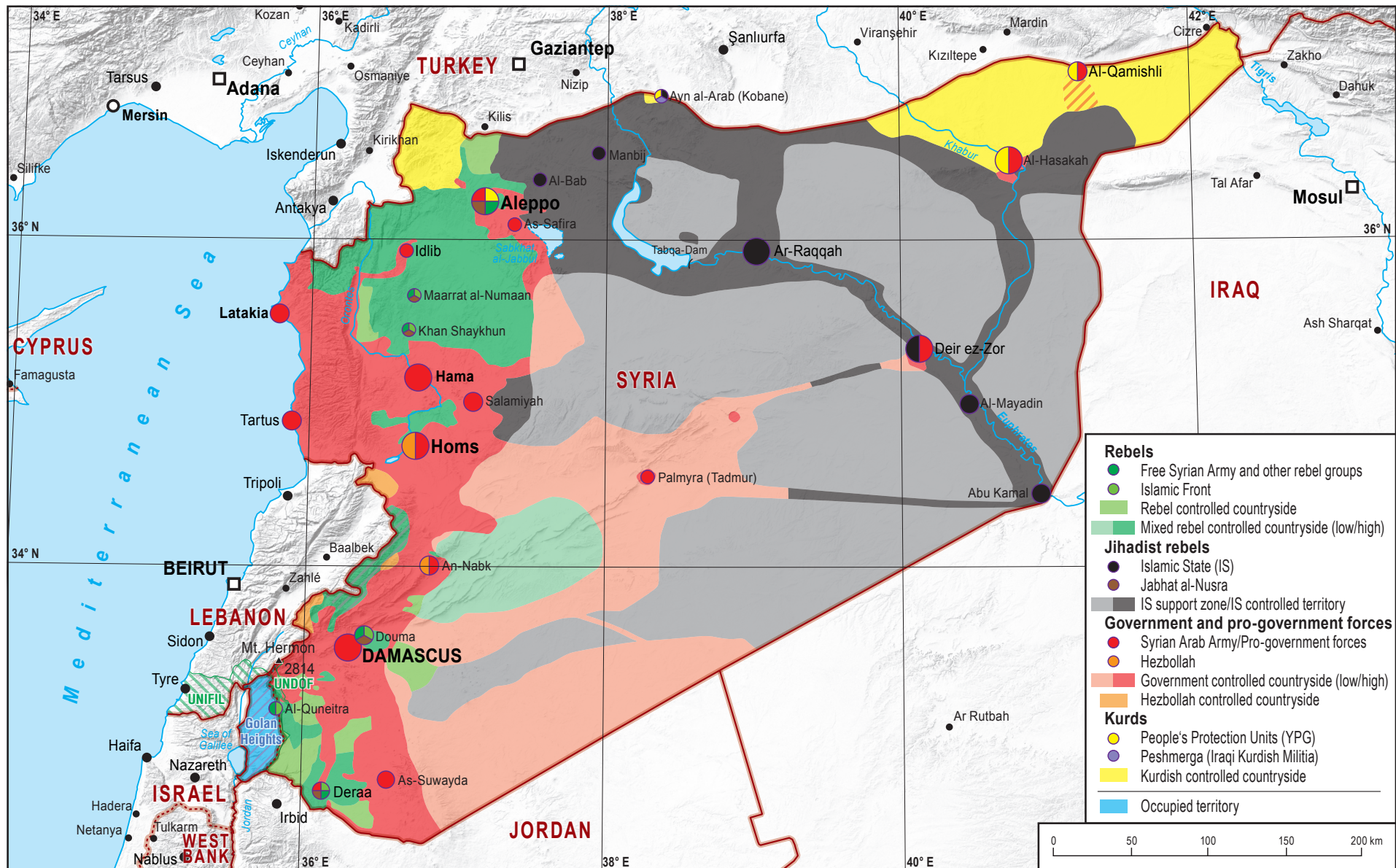


Source: ISW - Institute for the study of war, SOHR - Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, CENTCOM - US Central Command, Agathocle de Syracuse - Understanding modern conflicts, Pieter van Nooten - Musings on Arabism, Islamicism, History and current affairs

Moderate Rebels: Rebels who have been identified as „moderate“ by the U.S.-led coalition and are being supported by the coalition through ongoing airstrikes against ISIS in Syria (e.g.: FSA, Syria Revolutionaries Front).

Mixed Rebels: Rebels who are being perceived as moderate but are also working alongside hardline groups (e.g. Jabhat al-Nusra). In some cases they coexist without interacting and in other cases they clash.

Syria: Control of territory *January 2015*



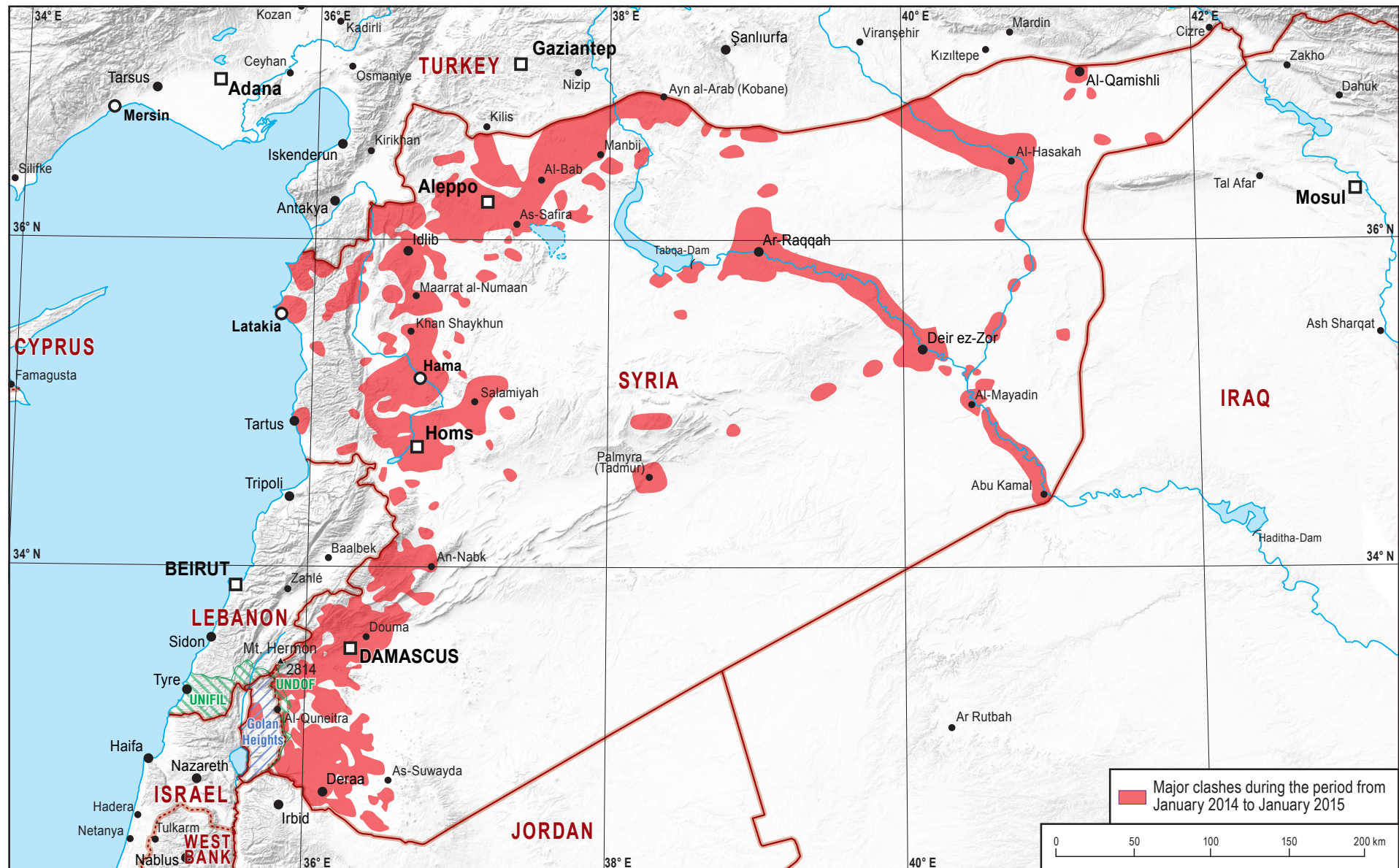
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Mixed Rebels: Rebels who are being perceived as moderate but are also working alongside hardline groups (e.g. Jabhat al-Nusra). In some cases they coexist without interacting and in other cases they clash.

Low/high refers to the level of territorial control.

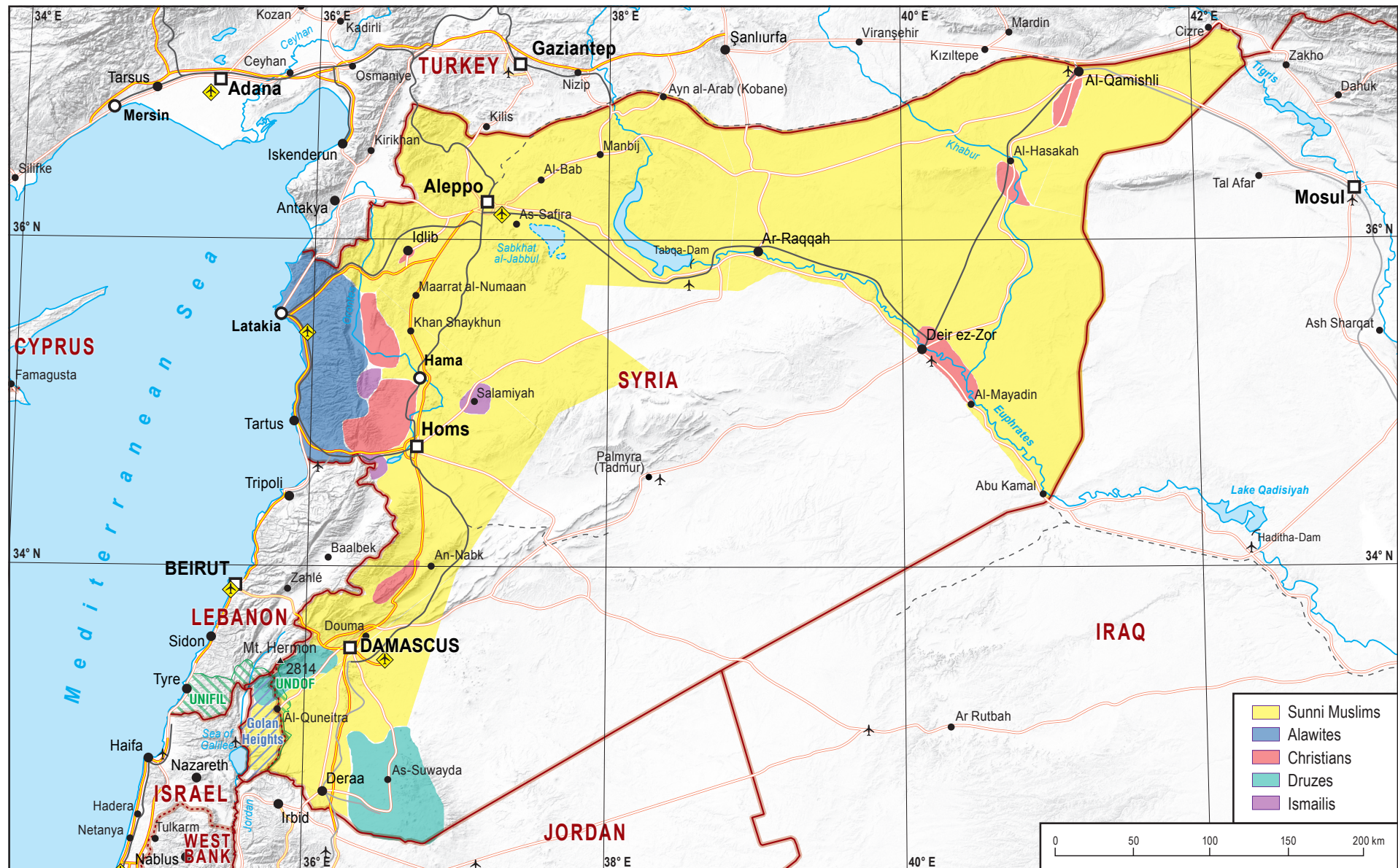
Syria: Major clashes January 2014 - January 2015



Source: ISW - Institute for the study of war, SOHR - Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, CENTCOM - US Central Command

Major clash: Every military/violent confrontation between armed actors (including airstrikes, artillery fire, bombings, suicide vests, Suicide Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices [SVBIED] and Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices [VBIED]).

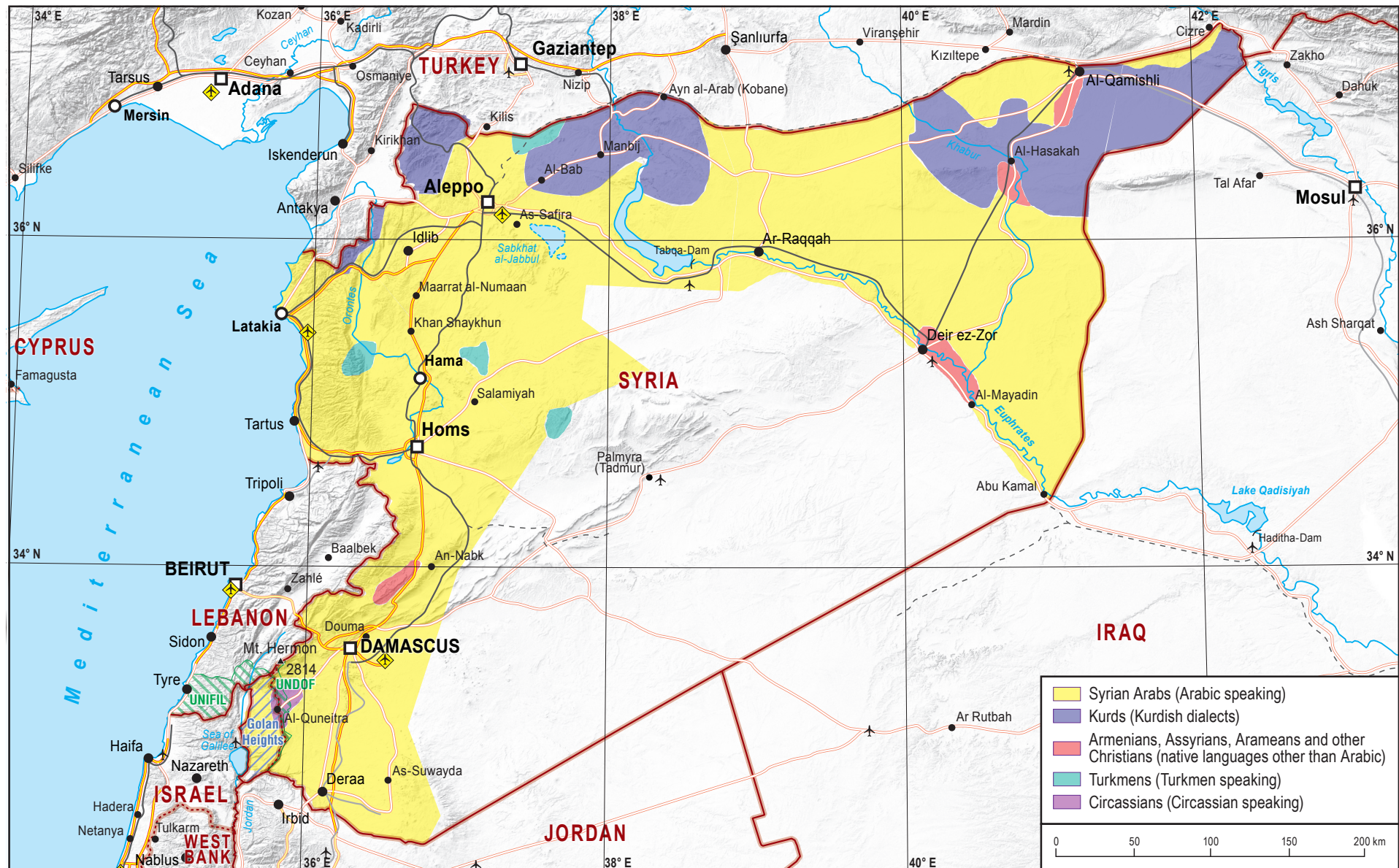
Syria: Religious and sectarian groups *March 2011*



Source: www.ecoi.net/atlas_syria_sources.pdf

This map shows only the main areas of settlement of religious and sectarian groups. The Syrian population is very heterogeneous in terms of religious and sectarian affiliation, especially in urban centers.

Syria: Ethnic and linguistic groups *March 2011*



Source: www.ecoi.net/atlas_syria_sources.pdf

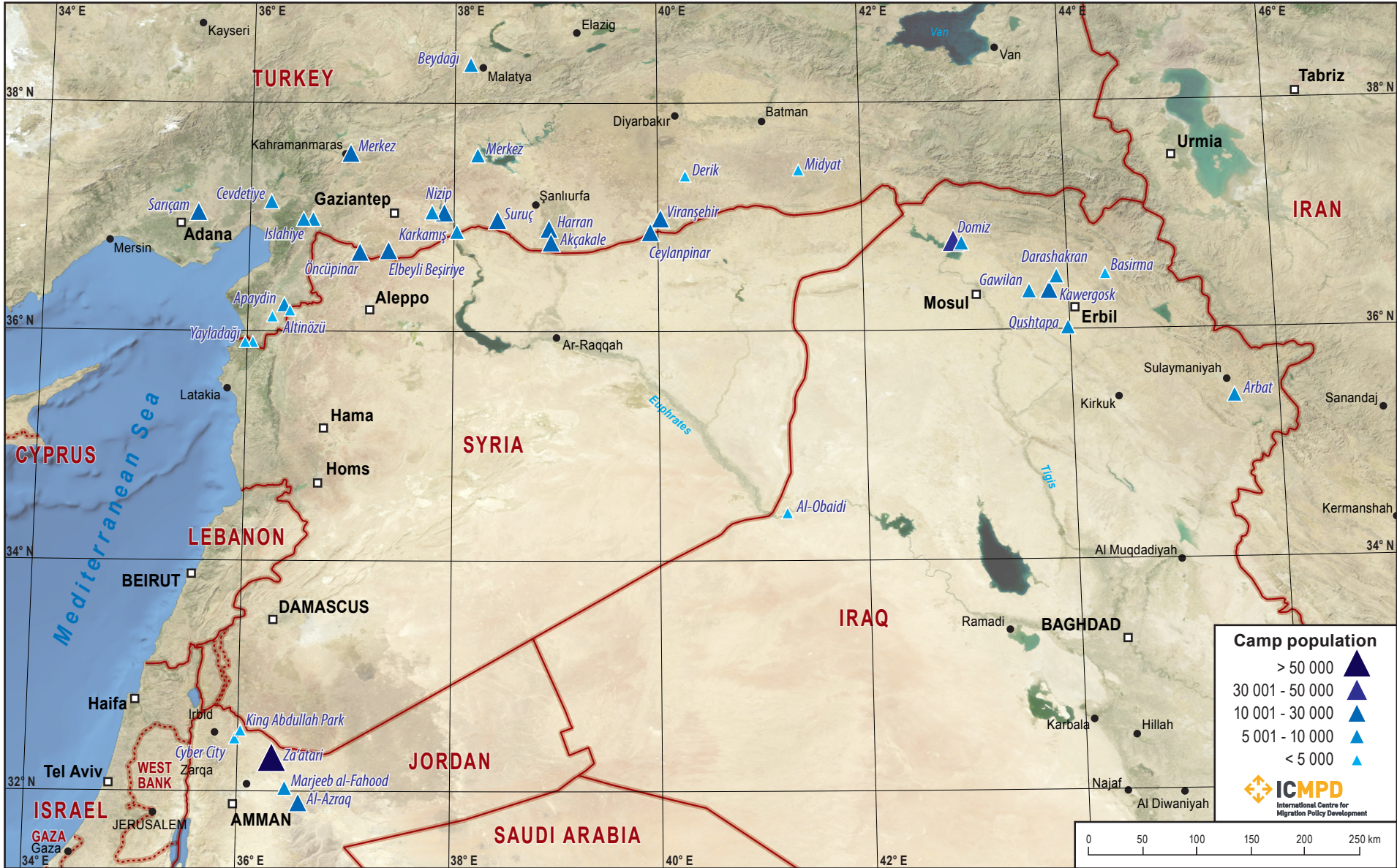
This map shows only the main areas of settlement of ethnic and linguistic groups. The Syrian population is very heterogeneous in terms of ethnic and linguistic affiliation, especially in urban centers.

Kurds in the Middle East



Source: Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients (1990), www.ecoi.net/atlas_syria_sources.pdf
 This map shows only the main areas of settlement of Kurds in the Middle East.

Camps for Syrian refugees 2015



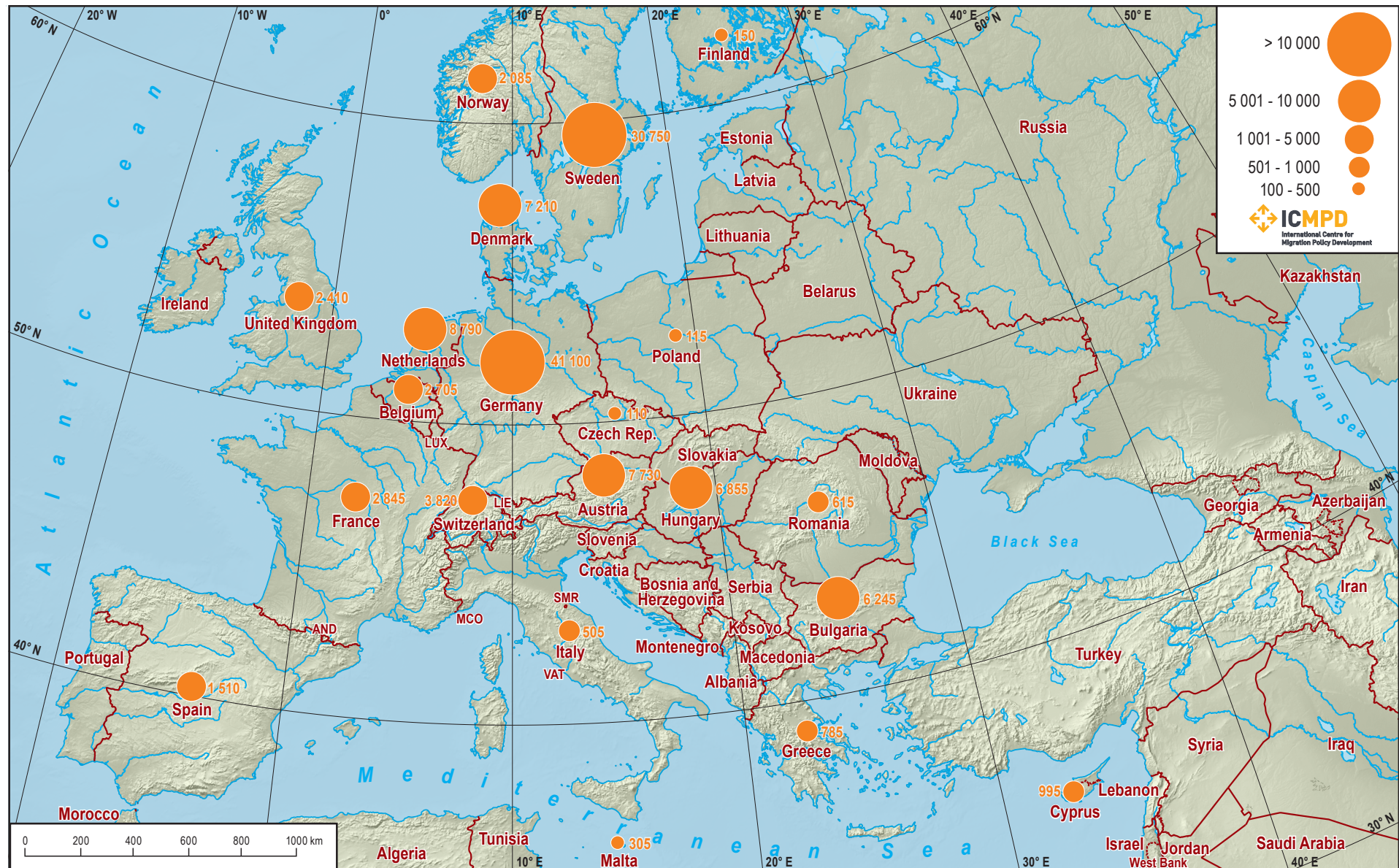
Source: Refugee camps in Iraq and Jordan: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php> (latest updates: Iraq: 31 March 2015, Jordan: 08 April 2015). King Abdullah Park Refugee Camp and Cyber City Refugee Camp in Jordan (temporary refugee camps): Camp population is based on estimates of aid workers in April 2015. Refugee camps in Turkey: <https://www.afad.gov.tr/TR/icerikDetay1.aspx?ID=16&icerikID=848> (latest update: 13 April 2015). This map only depicts official camps for Syrian refugees and does not make reference to informal tent camps set up by refugees without shelter.

The map displays the distribution of Syrian citizens and Syrian-born populations across Europe. The data is presented as follows:

| Country | Syrian citizens | Syrian-born population |
|------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Norway | 1 526 | 3 090 |
| Sweden | 20 511 | 41 748 |
| Denmark | 4 352 | 5 812 |
| United Kingdom | 7 000 | 11 000 |
| Netherlands | 1 367 | 9 498 |
| Belgium | 4 760 | 8 274 |
| Germany | 52 510 | No data |
| France | No data | No data |
| Spain | 3 201 | 5 957 |
| Italy | 4 414 | 5 957 |
| Austria | 4 268 | 5 196 |
| Slovenia | 4 166 | 5 219 |
| Croatia | No data | No data |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | No data | No data |
| Montenegro | No data | No data |
| Albania | No data | No data |
| Greece | No data | No data |
| Poland | No data | No data |
| Czech Rep. | No data | No data |
| Slovakia | No data | No data |
| Hungary | No data | No data |
| Romania | 3 588 | 2 435 |
| Moldova | No data | No data |
| Ukraine | No data | No data |
| Belarus | No data | No data |
| Lithuania | No data | No data |
| Latvia | No data | No data |
| Estonia | No data | No data |
| Finland | No data | No data |
| Russia | No data | No data |
| Kazakhstan | No data | No data |
| Georgia | No data | No data |
| Armenia | No data | No data |
| Azerbaijan | No data | No data |
| Iran | No data | No data |
| Turkey | No data | No data |
| Syria | No data | No data |
| Lebanon | No data | No data |
| Cyprus | No data | No data |
| Israel | No data | No data |
| Jordan | No data | No data |
| Saudi Arabia | No data | No data |
| Algeria | No data | No data |
| Tunisia | No data | No data |
| Malta | No data | No data |

The map only includes the top 10 countries in the categories Syrian citizens and Syrian-born population.

Asylum applications of Syrian citizens 2014



Source: EUROSTAT (latest update: 01 April 2015).
Data includes asylum and new asylum applicants by citizenship; only included if > 100

Syrian refugees, asylum seekers and IDPs 2014/15



Source: Syrian Population of UNHCR Concern: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php> (latest updates: Egypt: 14 April 2015, Iraq: 31 March 2015, Jordan: 08 April 2015, Lebanon: 10 April 2015, Turkey: 10 April 2015). Persons of Concern to UNHCR include refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, as well as returnees. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs): <http://www.internal-displacement.org/middle-east-and-north-africa/syria/> (latest update: December 2014).

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ISBN 978-3-9503643-4-7