

**April 2017**

The conflict in Syria, which began with anti-government protests before escalating into full-scale civil war, has transformed Syria and the region. Much of the country lies in ruins, thousands have been killed and two thirds of the population has been displaced, half outside the country. Large numbers of Syrians have sought refuge in neighbouring countries, putting host countries and communities under huge strain, and seriously threatening the stability of some neighbouring states. The violent Salafi-jihadist movement known as the Islamic State of Syria and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) exploited the crisis in Syria to extend its brutal control over large swathes of territory in Iraq, displacing 3 million Iraqis. Despite the humanitarian and security crisis created by the Syrian conflict, progress towards a negotiated political settlement has been slow. On 5 April 2017, the EU, together with Germany, Kuwait, Norway, Qatar, the UK and the UN, will co-chair the Brussels Conference on 'Supporting the future of Syria and the region'. The conference will focus on preparing the political transition, the reconciliation process and the reconstruction of Syria, and take stock of international support for the region over the course of the past year.

Mapping the future of Syria: State of play and options

Briefing by Patryk Pawlak, March 2017

Six years into the conflict, the situation in Syria and of Syrian people is still the subject of political debate. The search for a political solution revolves around questions about the future of the Assad regime, territorial integrity of Syria, political accountability, and future reconstruction work. On the eve of the Brussels conference on supporting the future of Syria and the region, this briefing provides an overview of the main political challenges and the options for the European Union, as laid down in a communication providing elements of an EU strategy for Syria.

Syrian crisis: Impact on Jordan

Briefing by Beatrix Immenkamp, February 2017

Nearly 5 million Syrians have sought refuge in neighbouring countries, an estimated 1.3 million in Jordan. The sudden influx of large numbers of people has exacerbated challenges Jordan has faced for many years – increased competition for jobs, overburdened infrastructure and strained social services, such as healthcare and education. This briefing focuses on the new approach Jordan and the international donor community have adopted to confront these challenges.

Syrian crisis: Impact on Lebanon

Briefing by Beatrix Immenkamp, March 2017

As a result of the Syrian crisis, the population of Lebanon has grown by an unprecedented 30 % in under four years. Moreover, the situation in neighbouring Syria has deepened Lebanon's political instability and led to political deadlock for the past three years, seriously exacerbating problems with the provision of basic services to the Lebanese population. This briefing highlights the urgency of stepping up international support for a country at breaking point.

Syrian crisis: Impact on Iraq

Briefing by Beatrix Immenkamp, April 2017

From its stronghold in the central Syrian town of Raqqa, ISIL/Da'esh overran a third of Iraq's territory in 2014, sowing death and destruction in its path and leading to the internal displacement of over 3 million Iraqis. Moreover, a quarter of a million Syrians sought refuge in neighbouring Iraq, mainly in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. This briefing

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explains how the international community has joined Iraq in its fight against ISIL/Da'esh and in tackling the humanitarian consequences of the large-scale displacement of Iraqis, as well as the needs of Syrian refugees.

[Syrian crisis: Impact on Turkey](#)

Briefing by Philippe Perchoc, April 2017

The Syrian crisis has led to a significant deterioration in the security situation in Turkey, to which the government reacted with a range of repressive measures that are now threatening its membership negotiations with the EU. Turkey is also host to 3 million Syrian refugees. This briefing traces Turkey's response to the crisis unfolding on its southern doorstep, and reviews details of the migrant deal that the EU has concluded with Turkey

Further reading on the Syrian conflict:

[Russia in Syria: Playing for high stakes](#)

At-a-glance by Martin Russel, January 2016

This briefing discussed the reasons underlying Russia's involvement in the Syrian war.

[Iran in Syria: Deal-maker or deal-breaker?](#)

At-a-glance by Patryk Pawlak, January 2016

This briefing explored the role of Iran, steadfast supporter of Bashar al-Assad, in the conflict.

[US humanitarian response to the Syrian refugee crisis](#)

Briefing by Micaela Del Monte and Laura Yuko Hasters, December 2015

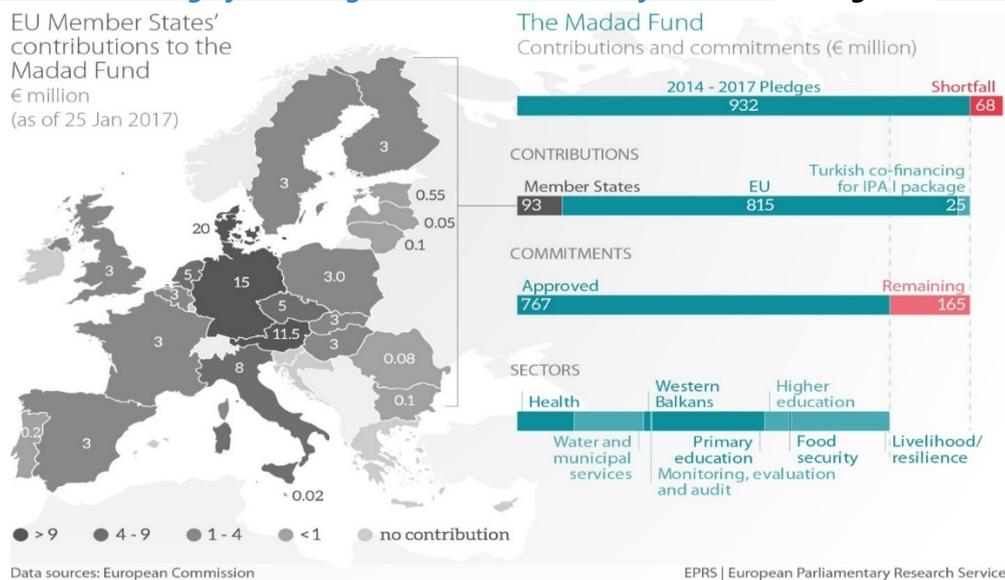
This briefing provided background on US support to the region, including resettlement of refugees

[The international coalition to counter ISIL/Da'esh](#)

Briefing by Carmen-Cristina Cîrlig, March 2015

The briefing presented the context of the formation of the international coalition against ISIL/Da'esh.

The [EU contribution to building Syrian refugee and host community resilience](#) through the [Madad Fund](#)



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