

Introduction

Syria is a country in the Middle East bordering the Mediterranean Sea. Neighboring countries include Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. The geography of Syria is primarily semiarid and desert plateau with a double mountain belt in the west. The government system is a republic under authoritarian regime; the chief of state is the president, and the head of government is the prime minister. Syria has a mixed economy in which there is limited private freedom but the economy remains highly controlled by the government. Syria is a member of the League of Arab States (Arab League).



Location: Western Asia

Capital City: Damascus (+2 GMT)

Chief of State: President Bashar al-Asad

Head of Govt.: Prime Minister Imad Mohammad Deeb Khamis

Currency: Syrian Pound (SYP)

Major Languages: <p>Arabic (official), Kurdish, Armenian, Aramaic, Circassian (widely understood); French, English (somewhat understood)</p>

Primary Religions: <p>Muslim 87% (official; includes Sunni 74% and Alawi, Ismaili, and Shia 13%), Christian (includes Orthodox, Uniate, and Nestorian) 10% (includes Orthodox, Uniate, and Nestorian), Druze 3%, Jewish (few remaining in Damascus and Aleppo)</p>

Calling Code: 963

Voltage: 220

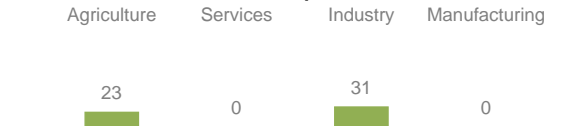
Key Websites

Commerce Ministry: syrecon.gov.sy

Key Economic Facts

Income Level (by per capita GNI):	Lower Middle Income
Level of Development:	Developing
GDP, PPP (current international \$):	\$121.75 billion (2012)
GDP growth (annual %):	3.20% (2010)
GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$):	\$5,435.56 (2012)
External debt stocks, total (DOD, current US\$):	\$4,653,920,881.70 (2017)
Manufacturing, value added (% of GDP):	7.66% (2002)
Current account balance (BoP, current US\$):	-\$0.37 billion (2010)
Inflation, consumer prices (annual %):	36.70% (2012)
Labor force, total:	4,758,732 (2017)
Unemployment, total (% of total labor force) (modeled ILO estimate):	14.90% (2017)
Imports of goods and services (current US\$):	\$28.02 billion (2012)
Exports of goods and services (current US\$):	\$27.99 billion (2012)

GDP Composition %



**Although Manufacturing is included in the Industry figures, it is also separately reported because it plays a critical role in economy.*

Rankings

Index	Rank
Corruption Perceptions Index	176 / 178
International Logistics Performance Index (LPI)	138 / 160
Inward FDI Potential Index	94 / 139
KOF Index of Globalization	128 / 185

Risk Assessment (Provided by Coface)

Country rating: E - The highest-risk political and economic situation and the most difficult business environment. Corporate default is likely.

Business Climate rating: E - The highest possible risk in terms of business climate. Due to a lack of available financial information and an unpredictable legal system, doing business in this country is extremely difficult.

Strengths

- Strategic geographic position
- Energy transit country
- Oil potential

Weaknesses

- Civil war since 2011, 320,000 dead, destruction of many infrastructures
- Fragmentation of the territory between different groups of influence
- Oil production is reduced to nothing

U.S. Embassy

The U.S. Embassy in Damascus suspended operations in February 2012 and cannot provide routine consular services. For Emergency assistance, U.S. citizens should contact the U.S. Interests Section of the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Damascus at USIS_damascus@embassy.mzv.cz, or the U.S. Embassy in Amman, Jordan at 962-6-5906500.