

Response in Egypt to Syrian Crisis

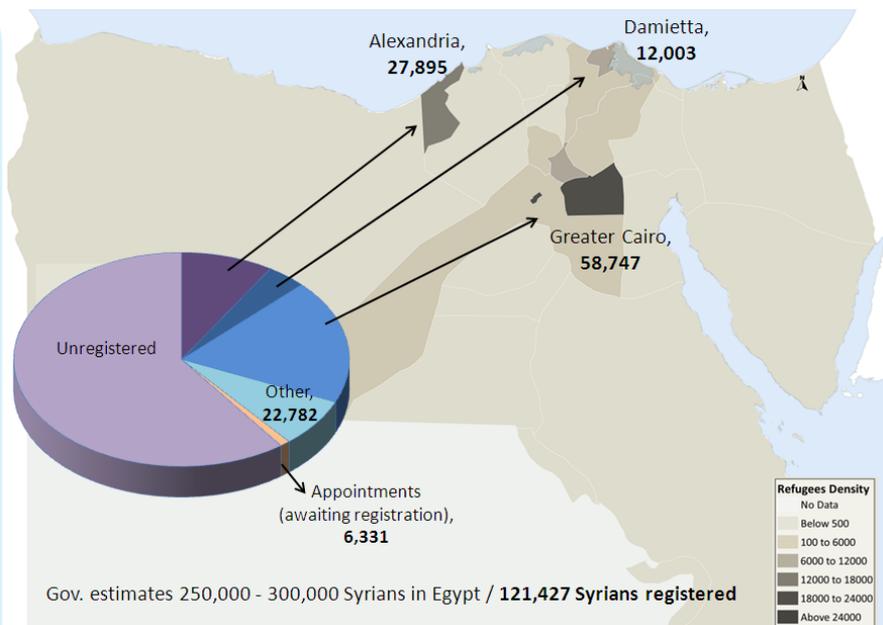
As the conflict in Syria continues to escalate, the number of people fleeing into other countries in the region in search of refuge has been increasing. Some 250,000 to 300,000 Syrians currently reside in Egypt according to Government estimates provided in June, of which UNHCR has registered 121,427 individuals as of 5 October.

As a result of alleged involvement of a few Syrians in the recent political turmoil, there has been a shift in perceptions and the level of sympathy afforded to the Syrian community. The Government of Egypt announced temporary measures on 8 July requiring Syrians coming to Egypt to obtain a visa and prior security approval. Syrians have also been experiencing increasing incidents of verbal threats, physical assaults, detention and deportation.

Most Syrians in Egypt are scattered in urban neighbourhoods, renting and sharing accommodation. Lately, there has been a sharp increase in the number of refugees closing their files with UNHCR and leaving Egypt, citing economic concerns, an interest in re-joining family members in other countries, and anxiety over their security in Egypt. Most have indicated they will depart to Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon among other destinations. Some have also noted they intend to return to Syria. There have also been increasing reports of departures by sea to Europe.

UNHCR conducts registration, provides counselling, and works with partners to provide legal assistance and address the social needs of vulnerable Syrians in Egypt. UNHCR also operates hotlines for emergencies and inquiries, and sensitizes refugees of the dangers of involvement in political activities.

Registration of Syrians in Egypt (as of 5 October)



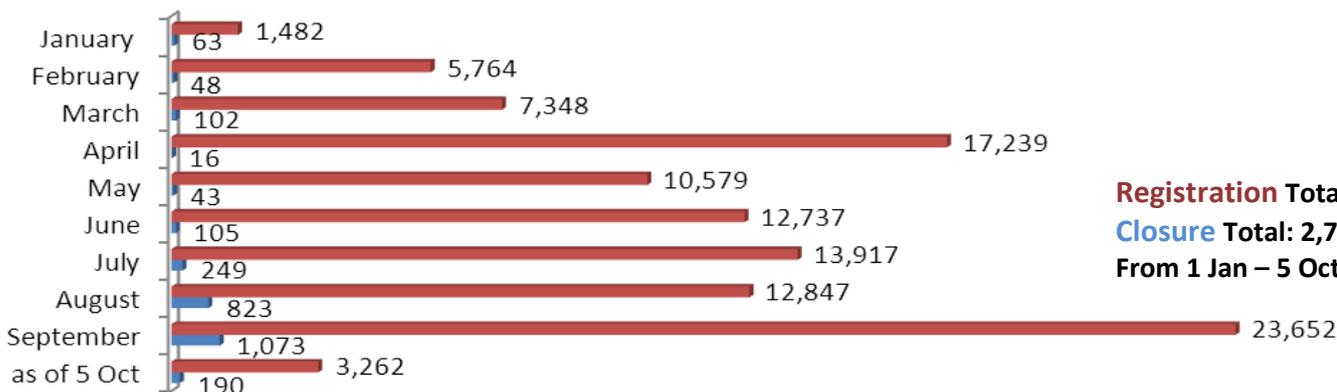
49.2% of registered Syrians arrived to Egypt through a transit country; of those, 77.4% passed through Lebanon, 12.2% through Jordan, and 10.4% through others countries.

During the week, 5,740 individuals registered in the Zamalek Registration Centres; 226 persons were identified with specific needs.

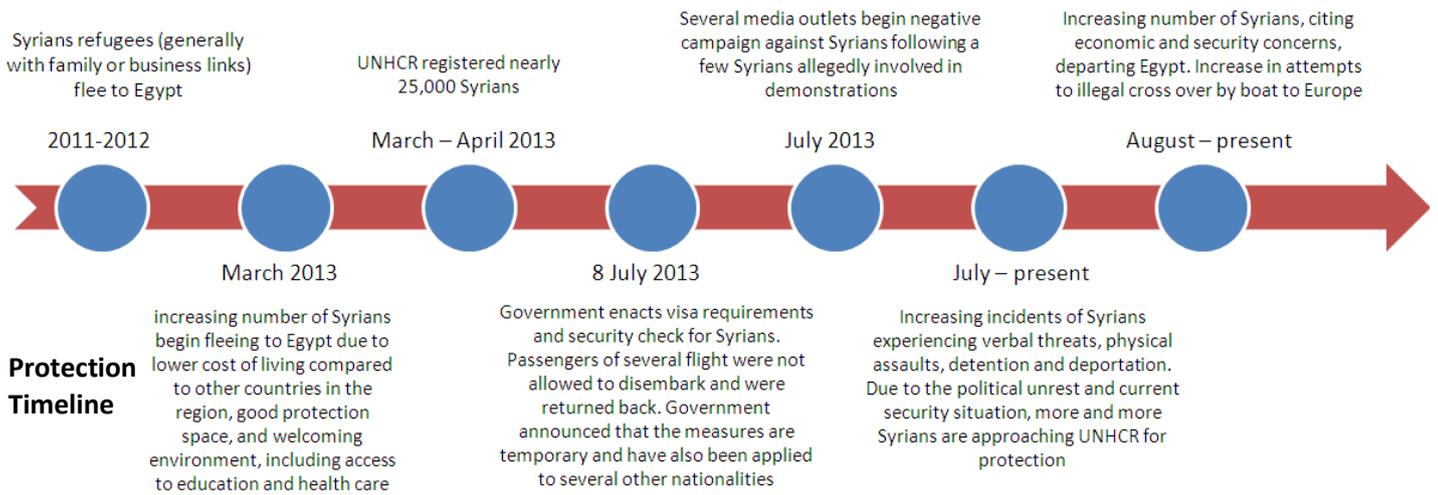
Gender and Age Breakdown

Age Group	F	M	Total
0 - 4	8,630	9,092	17,722
5 - 11	10,526	11,173	21,699
12 - 17	6,948	8,033	14,981
18 - 39	22,050	22,180	44,230
40 - 59	8,942	8,875	17,817
60+	2,462	2,516	4,978
Total	59,558	61,869	121,427

Registration and Closure Trends in 2013



Registration Total: 108,827
Closure Total: 2,712
From 1 Jan – 5 Oct



Protection/Field

UNHCR and UNICEF conducted a joint child protection mission to Alexandria on 25-26 September; during with they met with Caritas, legal partners and activists, and visited child friendly spaces that have been implemented by UNICEF. They also met with Plan-Egypt to review support for children with disabilities. The mission also visited Karmous detention centre to review the conditions of refugee families (including children) being held there.

Illegal Departures

Since August there has been a dramatic increase in the number of Syrian crossing the Mediterranean from Egypt to Italy. An estimated 6,000 Syrians have arrived along the coast of Italy since the beginning of 2013; over 3,000 of whom have arrived along the coast of Italy since August. This is compared with an estimated 350 Syrians who arrived in 2012. Once in Italy, most of the Syrian refugees are continuing on to other countries in Europe. However, since the beginning of August there have been over 900 Syrian refugees arrested while trying to illegally depart Egypt. UNHCR has had difficulties in accessing the detained in order to properly verify numbers, conditions, and needs, or provide legal assistance.

Joint Assessment Mission

Five UN agencies, seven national and international organizations and Cairo University have been participating in the implementation of a month-long assessment of assistance gaps, humanitarian needs and protection challenges for Syrian refugees in five Governorates in Egypt. Findings of the assessment will be the platform for the upcoming strategic planning and will directly feed the Egypt chapter in the Regional Response Plan for 2014. Thus far, the mission has completed data collection from 600 cases through a questionnaire and has conducted 20 focus group discussions.

Community Outreach/Capacity Building

UNHCR conducted a workshop on 1-2 October in Cairo for Egyptian human rights organizations to build a better understanding among the civil society community about the rights, obligations and needs of refugees, with specific focus on

the Syrian refugee situation. 19 lawyers and researchers from 8 human rights organizations engaged in active discussions on cases of Syrian refugees trying to illegally depart to Europe, and the increasing numbers of Syrians detained in the northern coastal cities of Egypt.

Education

UNHCR conducted meetings with the Syrian community and the Under-Secretary of Education in Damietta to address concerns over access to education for Syrian children. The Ministry of Education agreed to hold a placement test on 19 October for 800 Syrian students; those that pass will be placed in the schools of their choice and UNHCR will assist the Damietta Education Authority in establishing remedial classes for those students that need to further develop their competencies in order to enter their normal grade.

Hotline

UNHCR also responded to 885 calls:

Breakdown by type of inquires

Gen. Info	Resettlement	Food Vouchers	Registration
26%	25%	18%	8%
Residency	Education	Financial Assistance	Other
8%	6%	6%	3%

Partners:

Caritas • Catholic Relief Services (CRS) • Islamic Relief Worldwide • Mahmoud Mosque society • Refuge Egypt • Resala Association • Terre Des Hommes - TADAMON and Psycho-Social Services and Training Institute in Cairo (PSTIC) • Save the Children • UNICEF • WFP

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