

Millions of Syrian refugees ready to go home

12th December 2024



Millions of Syrian refugees could soon go home. They are waiting to see what happens in Syria following the fall of the country's former president Bashar al-Assad. He ruled Syria with an iron fist for 24 years. After rebels took control of parts of

Syria on the 6th of December, thousands of refugees in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt started returning to their hometowns. The United Nations believes there are close to 5 million refugees in countries that border Syria. Of these, two million are school-aged children. An additional 1.3 million refugees are living in other countries, mostly in Europe. Turkey's president said: "As Syria gains more stability, God willing, voluntary, safe...returns will increase."

Many of the returning refugees have spoken to journalists. Muhammed Zin, 28, told the Associated Press news agency: "Assad was shooting us, killing us. I will return to Syria now. Thank God, the war is over." He fled the capital Damascus in 2016, five years after Syria's civil war broke out in 2011. Another returnee, Malak Matar, told reporters: "This is a feeling we've been waiting 14 years for. We feel psychologically free, we can express ourselves. The country is free, and the barriers have been broken down." He was hopeful for the future. He added: "Syrians have to create a country that is well organized and takes care of its people. It's a new phase."

Sources: apnews.com / timesofisrael.com / dailymail.co.uk

Writing

The Middle East is a more secure place today than it was a year ago. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

refugees / waiting / president / an iron fist / control / hometown / border / safe / journalists / news agency / war / capital / feeling / express ourselves / hopeful / care

True / False

- 1) Two million Syrian refugees have gone home this week. T / F
- 2) Bashar al-Assad controlled Syria for 34 years. T / F
- 3) The U.N. thinks there are over six million Syrian refugees. T / F
- 4) Most of Syria's refugees are living in Europe. T / F
- 5) Refugees are refusing to talk to journalists. T / F
- 6) A refugee called Muhammed fled Syria in 2016. T / F
- 7) A civil war started in Syria more than 14 years ago. T / F
- 8) A refugee said Syria has started a new phase in its history. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. refugee | a. going back |
| 2. former | b. started |
| 3. returning | c. ex |
| 4. border | d. escaped |
| 5. safe | e. reporters |
| 6. journalists | f. obstacles |
| 7. fled | g. displaced person |
| 8. broke out | h. stage |
| 9. barriers | i. secure |
| 10. phase | j. neighbour |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about Syria?
- b) What do you know about the Syrian refugees?
- c) What news have you heard about Syria?
- d) What do you know about Bashar al-Assad?
- e) How do you feel about the fall of Bashar al-Assad?
- f) Why are there so many Syrian refugees?
- g) What can you do to help the Syrian refugees?
- h) What advice do you have for the Syrian refugees?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Millions of Syrian refugees could | a. former president |
| 2. following the fall of the country's | b. broken down |
| 3. After rebels took | c. that border Syria |
| 4. 5 million refugees in countries | d. broke out in 2011 |
| 5. two million are school- | e. control of parts of Syria |
| 6. He fled the | f. phase |
| 7. Syria's civil war | g. soon go home |
| 8. barriers have been | h. for the future |
| 9. He was hopeful | i. capital Damascus in 2016 |
| 10. It's a new | j. aged children |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- How would you feel if you had to flee your home?
- How would you feel if your country was at war?
- Has your country ever had a civil war?
- How free are you in your country?
- How hopeful are you for the future?
- What do you think Syria will look like in a year from now?
- What questions would you like to ask the rebel leader?

Spelling

- the country's frermo president
- He ruled Syria with an inor fist
- blseer took control of parts of Syria
- An noidadtial 1.3 million refugees
- As Syria gains more aitislty
- tnauyvolr, safe...returns
- refugees have spoken to otulanjsisr
- He fled the aapiclt Damascus
- Syria's ivicl war broke out in 2011
- we can pseresx ourselves
- the brsirae have been broken down
- It's a new hsepa

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. c	3. a	4. j	5. i
6. e	7. d	8. b	9. f	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Schools

You think schools is the most important things a country needs after war. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): the Internet, a police force or roads.

Role B – Internet

You think the Internet is the most important thing a country needs after war. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): schools, a police force or roads.

Role C – Police Force

You think a police force is the most important thing a country needs after war. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): the Internet, schools or roads.

Role D – Roads

You think roads are the most important things a country needs after war. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): the Internet, a police force or schools.

Speaking – Rebuilding

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important things to rebuild a country at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| • Schools | • Hospitals |
| • Airports | • Police force |
| • Internet | • Newspapers |
| • Roads | • Water supply |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	F	3	T	4	F	5	F	6	T	7	F	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.