



Impacts of **10 Years** of Conflict to the Syrian Population

Comparative Study Between 2011-2021

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INTRODUCTION

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This study aimed to find a proper approach to calculate or estimate the differences in the number of Syrians who are living inside the Syrian territory between 2011 and 2021 to figure out the impact of 10 years of conflict, disasters, and the clashes to the overall demographic structure distribution of the Syrian population

It is very clear that there is a significant lack of accurate information regarding the changes to the demographic structure of the population inside Syria due to the above mentioned circumstances, in order to estimate the actual impacts of a 10 years of conflict to the Syrian population

In order to achieve a proper estimation of the changes in the demographic structure and the population distribution, this study made use of different resources starting from the official population that shared by the Syrian regime in 2011 and also made use of many of the studies, numbers, and calculations and partial reregistration that was conducted to the Syrian population during the last 10 years by the UN agencies and the different international and local NGOs working in the Syrian context.

THE METHODOLOGY

in 2011 the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS)¹ shared the population of the Syrians according to the governorates and gender, we took those numbers as a reference because they are the only official numbers that were issued by the government since 2011 while all the other numbers that was also issued by the government where mentioned to be an "estimation of the Syrian population", making use of the yearly population growth rate shared by the World Bank we amend the numbers of 2011 according to the series of years up to 2021 and in order to consider the changes and the differences of their numbers due to different factors like immigration, internal displacement, and also fatality we made use of the numbers shared by different UN agencies and international NGOs especially for the last five years.

The study as a start calculated the numbers of the Syrian population using the growth rate and the fatality rate, then making use of a joint study with Jusoor Research Center we removed the total number of the absents Syrians -despite the party of the conflict- which according to the mention study was around 1M individuals. According to the calculations this joint study found out that the total number of the Syrians is around 16.5 million individuals. For the purpose of the mathematical accuracy, the number of absent Syrian will not be consider but will be reflected within the percentage of the numbers in the study below, and this will result into a total number of Syrian Population of 17.4 million inhabitants.

The difficult part in this study was to find out the percentage of the Syrians within areas of control of the different parties to the conflict and the percentage of the Syrians for each of the governorates. While for the demographic changes in the overall percentage of population by age and gender, the study made use of different resources some of them are local and some of them are international, like the World Bank and the UN Department of Economics and Social Affairs-Population Dynamics, with applying mathematical formulas in order to estimate the gaps in the mentioned studies due to the fact that no actual statistical population census was conducted to the Syrian populations inside Syria at least since 2011.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

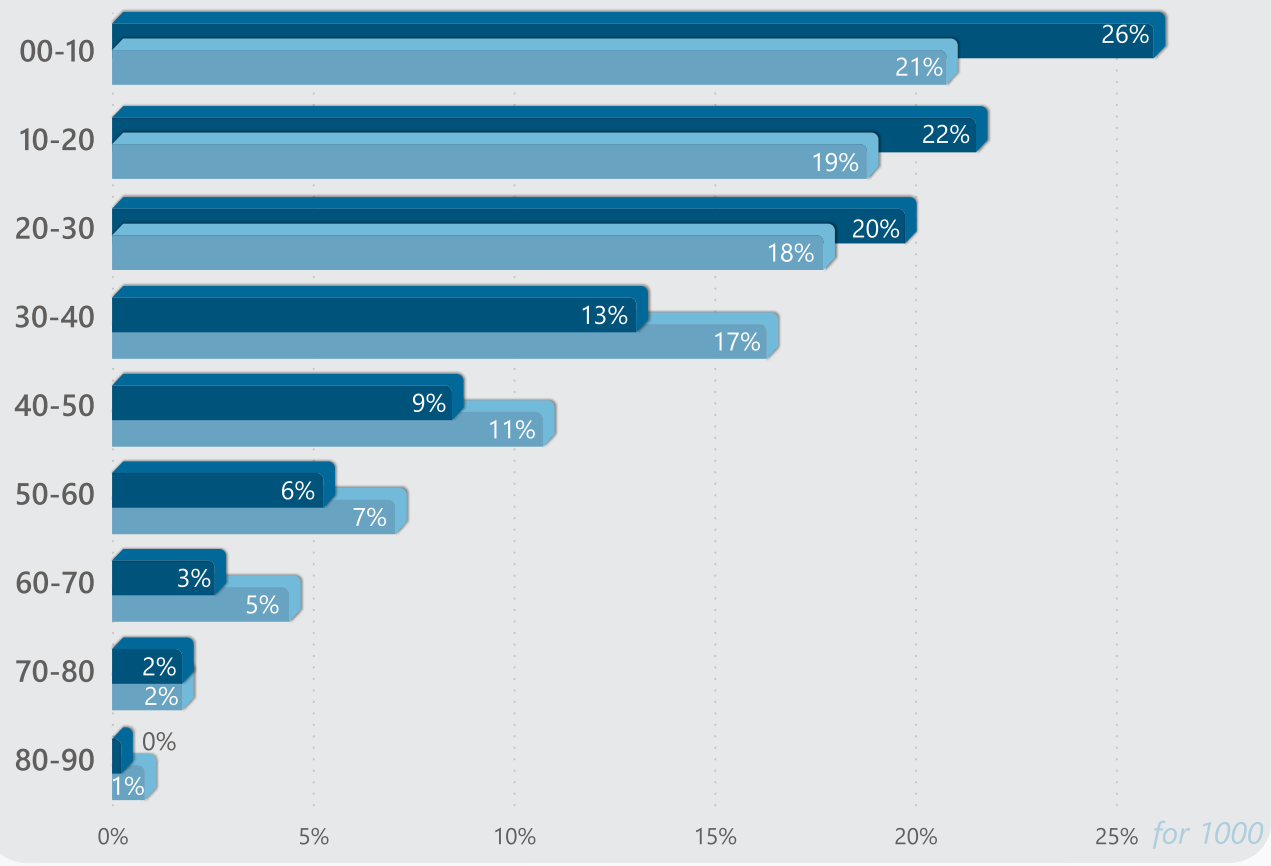
• Ages Breaks

The study shows notable decrease in the percentage of the small age groups especially between 0 and 30 years old, and this contradict with multiple studies and reports that indicated that the fertility rate of the Syrians increased during the crisis, the youth group between 20 and 30 decrease with around 2% compared to the total population between 2011 and 2021, while for the males this decrease was more than 3% as this is the group of the individuals who are usually participating in the military actions and are expected to be the highest percentage of victims. on the other hand, the individuals between 30 and above increased in 2021 compared with 2011.

1- <http://cbssyr.sy/>

Changes to Age Ranges Percentage between 2011-2021

The Legend ● Per-2011 ● Per-2021



Gender Ratio

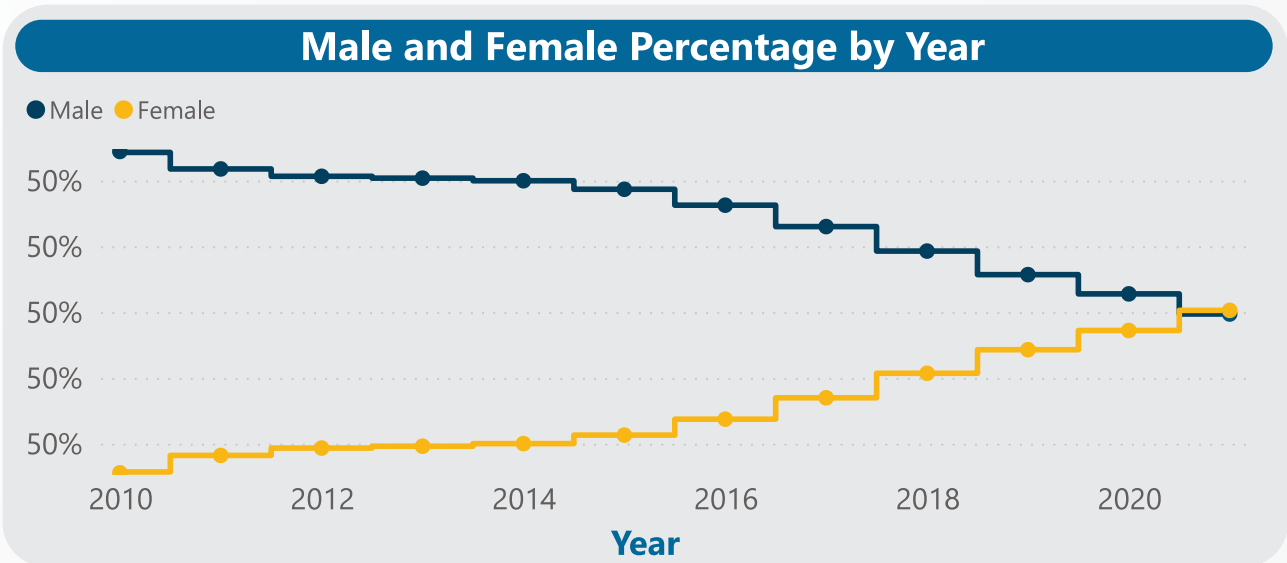
2021 can be considered as the first year where the percentage between males and females became higher to the side of the female and although it's not a significant difference yet it is notable change to the demographic structure of the Syrian population. The chart below illustrate the continuous change to the ratio between males and females by year, where we can see that while it was always more than 100% which means that males are in higher ratio compared to females yet in 2021 this percentage decrease to 99.98%.

Male to Female Ratio by Year



2- <https://population.un.org/wpp/>

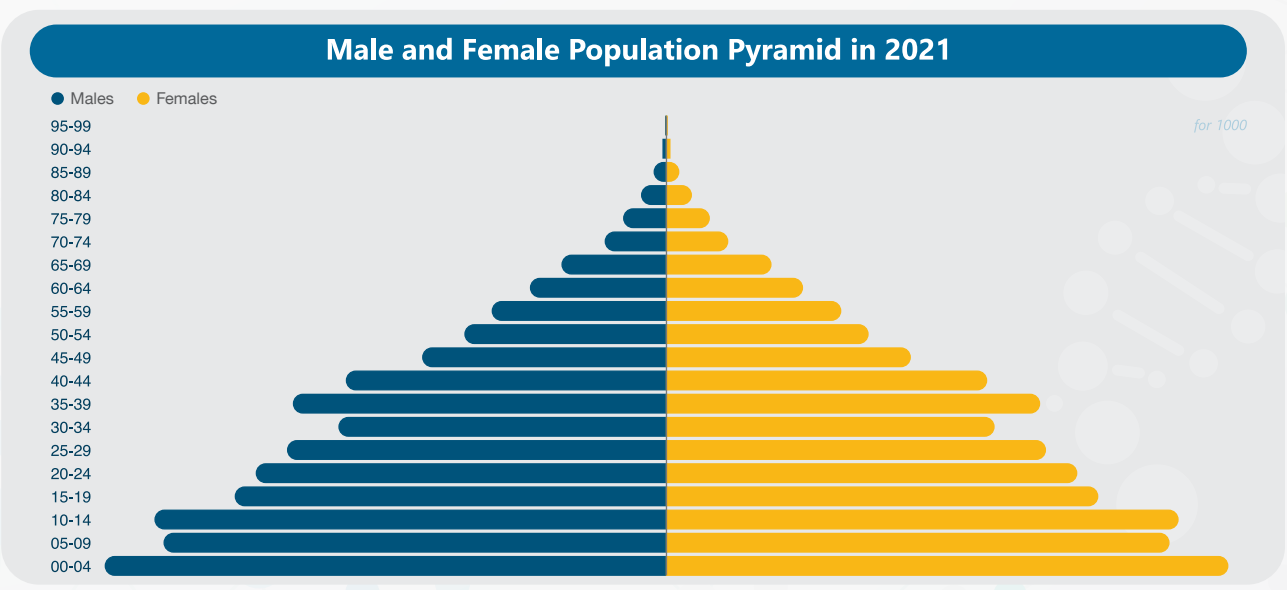
Also as illustrated in the chart below we can see how the percentage between male and female changed dramatically through the course of the Syrian crisis between 2011 and 2021, and according to the estimated forecasting based on that deterioration of the male and female percentage we can see that the percentage in 2021 is 49.99% for males and 50.01% for females.



The charts and the information indicated that a dramatic change occurred to the demographic structure of the Syrians not only based on the age groups but also to the male and female percentage, and this will result into a significant social impact to the overall Syrian population for the next decades giving the fact that the mentioned percentages used to be stable for the Syrian population at least during the last decades prior to the Syrian crisis. Moreover this is going to affect the national indicators of the Syrian Country.

• Population Pyramid

According to the calculations mentioned above we can see below the male and female population pyramid of the Syrians in 2021 estimated according to the latest ratio between males and females for each 1000 inhabitants.



The percentages of the age breaks in the population pyramid were calculated making use of the announced population pyramid percentage for the Syrian population in 2011, 2015, and 2020 according to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs as well as the overall growth rate indicated by the World Bank and based on estimation and opinions of experts in the social studies, keeping in mind the consideration of the overall impacts of the Syrian crisis over the different age breaks, as we can see there is a notable decrease in the percentage of the age breaks for the youths between 15 and 35 years old, which is a result of the previous changes to the age breaks of the Syrian population during ten years of conflict. This fact will have a notable impact on different economic and social topics related to the national manpower as well as other national indicators and it may affect the ability or the capacity of any reconstruction process in case it happened.

THE POPULATION IN THE GOVERNORATES

In 2017 a UN funded project shared a study indicating the people in need according to the sub-districts of Syria that very useful and helpful study covered all of the sub-districts and was the base of the study that was conducted through our platform, we started with those numbers and tuning them to convert the total people in need into total population, accordingly the total population in 2017 was estimated around 17.12 million individuals, this number was very close to the numbers estimated and shared by the World Bank as well as other different UN agencies.

Giving this fact we were able to consider this number as a base number of the total Syrians for 2017, later we applied the growth and fatality rates issued by the World Bank in order to reach out to the total number of the Syrians for 2021 and taking out the numbers of the refugees as well as the absent Syrians during the mentioned period, as stated in the joint published study between InformaGENE and Jusoor Center

The hard part was to modify and tune the numbers for each of the governorates using the same approach and the same mathematical formulas, and in order to achieve this, the study came up with a modification percentage based on the differences between the numbers for the last five years and through calculating the same growth and fatality rates for each of the governorates then making use of the published IDPs movement reports through the UN agencies and other international and local NGOs to tune the number through each of the governorates.

Moreover this study was able to extend this calculation to the level of sub-district which we can consider as an achievement giving the fact of the absence of such numbers especially for the last three years. Using the mentioned methodology and approach we were able to identify the numbers of the Syrians in each of the governorates as in the following chart.

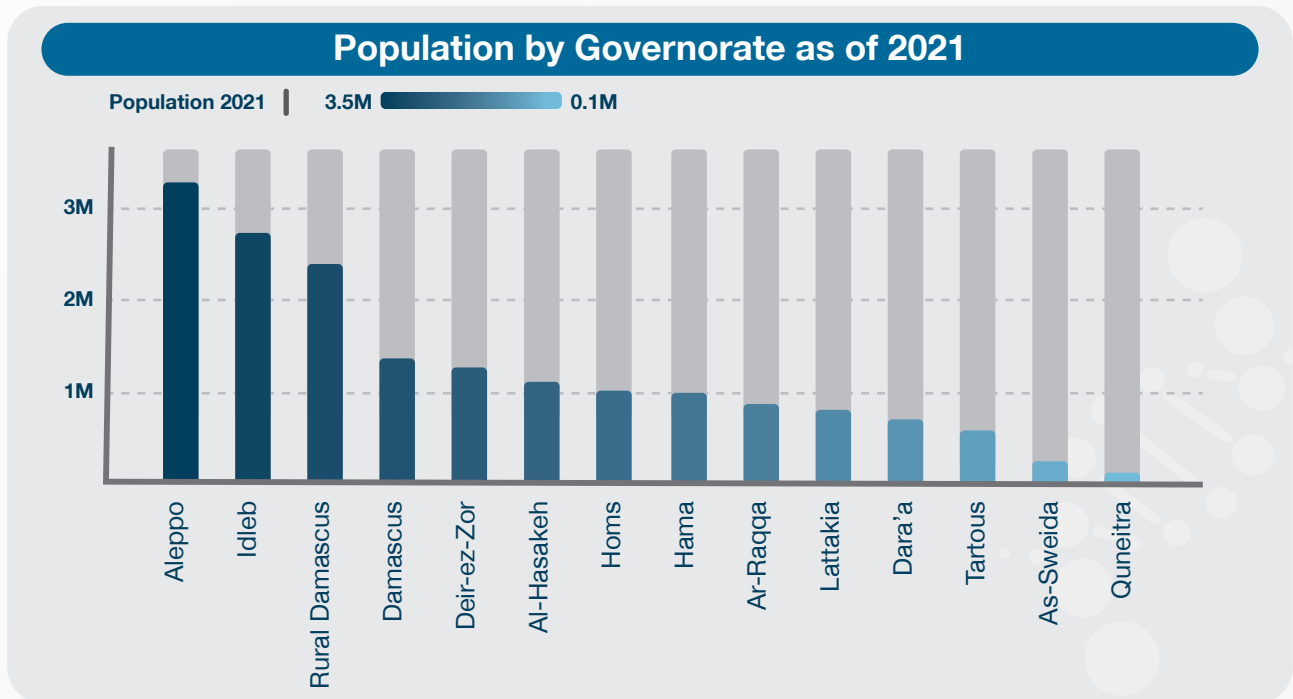
On the level of governorates Aleppo Governorate came in the first place with more than 3 million individuals living within the administrative territory of Aleppo Governorate, it is important to mention that Aleppo Governorate is one of the few cases where we have all the different actors controlling different locations and geographic territories within the same governorate.

3- <https://hno-syria.org/>

4- <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/>

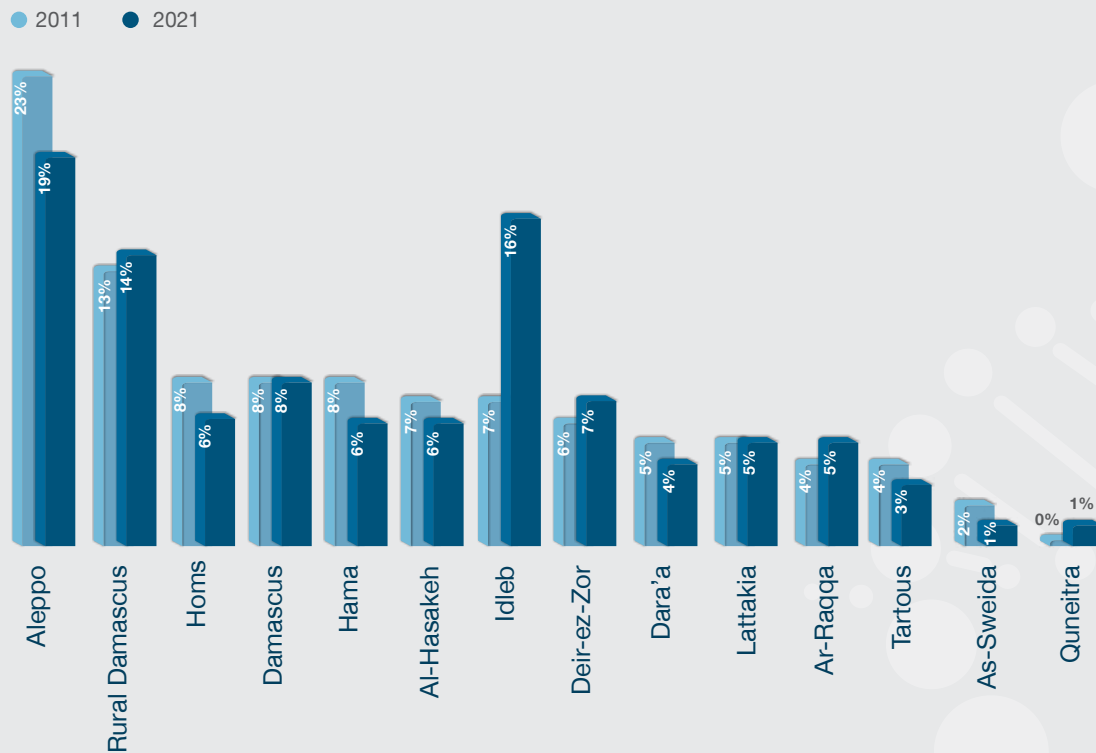
5- https://www.jusoor.co/content_images/users/5/-contents/1394.pdf

Moreover, according to the population numbers issued by the Syrian CBS in 2011, Idlib Governorate came away below in the order of the highest populated governorates while here in our study Idlib Governorate came second in population with more than 2.7 million individuals and more than 15% of the total population of Syrians in 2021, this illustrate clearly how Idlib Governorate as an example of the areas that are almost fully out of Syrian government control became a destination of the individuals who refused to stay in the areas controlled by the Syrian regime. and despite the harsh circumstances and difficulties as long as at the different conflict incidents like air strikes clashes and lack of internal security, yet Idlib Governorate gained around 90% increase to its original population compared with the numbers of 2011.



Following this calculation it was essential to come up with a chart that indicates the percentage of the difference of population for each of the governorates out of the total population in Syria between 2011 and 2021, according the chart below it's obvious how the conflict affected the percentage of the population in each of the governorates where we can see clearly that a governorate like Idlib increased more than double of its original percentage of 2011 because it became a destination of the Syrians who refused the current Syrian regime, moreover due to the continuous forced internal displacement that was imposed by the Syrian regime against the Syrians who were in the areas out of his control especially in the besieged areas, and for sure this can be consider as one of the most influenced push and pull factors to be considered within the Syrian conflict, as the freedom from the Syrian regime was more influencing than the personal security in a governorate like Idlib where military attacks and low level of law enforcement and internal security are common threats.

Governorates' Population Ratio between 2011 - 2021

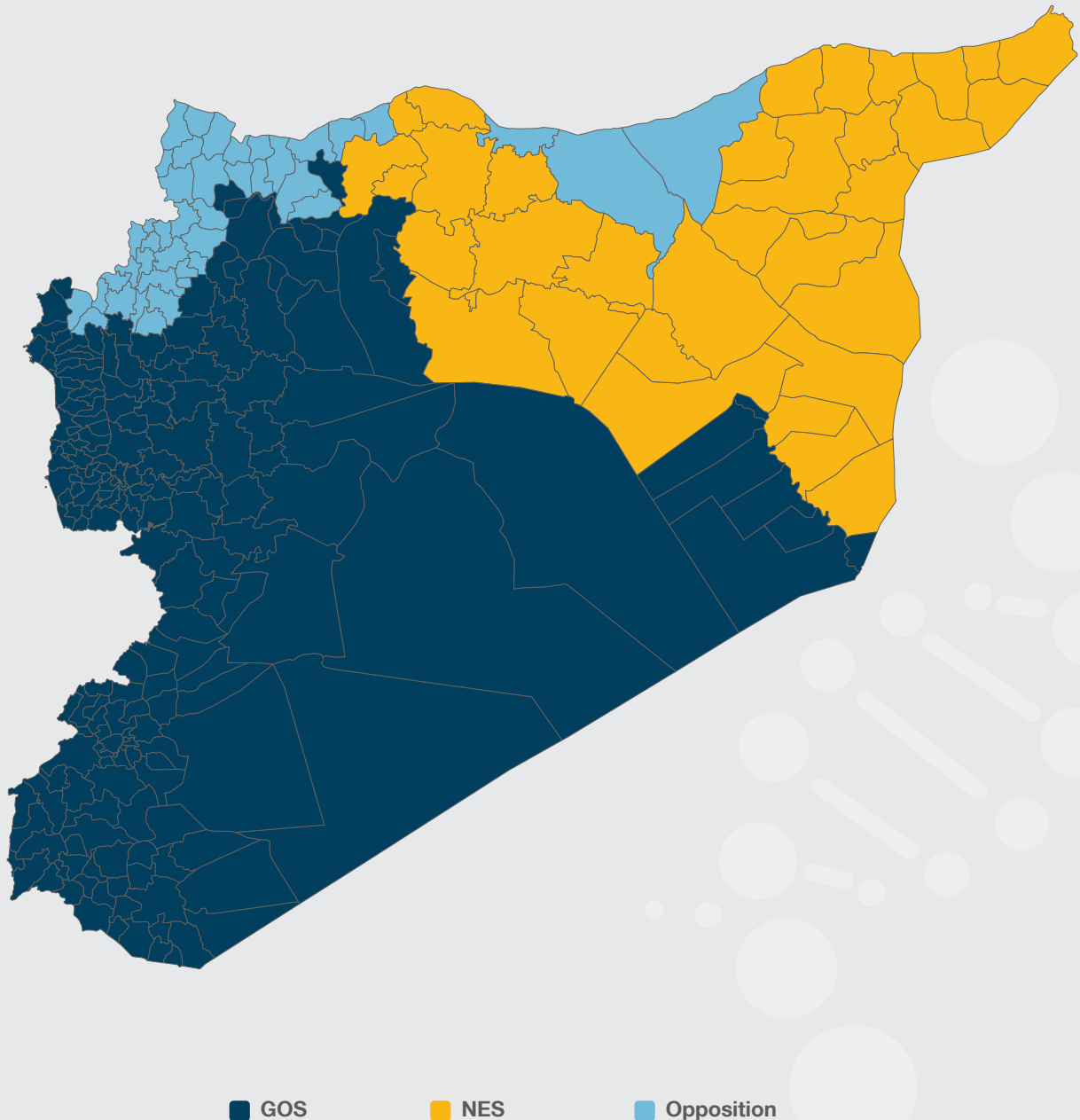


Moreover, main governorates like Aleppo and Damascus lost certain percentage of their population either due to the same mentioned reasons or due to the external immigration where more than 8 million Syrians pushed to flee out of their country. through a quick look to the differences of the percentage for each of the governorates we can see that many of the governorates that are out of the Syrian regime control gained more population compared with the other governorates that are still under the Syrian regime control which either maintain a similar percentage of their population or lost certain percentage of the population.

THE POPULATION IN AREAS OF CONTROL

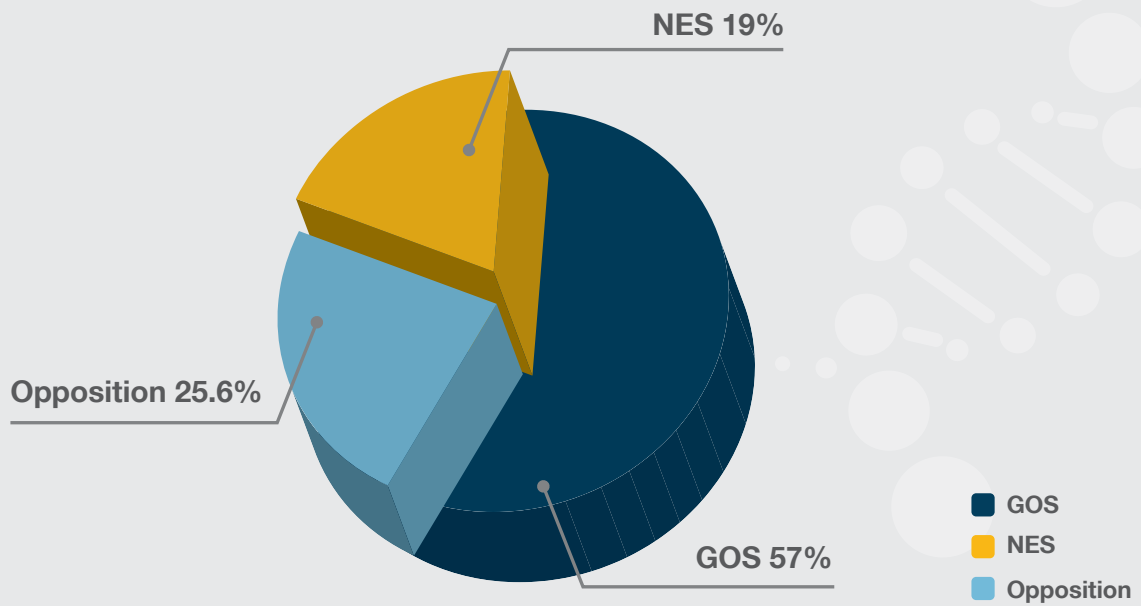
As mentioned in the previous section and making use of the reference study and considering the modification and the tuning factors, we were able to amend the final number of population for Syria and also for each of the governorates down to each of the sub-districts using the same methodology that we used previously with the governorates, in order to divide the areas of control according to the administrative borders of each of the sub districts.

Areas of Control by Sub-District



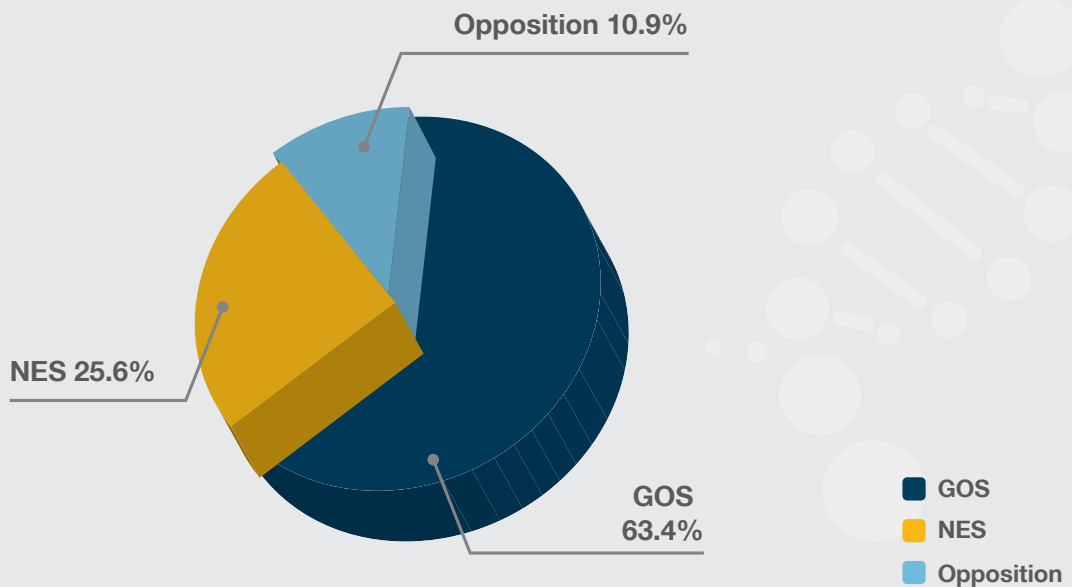
as a result, the sub-districts of Syria were categorized based on the controlling party then we calculated the percentage of population for each of the sub-districts and conducted the same modification and tuning methodology explained in the previous sections to find out that total population for each of the sub-districts and then we were able to calculate the percentage of the population in each of the areas of control. According to our study the Syrian regime controlled areas holds the majority of the Syrians with around 57% of the total population and a number around 9.4 million, while the opposition areas came second with around 24% of total population and the number close to 4 million, while the areas under SDF control came with around 19% of the total population and around 3.5 million inhabitants.

Population Percentage in Areas of Control

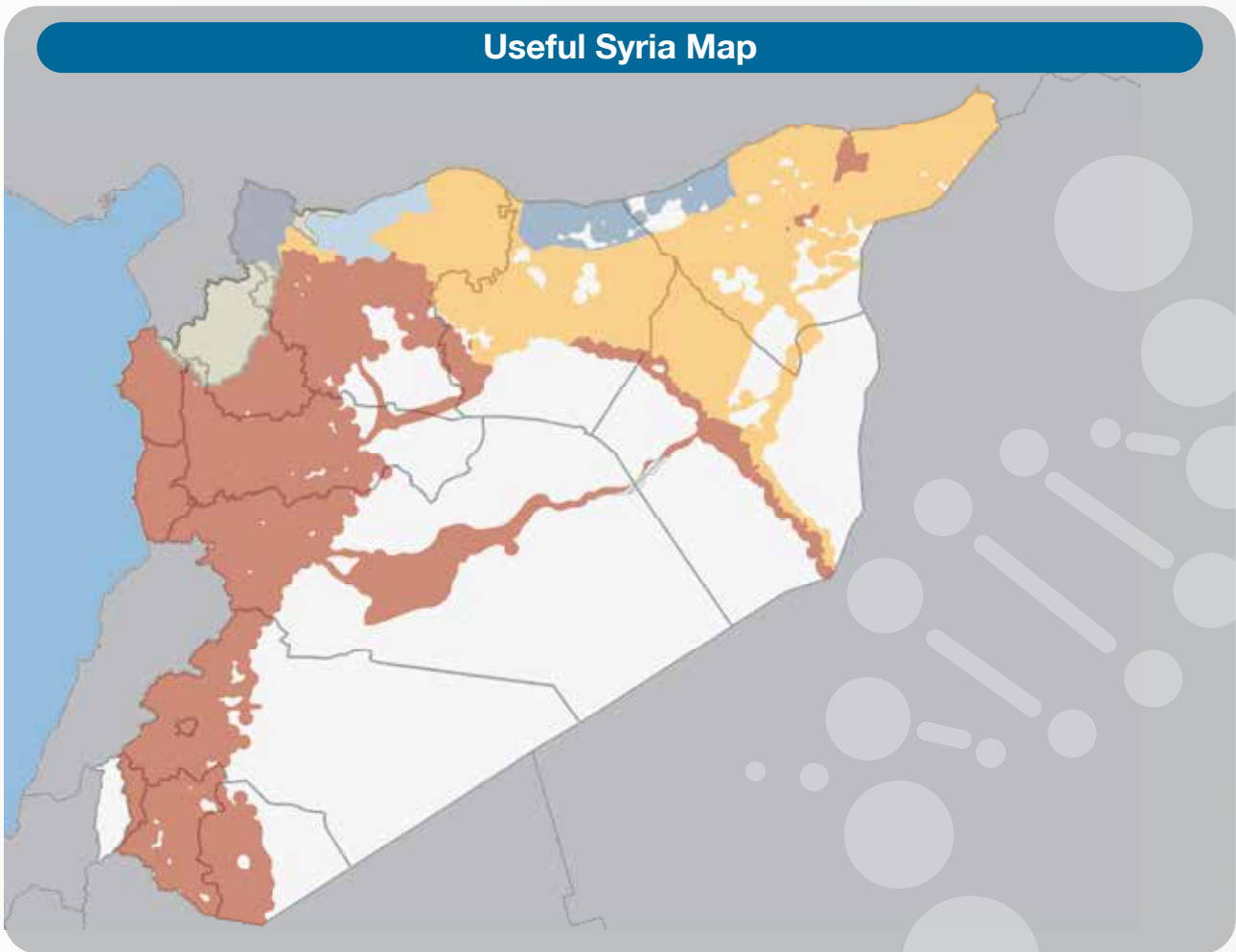


According to the detailed conflict map the Syrian regime controls around 63% of the total territory of Syria while both SDF and the Opposition hold control over the rest with 25.6% and 10.9% successively

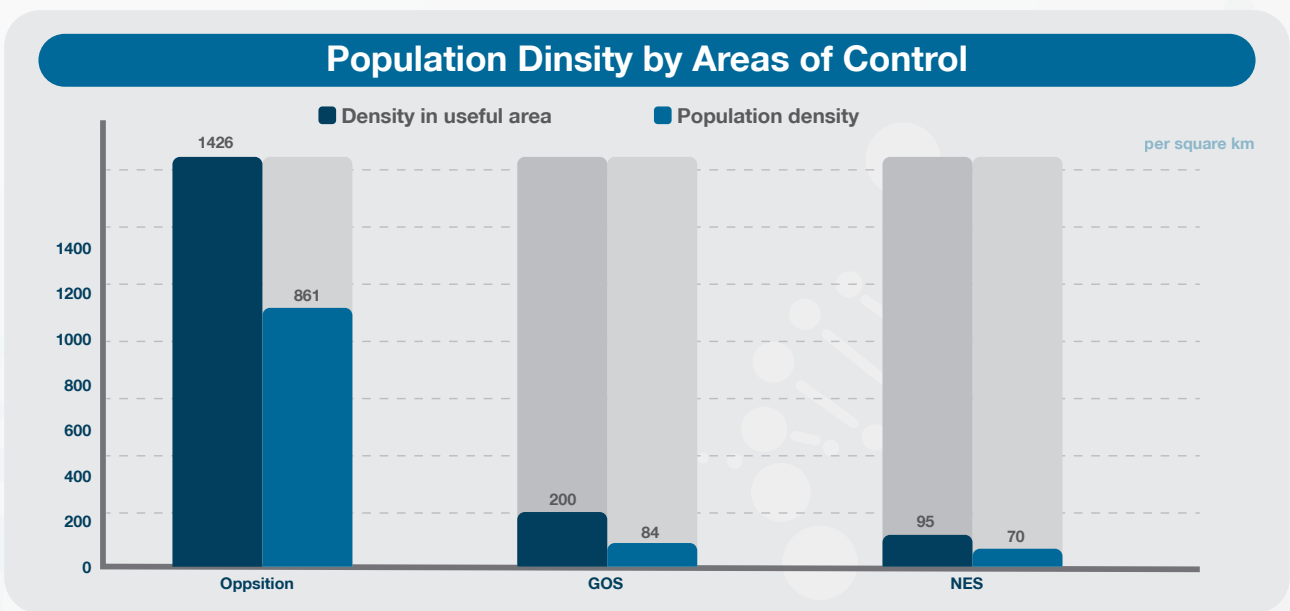
Controlled Areas



according to the calculations, the density of population in the Syrian regime area was around 84 individual per square kilometer and the opposition areas were the most density populated areas with around 861 individuals per square kilometer, however if we consider the term identified as "Useful Syria"



those numbers are going to change dramatically and while the opposition areas remains the highest density populated areas, the numbers became more then mentioned before and exceed the 1000 individual per square kilometers to reach to a value of 1426 individuals per square kilometer, and the number in the regime controlled areas became 200 individuals per square kilometer while four selfadministration controlled areas it was less than a 100 individuals per square kilometers for both all territory or the area of Useful Syria



WHY THIS STUDY IS IMPORTANT

This study represents for the first time since 2017 the extended population at the level of the administrative division in Syria, Moreover this study represent the changes to the demographic structure of the Syrian population by age and gender which is also an important approach to understand the impact of the Syrian conflict on the Syrian population which will be also useful to understand the impacts to the most affected and vulnerable population groups in Syria.

The study can be used as a reference not only for the researches and studies but also as a reference number for the humanitarian activities and development. And although the political usage of those numbers is also an option however we need to be very careful due to the mathematical approach as presented in this study, however this study give us an idea about the impact of 10 years of conflict to the life, circumstances, and that situation of the Syrian population inside Syria and provide us with a clear illustration of how the course of the wide range of hostile activities and conflict affected the population inside Syria.



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