

Searching for Syria? Google and UNHCR offer answers to five top questions



22 May 2017 | [Español](#) | [Français](#)



The immersive new website answers five common questions people are asking about the Syrian refugee crisis. © Getty Images

New York / London / Paris / Berlin / Madrid – UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and Google are launching a powerful new website that gives global online audiences an informative and compelling insight into the Syrian refugee crisis, its staggering human cost and the world's humanitarian response aimed at helping millions of Syrian families, forced from their homes by violence and persecution, survive and restore their dignity.

The “Searching for Syria” website (<https://www.searchingforsyria.org>) combines UNHCR data and stories, Google Search Trends and other sources to deliver answers to the five most common queries that people around the world are asking about the Syrian refugee crisis:

- What was Syria like before the war?
- What is happening in Syria?
- Who is a refugee?
- Where are Syrian refugees going?
- How can I help Syrian refugees?

The answers are delivered through rich and immersive multimedia content – some produced by UNHCR and some provided by Google.

“Searching for Syria aims to dispel myths and misconceptions about Syria and refugees and provide an entirely fresh look at the biggest humanitarian tragedy of today,” said UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi. “This is a fantastic project with Google that allows us to pinpoint and answer the five key questions about Syrian refugees and displaced that audiences most want to know and help us rally much needed support and funding for our humanitarian effort.”

“We’re proud to work with the UNHCR to develop Searching for Syria to help raise awareness and inform the world on the human cost of the ongoing conflict and the refugee crisis,” said Jacqueline Fuller, Vice President of Google.org. “The scale of the Syrian refugee crisis is difficult for most of us to fathom, but the questions on Searching for Syria are a reflection of many people’s desire to understand. Among the top searches in Germany, France, and the UK last year was: What is happening in Syria?”

With the Syrian crisis in its seventh year testing the international resolve and ability to end the conflict, more than five million Syrian refugees face increasing hardships and risks. Host communities in neighbouring countries region continue to bear the brunt of the response to the Syrian crisis in a manner that is not sustainable. Meanwhile, the humanitarian effort for Syrian refugees, led by UNHCR, faces critical challenges with only 17 per cent of funds available to meet the immediate needs of uprooted Syrian families this year.

Throughout the experience of the “Searching for Syria” website, audiences can browse through the five queries and dive deeper into the content through short editorial passages, refugee profiles, photographs and videos. For users wishing to engage further, the website will offer options to share content via social networks, donate or sign up to UNHCR’s #WithRefugees global petition asking the world leaders to ensure education for refugee children, adequate shelter and livelihoods for refugee families.

The “Searching for Syria” website is available in English, French, German and Spanish with an Arabic version soon to follow. The website will be featured on the Google home page (<http://www.google.com>) in selected countries or can be accessed directly at <http://www.searchingforsyria.org>.

About Syrian refugee crisis:

Since the beginning of the Syrian conflict in March 2011, approximately half of the country’s population (estimated 22 million) has been forced to flee their homes. More than five million live as refugees in neighbouring countries. This makes Syrians the largest refugee group in the world. Another 6.3 million are displaced inside Syria.

Nine in 10 Syrian refugees live in rural and urban host communities in neighbouring countries. Only about 10 per cent of more than five million Syrian refugees live in camp settings.

Turkey, with nearly three million registered Syrian refugees, is the top refugee hosting country in the world.

Iraq hosts 236,772 registered Syrian refugees.

Lebanon hosts more than one million Syrian refugees (1,011,366). Approximately one in four people in Lebanon is a Syrian refugee.

The 2017 appeal to meet the immediate humanitarian needs of Syrian refugees is only 17 per cent funded.

About UNHCR:

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is mandated by the United Nations to lead and coordinate international action for the worldwide protection of refugees and the resolution of refugee problems. Established in 1950, UNHCR has been

twice awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its humanitarian work – in 1954 and in 1981.

About Google:

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful. Through products and platforms like Search, Maps, Gmail, Android, Google Play, Chrome and YouTube, Google plays a meaningful role in the daily lives of billions of people and has become one of the most widely-known companies in the world. Google is a subsidiary of Alphabet Inc.

Media contacts:

For UNHCR:

- In New York, Jenifer FENTON, fenton@unhcr.org, +1 646 255 3054
- In Paris, Céline SCHMITT, schmittc@unhcr.org, +33 1 44 43 48 55, +33 6 23 16 11 78
- In London, Matthew SALTmarsh, saltmars@unhcr.org, +44 203 761 8091, +44 7880 230 985
- In London, Laura PADOAN, padoan@unhcr.org, +44 203 761 8092, +44 777 556 6127
- In Berlin, Stefan TELOEKEN, teloken@unhcr.org, +49 30 202 202 10, +49 151 706 660 13
- In Berlin, Martin RENTSCH, rentsch@unhcr.org, +49 30 202 202 15, +49 151 706 660 15
- In Madrid, María Jesús VEGA, vegam@unhcr.org, + 34 91 5563649, +34 670 66 12 63
- In Amman, Scott CRAIG, craigs@unhcr.org, +962 6510 0460 (2440), +962 7 9276 0640
- In Geneva, Andrej MAHECIC, mahecic@unhcr.org, +41 22 739 83 47, +41 79 642 97 09

For Google:

- press@google.com

Related news and stories

STORIES

'I stopped by your house in Syria today, but no one was home'

STORIES