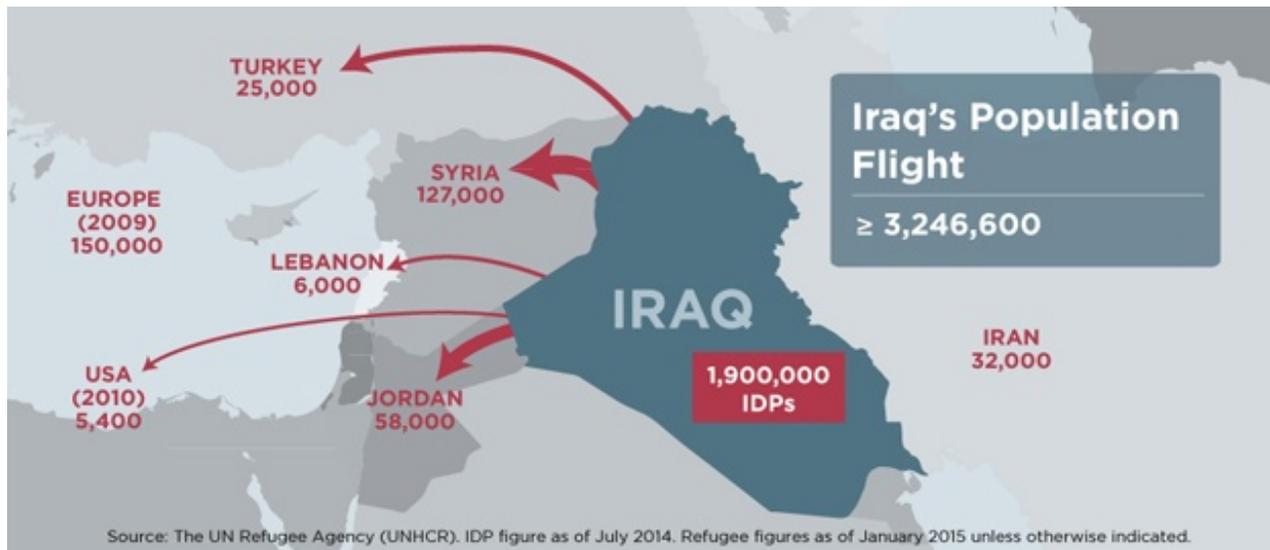


# Refugees & Health

W [watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/costs/human/refugees](http://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/costs/human/refugees)



The insecurity that Iraqis, Afghans, and Pakistanis face extends far beyond the guns and blasts of the war. It includes lack of secure access to food, health care, housing, employment, and clean water and sanitation, as well as the loss of community.

For war refugees, these problems are exacerbated in the face of exile. Approximately 10.1 million people in these war zones have been displaced and are living in grossly inadequate conditions. (Source: The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) (2015).)

Refugees also face difficulties in renewing visas, the denial of civil rights and services, the fear of deportation, and anxiety about the future.

Many displaced persons, usually poorer migrants who lack the finances necessary to travel abroad, have had to relocate within their countries. For example, in Baghdad, internally displaced persons (IDPs) often squat in bombed-out buildings with no water, electricity, sewage, or garbage disposal. Precarious living conditions are further heightened by unemployment.

Those who have managed to escape the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have fled to nearby states including Pakistan, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Turkey, and Iran. The refugee influx into these countries has strained their resources and the livelihoods of their urban working classes. Given the continued reluctance of Western states to resettle Iraqi and Afghan refugees, the limited international assistance received by host states, and the uncertainty as to time of return, the refugee situation continues to worsen.

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## Key Findings

- The number of war refugees and displaced persons in the three countries is estimated at 10.1 million.
- Refugees and IDPs face food insecurity, unemployment, homelessness, lack of adequate health care, water, electricity, and sanitation, among other issues.

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## Recommendations

- The Congressional Research Service should submit an annual report to Congress on displacement and refugees in regions where the US is at war.

(Page updated as of December 2016)