Your relocation guide to Syria

Atlantic International Movers

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Memb No: A091

TELEPHONE:	Country code (963)
STANDARD TIME:	GTM +2 hours (+3 hours March – October)
WEIGHTS & MEASURES:	Metric
ELECTRICITY:	220 volts AC, 50 Hz
INOCULATIONS / VACCINATIONS:	Hepatitis A and B, Poliomyelitis, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Typhoid, TB, Rabies
PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:	Jan 1, 24, Mar 8, 31, Apr 17, May 1, 5, 6 Aug 8, Oct 6, 15, Nov 4, Dec 25
OFFICE HOURS:	08.30-14.30 Saturday – Thursday
BANK HOURS:	08.00-14.00 Saturday – Thursday
EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:	Fire – 113 Ambulance – 110 Police – 112
BRITISH EMBASSY IN SYRIA: SUSPENDED	In an emergency contact any European Consulate Emergency number FCO London (+44) 20 7008 1500 Web: http://ukinsyria.fco.gov.uk/en/
TOURIST & TRAVEL INFORMATION:	Web: www.syriatourism.org
SYRIAN EMBASSY IN LONDON:	8 Belgrave Square London SW1X 8PH Tel: 0207 245 9012 Fax: 0207 235 4621 Web: http://syria.embassyhomepage.com/

Customs

To the best of our knowledge, the following applies for the importation of household and personal effects into Syria. However, since regulations are subject to change without notice, it is always advisable to check with the authorities that documentation is in order, prior to despatch.

Warning from the British Foreign Office

The British Embassy Damascus has suspended all services and all Diplomatic personnel have been withdrawn from Syria.

Those who choose to remain in Syria or to visit against our advice should be aware that we cannot provide consular assistance in country. Any British nationals requiring urgent consular assistance can visit the Embassy of any EU Member State in Damascus, or in an emergency call the FCO in London on (+44) 20 7008 1500.

We currently advise against all travel to the Syrian Arab Republic; British nationals in Syria should leave now by commercial means while they are still available. We cannot help you leave Syria.

Household Goods – Returning Syrian Nationals

Documents required:

- Certificate of Residence from the country of origin
- Certificate of cancellation of residence at the country of Origin from Syrian Embassy or consulate
- List of Household goods and personal effects in Arabic
- List of Electric / Electronic Appliances detailing make / year / serial number etc
- List of valuable articles such as gold / silver / carpets / furs etc
- Catalogues / manuals for all electric / electronics, such as computers, tvs, stereos etc
- Immigrant book issued by the Syrian Embassy
- Lease of house, utility bills
- Original Passport and Syrian National ID cards
- Type written inventory in English

Owner must be transferring their normal home to Syria to take up permanent residence.

Goods must have been used.

Only limited amount of alcoholic drink, or tobacco is permitted.

Electrical and Electronic appliances are subject to customs duties. Value and tax assessment will be provided by customs after taking the depreciation into consideration.

Documents must be certified by the Syrian Embassy or consulate at the Country of Origin.

Shipper must be present in country during customs clearance.

Goods must arrive in Syria within four months of arrival of owner.

Only one shipment per returning Syrian National is allowed.

Foreign Nationals

Documents required:

- Type written inventory in English
- List of Electric / Electronic appliances detailing make / year / serial number etc
- List of valuable articles such as gold / silver / carpets / furs etc
- Catalogues / manuals for all electric / electronics, such as computers, tvs, stereos etc
- Work permit in Syria
- Import licence (permit from the Syrian General

Directorate of Customs which allows shipment to be imported on a temporary basis)

- Letter of guarantee from their working entity

Customs duty free entry under temporary admission regime.

Only limited amount of alcoholic drink or tobacco is permitted.

Goods must be retained for personal use only.

Customs clearance cannot be done before the arrival of owner in Syria.

Goods must arrive in Syria within three months of arrival of owner.

Items cannot be sold or abandoned in Syria.

All items must be re-exported at the end of work contract / work permit.

Diplomats & United Nations Personnel

Documents required:

- Type written inventory in English
- List of Electric / Electronic appliances detailing make / year / serial number etc
- List of valuable articles such as gold / silver / carpets / furs etc
- Catalogues / manuals for all electric / electronics, such as computers, tvs, stereos etc
- Diplomatic exemption from the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)

Customs duty free entry.

Customs clearance cannot be done before the arrival of owner in Syria.

Items cannot be sold or abandoned in Syria.

All items must be re-exported at the end of work contract / work permit.

New & Unused Household Goods

Diplomatic Exemption from the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

Customs duty free entry.

Only permitted to Diplomats and United Nations Personnal.

Vehicles

Returning Syrian Nationals

Documents required

- Certificate of Residence from the country of origin
- Certificate of cancellation of residence at the country of origin
- Import licence (permit from the Syrian General Directorate of Customs which allows cars to be imported)
- Immigrant book issued by the Syrian Embassy
- Lease of house, utility bills
- Original Passport and Syrian National ID cards

You have to pay road taxes.

Cars must be 0 (zero) km stating year of manufacturer / model and not older than two years.

- Diesel engines are not permitted
- Customs clearance cannot be done before the arrival of owner in Syria
- Vehicles must arrive in Syria within 4 months of arrival of owner
- Documents must be certified by the Syrian Embassy at the Country of origin
- Only ONE shipment per returning Syrian National is allowed

Foreign Nationals

Documents required:

- Car ownership
- Work permit in Syria
- Residence card in Syria
- Import license (permit from the Syrian General Directorate of Customs which allows shipment to be imported on a temporary basis)
- Letter of guarantee from the work place in Syria

Customs duty free entry under temporary admission regime.

Pays road taxes.

The private car must be retained for personal use only.

Cars must be 0 (zero) km on the clock and must not be older than two years.

Diesel engines are not permitted.

Customs clearance cannot be done before the arrival of owner in Syria.

Vehicles must arrive in Syria within six months of arrival of owner.

Must be re-exported at the end of work contract / work permit.

Diplomats and United Nations Personnel

Diplomatic exemption from the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

Customs and road duties free.

Cars must be retained for personal use only.

Diesel engines are not permitted.

Cars must be re exported at the end of active service.

Motorbikes

Not permitted.

Alcoholic Drinks, Tobacco and Products Derived from Tobacco

Diplomatic Exemption from the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

Customs duty free entry.

Only permitted to Diplomats and United Nations Personnel.

Limited quantity only.

Plants & Products

Diplomatic Exemption from the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

- Phytosanitary certificate

Customs duty free entry.

Only permitted to Diplomats and United Nations Personnel.

Domestic Animals

Diplomatic Exemption from the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

- Veterinary Certificate

Customs duty free entry.

Only permitted to Diplomats and United Nations Personnel

Wedding Trousseaux

Documents required:

- Permit from Syrian Ministry of Economy
- Permit from Syrian General Directorate of Customs

All items are subject to payment of duties and taxes.

Permits and approvals MUST be obtained PRIOR to shipments arrival in Syria – preferably before shipments departure from country of origin.

Inheritance

Documents required:

- Permit from Syrian Ministry of Economy
- Permit from Syrian General Directorate of Customs

All items are subject to payment of duties and taxes.

Permits and approvals MUST be obtained PRIOR to shipments arrival in Syria – preferably before shipments departure from country of origin.

Presents & Souvenirs

Documents required:

- Permit from Syrian Ministry of Economy
- Permit from Syrian General Directorate of Customs

All items are subject to payment of duties and taxes.

Permits and approvals MUST be obtained PRIOR to shipments arrival in Syria – preferably before shipments departure from country of origin.

NOT PERMITTED

- Fine arts / antiques
- Narcotics, drugs and incitements
- Dangerous goods, firearms, ammunition and firearms parts
- Pornographic materials, wireless transmission radios radio controlled games and toys (airplanes, cars, boats)
- Goods which bear a trade name mentioned in the black list drawn in connection with the boycott against Israel

Wood Regulations

Syrian Government adopted ISPM15 (International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures Publication 15) guidelines for regulating wooden packaging material in International trade aka NIFM15 to standardize the treatment of wood packing materials used for transport of goods.

Food

We strongly recommend that shippers be advised not to ship any commercially prepared and purchased food product with your unaccompanied personal goods.

This includes: wines, spirits, beer, cider, spices, herbs, canned packed or wrapped foods, pet food, pastas, rice, food supplements, vitamins, fruit juices, carbonated / noncarbonated drinks, milk, perishable foods, dry foods and any other item intended for human or animal consumption.

If the shipper insists on shipping food items, the specified information below must be gathered and provided for each food item imported. If the information is not provided, the food items may face refusal of entry, requiring segregation / manipulation of the shipment under customs supervision at a bonded facility, at substantial additional cost. Costs could be in the thousands of dollars and can not be anticipated. These costs will be the responsibility of the client.

- Product brand name
- Product classification
- Country of production
- Country of packaging
- Type of product (canned, bottled, packaged)
- Quantity

Ask for **Atlantic form QF565** for completing.

General Information on Syria

Background

Following World War I, France acquired a mandate over the northern portion of the former Ottoman Empire province of Syria. The French administered the area as Syria until granting it independence in 1946. The new country lacked political stability, however, and experienced a series of military coups during its first decades. Syria united with Egypt in February 1958 to form the United Arab Republic. In September 1961, the two entities separated, and the Syrian Arab Republic was reestablished. In November 1970, Hafiz al-ASAD, a member of the Socialist Ba'th Party and the minority Alawi sect, seized power in a bloodless coup and brought political stability to the country. In the 1967 Arab- Israeli War, Syria lost the Golan Heights to Israel. During the 1990s, Syria and Israel held occasional peace talks over its return. Following the death of President al-ASAD, his son, Bashar al-ASAD, was approved as president by popular referendum in July 2000. Syrian troops – stationed in Lebanon since 1976 in an ostensible peacekeeping role - were withdrawn in April 2005. During the July-August 2006 conflict between Israel and Hizballah, Syria placed its military forces on alert but did not intervene directly on behalf of its ally Hizballah. In May 2007 Bashar al-ASAD was elected to his second term as president. Influenced by major uprisings that began elsewhere in the region, antigovernment protests broke out in the southern province of Dar'a in March 2011 with protesters calling for the repeal of the restrictive Emergency Law allowing arrests without charge, the legalization of political parties, and the removal of corrupt local officials. Since then demonstrations and unrest have spread to nearly every city in Syria, but the size and intensity of protests have fluctuated over time. The government has responded to unrest with a mix of concessions - including the repeal of the Emergency Law and approving new laws permitting new political parties and liberalizing local and national elections - and force. However, the government's response has failed to meet opposition demands for ASAD to step down, and the government's ongoing security operations to quell unrest and widespread armed opposition activity have led to increasingly violent clashes between government forces

and oppositionists. International pressure on the ASAD regime has intensified since late 2011 as the Arab League, EU, Turkey, and the United States have expanded economic sanctions against the regime. Lakhdar BRAHIMI, current Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States on the Syrian crisis, in October 2012 began meeting with regional heads of state to assist in bringing about a cease-fire. The combined death toll of Syrian government forces, opposition forces, and civilians amid unrest in October topped 30,000.

Disputes

Golan Heights is Israeli-occupied with the almost 1,000-strong UN Disengagement Observer Force patrolling a buffer zone since 1964; lacking a treaty or other documentation describing the boundary, portions of the Lebanon-Syria boundary are unclear with several sections in dispute; since 2000, Lebanon has claimed Shab'a Farms in the Golan Heights; 2004 Agreement and pending demarcation settles border dispute with Jordan.

Geography

Syria comprises of about 185,180 kmÇ of deserts, plains and mountains. It is divided into a coastal zone – with a narrow, double mountain belt enclosing a depression in the west – and a much larger eastern plateau. The capital, Damascus, is situated in the south west in the semi arid climatic zone of Steppe. The country's waterways are of vital importance to its agriculture development. The longest and most important river is the Euphrates, which represents more than 80% of Syria's water resources. Its main left-bank tributaries, the Balikh and Khabur, are both major rivers and also rise in Turkey. The right-bank tributaries of the Euphrates, however, are small seasonal streams called wadis. In 1973, Syria completed construction of the Tabagah Dam on the Euphrates River upstream from the town of Ar Raqqah. The dam created a reservoir named Lake Assad (Buyayrat al Assad), a body of water about 80km long and averaging 8km in width.

Climate

The most striking feature of the climate is the contrast of sea and desert. Between the humid Mediterranean coast and the arid desert regions lies a semi arid Steppe zone extending across three fourths of the country.

Rainfall on the Mediterranean coast is fairly abundant, annual precipitation ranging between 75 and 100cm's. Most of the rain, carried by winds from the Mediterranean, falls between November and May. The annual mean temperatures range from 7.2ºC in January to 26.6ºC in August. East of the mountains, is a relatively arid zone with warm, dry winds and little rainfall.

Population

Syria's population is 19,314,747, approximately 90% being Arabs. The largest non-Arab minorities are Kurds, most of whom are pastoral people concentrated along the Turkish border and Armenians, who dwell chiefly in the larger cities. The desert is the most sparsely populated area and the west is the most densely settled area.

Language

Arabic is the first and official language; Kurdish, Armenian, Aramaic, Circassian are widely understood. The older generation often speaks French whilst English is understood mostly amongst the younger and middle aged groups.

Currency

The currency of Syria is the Syrian Pound or Lira, sometimes abbreviated to SP or LS (livre Syrien) but more often known as S£.

Notes and coins are printed in both Arabic and English. The following denominations are available:

Notes: 1, 5, 10, 25, 50, 100, 200, 500 and 1000

Coins: 1/4, 1/2, 1, 2, 5, 10, 25

Economy

After modest economic reform in recent years, Syria's economy suffered the effects of political unrest and violence in 2011. Economic growth slowed because of international sanctions and reduced domestic consumption and production. Prior to the unrest, Damascus had cut lending interest rates, opened private banks, consolidated multiple exchange rates, raised prices on some subsidized items, and established the Damascus Stock Exchange, which began operations in 2009. The economy remains highly regulated by the government, which has increased subsidies and tightened trade controls to assuage protesters and protect foreign currency reserves. Long-run economic constraints include foreign trade barriers, declining oil production, high unemployment, rising budget deficits, and increasing pressure on water supplies caused by heavy use in agriculture, rapid population growth, industrial expansion, and water pollution.

Religion

Islam is the predominant religion, with the Sunni sect forming the majority (74%). Other minorities include Alawites, Druze, Shi'ites, Yazidis and Ismailis. Christians also have a strong presence in Syria (16%) and several Orthodox churches, including Greek, Syrian, and Armenian play a prominent role in the social makeup. There is a small Jewish Community (10%) mainly in Damascus, Al Qamishli and Aleppo.

Education

Since 1967 all Syrian schools, colleges, and universities have been under close government supervision. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education are primarily responsible for all aspects of administration, including curricula development.

Schooling is divided into six years of compulsory primary education, three years of lower secondary education and three years of upper secondary education. General secondary education offers academic courses and prepares students for university entrance; the last two years of this stage are divided into literary and scientific streams.

Vocational secondary training offers courses in industry, agriculture, commerce, and primary school-teacher training. The usual entrance age for secondary schooling is 15, but is 14 for teacher training institutions.

Health

Syria has a well-developed health care system in the cities, involving state and private hospitals, many public and private outpatient clinics and different sorts of health centres. The health system for the rural areas is limited with few services. Syria has problems with TB and Trachoma, especially with the Bedouins and the poor. A yellow Fever Certificate is necessary for travelers arriving from infected areas. Treatment may be expensive, and payment in advance may be required. Travellers are advised to arrange for Medical Insurance prior to departure.

Although every care is taken to ensure that all information in the Relocation Guide is accurate and up to date we cannot accept liability for any inaccuracy.