

# **The Returning Syrian Diaspora: A Cultural Assessment and Implications for Entrepreneurship**

**Casimir Barczyk**  
**Purdue University Northwest**

**Charles Rarick**  
**Purdue University Northwest**

**Kasia Firlej**  
**Purdue University Northwest**

**Gregory Winter**  
**University of Iraq Baghdad**

*This paper assesses the cultural values of Syrian people anticipating a return to their homeland following a 14-year civil war and international sanctions that have decimated its economy. The paper provides insight into a displaced refugee population spread across many countries that reaches into the millions. The anticipated return of these Syrians follows a lightening offensive by opposition forces that ousted Syria's leader, Bashar al-Assad, on December 8, 2024. The analysis also provides implications for entrepreneurship that could help rebuild the war-torn country and restart its crippled economy. The cultural assessment was conducted using the 5-D Hofstede model of cultural values. It compared the cultural orientations of the Syrian diaspora with Iraq, Jordan and Turkey – countries into which the displaced people settled over the last decade – and with the USA. This paper also contrasts the cultural orientations of the victims of the Syrian diaspora hoping to return to their homeland with the data on Syria originally obtained by Hofstede in 1980. The results suggest that the returning displaced Syrians have some of the cultural values important for country-changing entrepreneurship.*

*Keywords: cross cultural management, cultural values, entrepreneurship, Hofstede, national culture, Syria*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Syria is a country once governed by France following World War I. The French administered it under a mandate until 1946 when it ultimately gained independence. Uniting with Egypt in 1958, the country was called the United Arab Republic until it separated in 1961, establishing the Syrian Arab Republic (CIA World Factbook, 2025).

From 1971 onward, Syria was ruled by Hafez al-Assad, who died in 2000. After Hafez al-Assad's death, his son, Bashar al-Assad, was elected president in an uncontested election. A politically divided

country, Syria became a victim of the Arab Spring. Anti-government rebels protesting the rule of al-Assad were met with harsh resistance by the Syrian army. In the chaos of the rebellion terrorist organizations such as ISIS and al-Nusra joined in a struggle to capture control of the country. The bloody civil war resulted in the Syrian diaspora with millions of people fleeing their country (Kahn & Khan, 2017). Many fled to Germany, Iraq, Jordan, and Turkey. Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, welcomed the refugees. In 2018, an estimated 5.6 million Syrians fled their country according to the United Nations Higher Commission for Refugees (UNHCR, 2018).

The diaspora into Turkey and other countries caused a massive humanitarian crisis. Over the years the Syrian pound's value has been drained with inflation reaching into double digits. Reuters news agency reports that the Central Bank of Syria currently has \$200 million in foreign exchange reserves compared to \$17 billion in 2010 (Kozul-Wright, 2025). Among the challenges faced by the country is a need for funding, peace and security. The World Food Programme estimates that more than 3.1 million Syrians do not have enough food to eat (WFT Syria, 2024). Most of the country's oil and gas wells, electrical grids, roads, farmland and infrastructure have been destroyed. Syria has been further crippled by wide ranging Western sanctions imposed on the country and on Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the main group that overthrew Bashar al-Assad. HTS is now leading Syria's transition away from the corrupt system that gave loyalists to the Assad family not only privileged access to government contracts, but also control over key industries. The corruption extended into al-Assad's lucrative production of Captagon, an illegal addictive amphetamine used widely in the Gulf states (Kozul-Wright, 2025).

Early observers of the political situation were unable to see an end to the hostilities and predict a return of the Syrian refugees to their homeland (Kirisici, 2017; Vignal, 2018). However, much has quickly changed since December 2024. Now the imperative is to stabilize HTS, the care-taker government seeking to introduce a free-market system, overhaul the tax system, and allay concerns about goods shortages. The role of entrepreneurship to buttress HTS's efforts to rebuild Syria's economy is vital. The question is whether the Syrians returning to their homeland have the cultural orientation to facilitate the process.

While Syrian refugees are sometimes labeled in the news as a problem, it is important to remember the hardships they faced in leaving their country during its brutal civil war. Losing their homes, escaping destruction, and confronted with trauma and even death, they arrived in the refugee camps of their host countries with determination to make the most of their new sanctuaries. Many in Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, and other countries have taken the initiative to start their own businesses, becoming immigrant entrepreneurs. Evidence suggests that some of the Syrian diaspora have the motivation and mindset to engage in various types of entrepreneurship (Bayram, 2019). With the ouster of the al-Assad regime and recent positive changes that have occurred, it is likely that many of the displaced Syrians will return to their homeland. The question is whether they have the cultural orientation to foster the kind of entrepreneurship necessary to rebuild their society and their country. While the data collected in this study are drawn from Syrians in a refugee camp situated in Turkey, they are representative of the country's newer generation. It is appropriate to generalize from this sample to the nearly 5.6 million people in the Syrian diaspora and to the greater population of Syria. The following section highlights some of Syria's history and geography.

### **Highlights of Syria's History**

Syria is a country in the Middle East that has seen invasions and occupations over centuries from Romans, Mongols, Crusaders, and Turks. It is home to diverse ethnic and religious groups. The country has a population of 22.1 million and covers a land area of 185,180 square kilometers. The capital of the country is Damascus and the native language spoken is Arabic.

Syria's history dates back to 3500 BC with the Kingdom of Ebla, the earliest recorded indigenous civilization in the region. The area was conquered by the Greeks under Alexander the Great in 330 BC and became part of the succeeding Seleucid Empire. In 63 BC, Roman general Pompey the Great annexed Syria and it became a Roman province. Following the Arab conquest of Syria in the 7th Century, the Umayyad caliphs made Damascus the capital of their empire. In 1175 AD Syria was largely conquered by the Kurdish leader Salah ad-Din, the founder of the Ayyubid dynasty. It was later invaded by the Turks and Mongols and became part of the Ottoman Empire. In World War I the Ottoman Empire fought on the side of Germany

and Austria-Hungary. It was defeated, resulting in the loss of control of the entire Near East to the British and French. In 1918, Arab and British forces captured Damascus, ending 400 years of Ottoman rule. With the fall of France in World War II, Syria was controlled by Vichy France until the British and Free French forces invaded it in the 1941 Syria-Lebanon campaign. In 1946 France left the area and its troops and Syria became independent. The period following independence was characterized by instability and periodic coups until the late 1960's. In 1967 Egypt, Jordan, and Syria were defeated in the Six-Day War with Israel, with the Golan Heights being seized by Israel. Three years later, Hafez al-Assad came to power in a coup and this began the reign of terror and corruption lasting until 2024 with the ouster of Bashar al-Assad (BBC News, 2025).

### **Highlights of Syria's Geography**

Syria is situated in the Middle East on the Asian continent, east of the Mediterranean Sea. It has an area of 185,180 square kilometers (71,498 square miles), which makes it slightly larger than the state of Washington. Syria's population, based on 2025 estimates, is 25 million people. It has a literacy rate of 94% (CIA World Factbook, 2025).

Syria is rich in natural resources, including oil, natural gas, phosphate, agricultural lands, and other major minerals. Its geography is characterized by fertile plains, high mountains, and deserts. After years of civil war, Syria has a number of resources that have survived the economic sanctions restricting trade with the European Union, the Arab League, and other nations, including the US and countries in Europe as well as Asia. Oil is one of the major contributors to the Syrian economy. It is a small producer of oil, accounting for about 0.5% of the world's production. It is estimated that Syria has about 2.5 billion barrels of oil reserve, which is slightly larger than all of its neighbors, except Iraq. Natural gas is abundant in Syria with about 8.5 trillion cubic feet of it. It is Syria's most abundant natural resource, which is used locally for domestic electricity generation. Agricultural land is another one of Syria's natural resources. According to a 2014 report by the World Bank, it is reported that 76% of Syria's total land area, estimated at 139,210 square kilometers, is agricultural soil. About 25% of its land area, 4.6 million hectares, is arable land. Syria is also rich in several metallic and non-metallic mineral resources. It is one of the major producers of cement in the Middle East. Syria's mining sector also produces steel, salt, gypsum, chrome ore, marble, and industrial salt. These minerals, however, are produced in small quantities and do not significantly contribute to the economy (World Atlas, 2019).

### **Assessment of Cultural Values**

This study compares the cultural values of the Syrian diaspora contemplating a return to their homeland with that of neighboring Middle Eastern countries and the USA. The inclusion of data from the United States on the five Hofstede dimensions is appropriate to facilitate understanding for readers of this paper in the USA. It is also appropriate because the USA is recognized as the most entrepreneurially oriented country in the world. To the extent that the data from the Syrian refugees resemble the cultural orientation of Americans, Syrians will likely be successful at entrepreneurship to rebuild their country and their devastated economy.

The study uses the classification model of Geert Hofstede for cultural comparisons. Hofstede's model is one of the most popular and far-reaching frameworks for the understanding of national cultural differences. His framework explains the dimensions that account for differences between cultures of individuals from different countries. Hofstede was a psychologist who directed the personnel research division at IBM-Europe. Having developed a "values" survey, he conducted a study of the employees in 72 national subsidiaries of IBM during the early 1970s. His findings changed the view of managers and the work of managing across national cultures (Hofstede, 1980a).

From his study of IBM employees, Hofstede identified four cultural dimensions that impact work-related values in different countries. Theories of organizations and management, in his view, were not universal. They were bound by culture. He argued that managerial behavior thought to be appropriate in one culture may be inappropriate in another culture. As such, effective managerial behavior should be predicated on a firm understanding of cultural values (Hofstede, 1980a; Hofstede, 1980b; Hofstede, 1983;

Hofstede, 1993; Hofstede, 1994; Hofstede, 1997; Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede's work has been widely cited in various academic disciplines (Kirkman, Lowe & Gibson, 2006) and is often used to explain organizational behavior from a cross-cultural perspective.

Hofstede's research originally identified four dimensions of culture - power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, and uncertainty avoidance. Power distance refers to the degree to which members of a society expect power to be shared among themselves. Cultures with high power distance expect that people with power will be treated differently than those without power. Status differentiation in high power distance cultures is prominent and acceptable. In low power distance cultures power differentials are not expected, nor considered desirable. Individualism is a dimension that refers to the importance of the individual over the group in terms of societal focus. Individualistic cultures place an importance on people's rights and responsibilities and expect societal members to take care of themselves. This is contrasted with collectivism in which the societal focus is on the group. One's identity is determined by group membership. In collectivistic cultures the group responds to the needs and interests of its members. Masculinity refers to the extent to which a culture values competition, assertiveness, and the acquisition of material goods. This is contrasted with femininity, which values nurturing, relationships, and a concern for others. Uncertainty avoidance is the last of the four dimensions. It refers to a culture's collective tolerance for ambiguity. In high uncertainty avoidance cultures rules and regulations are established to reduce the uncertainty of the future. In such cultures people feel more comfortable in having assurances of what will happen in the future. In low uncertainty avoidance cultures change and ambiguity are not considered a threat.

Collaborating with Hofstede, Michael Bond developed a fifth dimension to the model (Hofstede & Bond, 1988). Originally called Confucianism dynamism, this dimension is now more frequently referred to as long-term orientation. It reflects the extent to which a society encourages and rewards future-oriented behavior such as planning, delaying gratification, and investing in the future. The Hofstede team further uncovered another dimension of national culture referred to as indulgence/restraint (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011; Minkov, 2013). This dimension assesses the extent to which a society permits or suppresses the expression of human desires. Indulgence/restraint was not included as a variable in this study due to the lack of comparative data. The more established five-dimensional (Five D) Hofstede model was used to assess the cultural orientation of the Syrian diaspora summarized in this paper.

Hofstede's work gained great popularity in cross-cultural research and attracted competing models and critics. Other popular models of cultural classification have been developed and evaluated including the Schwartz theory of basic cultural values and the Globe Project (Moalla, 2016). Critics of the Hofstede model have expressed concerns about the generalizability of the findings, the level of analysis, the assumption of political boundaries of countries as cultural entities, and the validity of the survey instrument itself (Blodgett, Bakir, & Rose, 2008; Mc Sweeney, 2002; Smith, 2002). Others have challenged the assumption of the homogeneity of each culture studied (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). Venaik and Brewer (2013) are critical of both Hofstede and the GLOBE investigations and caution against using their findings in marketing management research and practice. The fifth dimension, long-term orientation, has been challenged on the grounds of conceptual validity (Fang, 2003). Grenness (2012) points out the problem of the ecological fallacy in Hofstede's work in which the predominant traits of a culture are generalized to individuals within that cultural group, and not accounting for individual differences. Beugelsdijk, Maseland & Van Hoorn (2015) have suggested that cultures change over time and the original Hofstede rankings may be dated. Some have even questioned the validity of a national culture and the value in predicting organizational behavior (McSweeney, Brown & Lliopoulou, 2016).

While Hofstede's critics have some reasonable concerns over his studies, his research represents the oldest and most comprehensive analysis of cultural values. It would be difficult to find a theory of cultural classification without critics and limitations. Overall, Hofstede's approach may be "blunt" to use the words of Jackson (2011), but it provides useful insight into understanding important cultural values.

This paper provides a glimpse into the cultural values of the Syrian diaspora and compares it with the values of neighboring countries and the USA. The cross-cultural comparison shows that displaced Syrians contemplating a return to their home country share an orientation somewhat conducive to entrepreneurship.

It is not greatly dissimilar to the orientation of Americans, whose nation is recognized as the most entrepreneurially invested country in the world (Jones, 2024). By having a solid understanding of the cultural dimensions of its people, countries can work with organizations to foster and effectively support entrepreneurship that facilitates the development of trade, restoration of infrastructure, and rebuilding of economies. The proper management of national culture dimensions has been positively related to firm success (Li, Lam, & Qian, 2001) and profitability (Martins & Lopes, 2016).

## **Method**

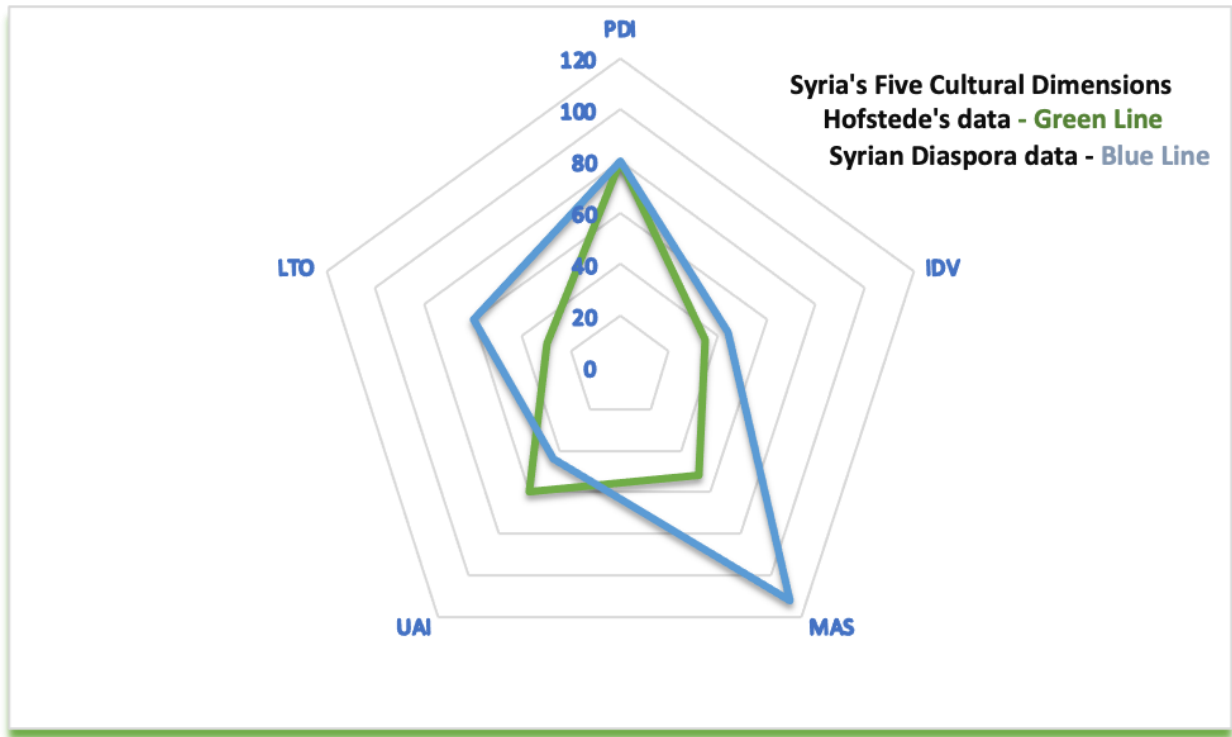
This investigation of cultural values was conducted in a non-governmental organization (NGO) operating in a refugee camp in Turkey. It involved surveying 59 adults living in the camp. The sample consisted of 38 males and 21 females whose age ranged from 20-49. The respondents' median age ranged from 25-29.

Cultural values were measured in the study using Hofstede's Values Survey Module (VSM 94). The items in the VSM 94 measured the culture of the Syrian diaspora using the 5-D model of Geert Hofstede, which includes the dimensions of power distance (PDI), motivation toward achievement and success (MAS), individualism (IDV), uncertainty avoidance (UAI), and long-term orientation (LTO). Value scores were determined using the formula found in the VSM 94 Manual. The scores for the value dimensions obtained in this study were compared to the scores obtained by Hofstede ([www.geert-hofstede.com](http://www.geert-hofstede.com), 2024). Comparisons were made with select countries: Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, and the USA. Scores for the value dimension from all of the countries came from Hofstede's published results. In addition, the results were compared with the data from Hofstede's original study of Syria.

## **RESULTS**

The survey results indicate that the Syrian diaspora is high in power distance, moderate in individualism, very high in motivation toward achievement and success, low in uncertainty avoidance, and high in long-term orientation. There were differences in the cultural dimension scores of the soon-to-be returning diaspora compared to the scores of Syrians analyzed in the original Hofstede study. Figure 1 shows the scores for the diaspora on the five cultural dimensions compared to the original Hofstede study. In the graph the line representing the data from the original Hofstede study is shown in green and the line representing the data from the current study of the Syrian diaspora is shown in blue. The graph shows significant differences in the scores for uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation, and motivation toward achievement and success. Questions can be raised about why these values are different, with one possible answer being that years of internal conflict and years of living outside of their homeland in a refugee camp altered the cultural values of the Syrian diaspora. Regardless of the reason, the current values of this population should be compared with the cultural values of neighboring countries and that of the USA, a nation categorized as the most entrepreneurial place in the world. This is important because if the soon-to-be returning Syrian diaspora has a cultural orientation resembling the USA, it will likely be positioned to engage in much-needed entrepreneurship necessary for rebuilding their country and their economy.

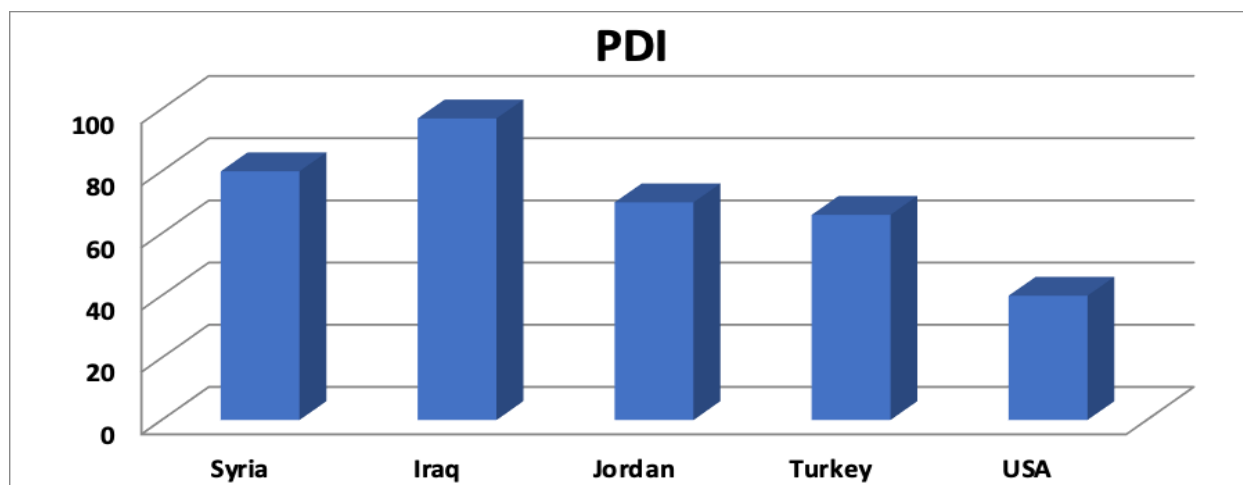
**FIGURE 1**  
**CULTURAL DIMENSION SCORES FOR THE SYRIAN DIASPORA AND FROM**  
**HOFSTEDE'S ORIGINAL STUDY**



### Power Distance

The data indicate that the Syrian diaspora has unique cultural dimension scores. The diaspora is high in power distance with a PDI score of 80. This score suggests that members of the Syrian diaspora place a low value on equality among societal members. Figure 2 shows the PDI scores for the Syrian diaspora along with those for neighboring countries and the USA. The data show that with respect to power distance, the Syrian diaspora ranks most closely to Jordan and Turkey but differs significantly from the USA. High power distance scores indicate a preference for power concentration and a more autocratic approach to management. The Syrian diaspora score on this cultural dimension is inconsistent with an entrepreneurial mindset.

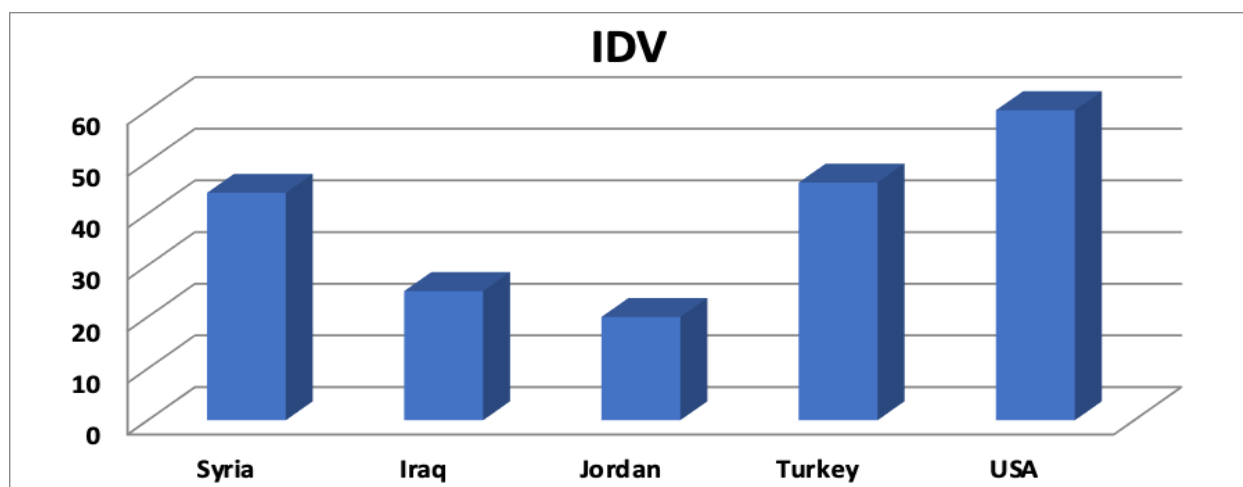
**FIGURE 2**  
**POWER DISTANCE SCORES FOR THE SYRIAN DIASPORA AND OTHER COUNTRIES**



### **Individualism**

The data indicate that the culture of the Syrian diaspora is somewhat individualistic with an IDV score of 44. Figure 3 shows the IDV score for the Syrian diaspora along with the other comparison countries. With respect to individualism, the score is similar to that of Turkey, and somewhat higher than the scores for Iraq and Jordan. However, it differs from the score for the USA. Individualism in the USA is perhaps the highest in the world and contrasts with the Syrian preference for slightly more collectivist behavior. Moderate collectivist values place a stronger emphasis on the group rather than on the individual. Individualism is strongly correlated with an entrepreneurial mindset.

**FIGURE 3**  
**INDIVIDUALISM SCORES FOR THE SYRIAN DIASPORA AND OTHER COUNTRIES**

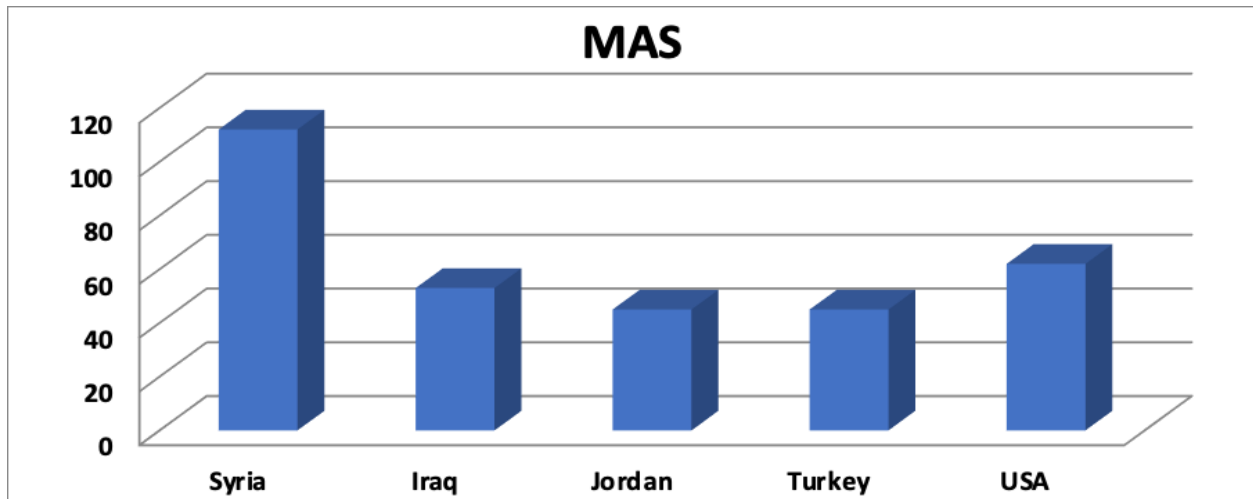


### **Motivation Toward Achievement and Success**

The data indicate that the Syrian diaspora has an extremely high regard for masculine values with an MAS score of 112, one of the highest in the world. Figure 4 shows the MAS scores for the Syrian diaspora along with the same comparison countries. The data reveal significantly higher masculinity among the Syrian diaspora than in any of the other comparison countries. Very high MAS scores indicate a strong

preference for materialism, rigid role relationships, competitive behavior, as well as aggressiveness in organizations. This cultural orientation is likely associated with an entrepreneurial mindset.

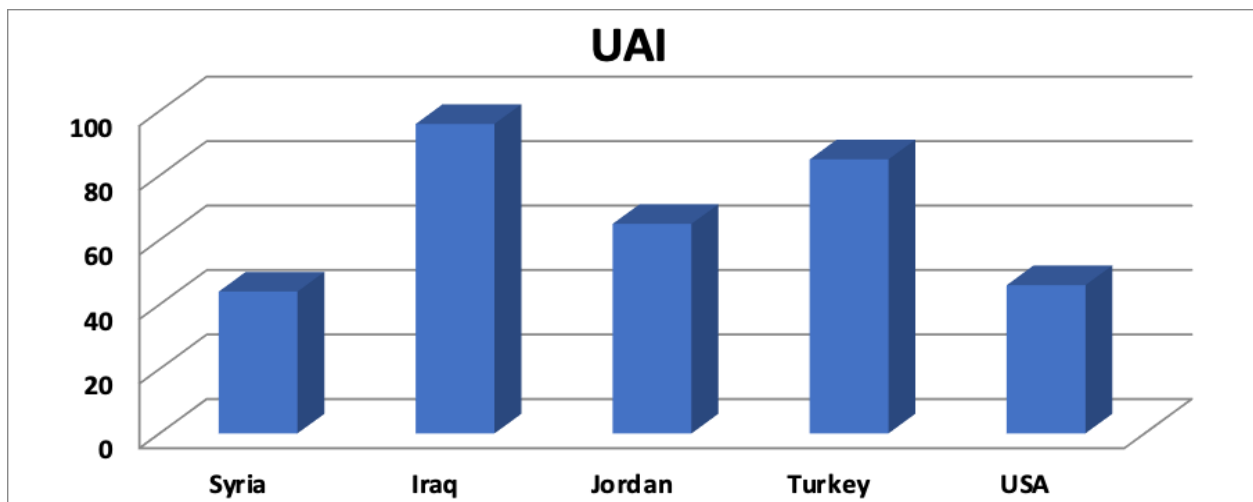
**FIGURE 4**  
**MOTIVATION TOWARD ACHIEVEMENT AND SUCCESS SCORES FOR THE SYRIAN DIASPORA AND OTHER COUNTRIES**



#### **Uncertainty Avoidance**

The data indicate that the Syrian diaspora is relatively low in uncertainty avoidance with a UAI score of 44. As shown in Figure 5, the diaspora has the lowest UAI score among the select countries, contrasting most significantly with Iraq and Turkey. A moderately low uncertainty avoidance culture is accepting of change and comfortable with uncertainty. Rigid rules and procedures in a country or in an organization are not seen as necessary or desirable. The UAI score for the Syrian diaspora is almost identical to that of the USA and is one correlated with an entrepreneurial mindset.

**FIGURE 5**  
**UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE SCORES FOR THE SYRIAN DIASPORA AND OTHER COUNTRIES**

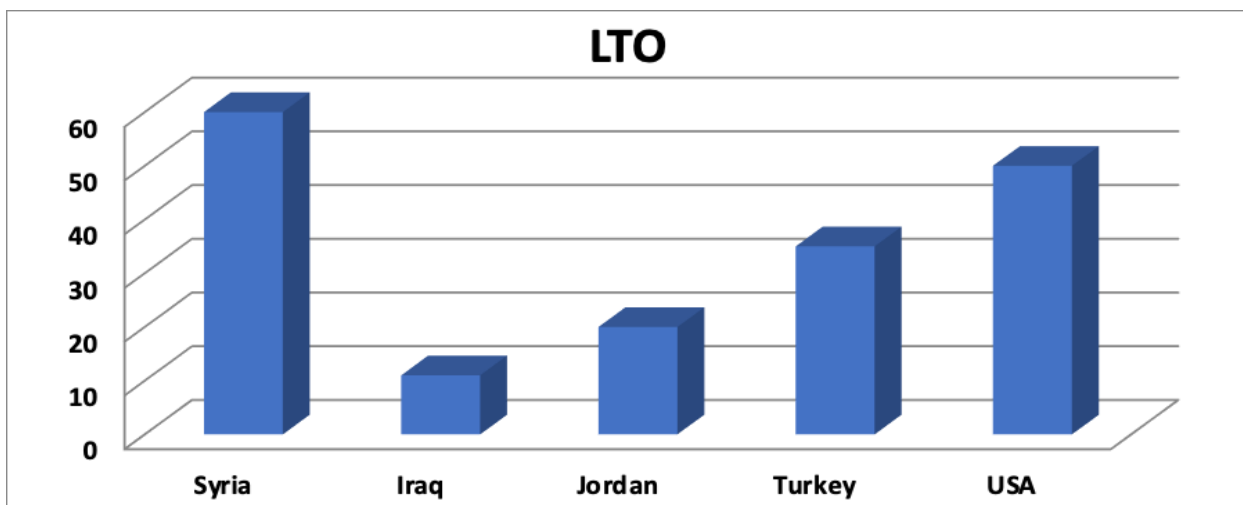




### Long-Term Orientation

The data indicate that the Syrian diaspora has a culture with a somewhat high long-term orientation towards time. Its LTO score is 60. As shown in Figure 6, the diaspora's time orientation is higher compared to its neighboring countries. However, people in the Syrian diaspora have LTO scores somewhat similar to the score of 50 for the USA. Cultures with a high LTO score are not overly concerned with the present and do not expect quick results. Thinking is long-term in nature and the managerial focus is not generally on present conditions and problems. Long-term cultures target their energies on what can be achieved in the long run. It is thought that the soon-to-be returning people of the diaspora have the cultural orientation toward time consistent with an entrepreneurial mindset.

**FIGURE 6**  
**LONG-TERM ORIENTATION SCORES FOR THE SYRIAN DIASPORA AND OTHER COUNTRIES**



### IMPLICATIONS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Understanding national culture and the values, beliefs, and assumptions of people in organizations and in a particular country is critical to the promotion of effective and harmonious relationships. Relationships and their cultivation are important to the practice of entrepreneurship. One's values system drives attitude, thinking, decisions, behaviors, and actions. According to Scarborough (1998), value systems are inextricably linked to national culture.

The 5.6 million people of the Syrian diaspora have at least two options for life moving forward. They may (1) return to their homes in Syria now that the civil war is over or (2) stay in the countries where they presently reside. Moving to another country may not be an option using political asylum as a basis in that the al-Assad regime has been deposed and HTS is being recognized as a more progressive caretaker government poised to resuscitating the Syrian economy.

With the cross-cultural analysis summarized in this paper, particularly examining the orientation of the USA, it seems that people from the Syrian diaspora have values consistent with entrepreneurship. Several of the cultural dimensions found among the Syrian diaspora are similar to those found in the USA, which suggests that Syrians have a mindset conducive to entrepreneurship.

These authors believe that the refugee Syrians who were unwillingly dispersed throughout the world will opt to return to their homeland. This sentiment has been articulated throughout this paper by referring to the people participating in the study as the soon-to-be returning Syrian diaspora. These authors predicate their belief on the fact that the HTS government has implemented changes making a refugee return to Syria more desirable. HTS wants to develop the free market system in the country, starting with the appointment

of a new Central Bank governor, Maysaaa Sabrine, the first woman to take this important role. According to Reuters, HTS also wants to restructure the financial ministries and overhaul the tax system by the end of the year. Mohammed Abazeed, the caretaker finance minister, said that he expects to have “a well-designed tax system that takes the interests of all taxpayers into account” (Kozul-Wright, 2025).

In a statement by Oman Dahi, a professor of economics at Hampshire College in Massachusetts, the imposition of sanctions by western nations needs to be addressed. He states that “in addition to war-related costs, sanctions drained business activity and shrunk the government’s tax base” (Kozul-Wright, 2025). Syria’s tax revenue to GDP ratio fell from 11 to 5 percent in 2021, representing approximately \$4.5 billion – one of the world’s lowest tax shares. HTS is hopeful that the new administration in the USA will lift economic sanctions against Syria. Suggesting that the USA is willing to engage with the HTS government, on December 20, 2024, Washington removed a \$10 million bounty for Ahmed al-Shara, commander-in-chief of Syria’s new administration.

Oil and hydrocarbon are major components in Syria’s economy. The country lost \$91.5 billion in the 10-year span between 2011 and 2021 due to years of civil conflict. The country’s energy infrastructure needs rebuilding because it is operating well below capacity, resulting in significant public finance losses. The Syrian gas and oil fields are mainly under the control of US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces in the northeast part of the country. Transferring these resources back to Damascus will be critical to the financial reconstruction effort, estimated to cost between \$250 and \$400 billion (Kozul-Wright, 2025).

Given that Syria is endowed with natural resources, has a 94 percent literacy rate – one of the highest in the region – and enjoys a strategic position on the Mediterranean Sea, it is a country ripe for entrepreneurial development. With both a peace- and people-oriented government at the helm, the soon-to-be returning Syrian diaspora are well-positioned to help address their country’s critical needs, bolster their decimated economy, and re-engage in a new life as entrepreneurs.

Despite Syria’s collapsing infrastructure and funding challenges, owners of very small business enterprises have not lost their entrepreneurial spirit. While surrounded by rubble and destruction, without internet service or even running water, many Syrians’ drive towards entrepreneurship is nothing short of extraordinary. They seem to view it as an existential imperative, with over 80% of Syrians viewing entrepreneurship as “extremely important” for survival. An estimated 200 startup businesses currently exist in the shattered country. They are largely supported by refugees of the diaspora who bring their expertise, connections, and zeal to help rebuild Syria’s economy (Bayram 2025). The key for success in Syria is to maintain peace and stability. This includes bringing an end to the bombings by Israel, nurturing the businesses of the new entrepreneurs, and encouraging cross border collaborations with Iraq, Jordan, Turkey and the USA.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

This paper assessed the cultural values of the soon-to-be returning Syrian diaspora using the 5-D classification of Geert Hofstede. The data collected from a group of displaced Syrians living in a refugee camp were compared with published data for Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, and the USA. The newly collected data were also compared with those originally reported by Hofstede, with this analysis showing significant differences for several dimensions including motivation for achievement and success as well as orientation towards time. In general, the data reveal that the Syria diaspora have a high score for power distance and an extremely high score for masculinity, now called the motivation for achievement and success. A possible reason for the shift in cultural dimension scores over time might be the conflict that has plagued Syria since the 2011 start of its civil war. The data also reveal a somewhat lower score for individualism and uncertainty avoidance with a higher than moderate score for orientation toward time. These data were examined with an eye as to whether the soon-to-be returning Syrian diaspora have an entrepreneurial mindset. The people of the diaspora have cultural dimensions scores somewhat similar to those of the USA, a country recognized for its strong orientation towards entrepreneurship.

In conclusion, this study suggests that the people of the Syrian diaspora, who are likely to be returning to their homeland, will find a climate conducive to peace, a government aiming for equitable treatment, and

an environment amenable for the resuscitation of the economy and reconstruction of infrastructure. We find that the people of the diaspora are culturally disposed to engagement in entrepreneurship. With an anticipated end to the sanctions, favorable governmental policies toward business, and a positive attitude toward contributing to their society, a new Syria is destined to emerge. The Syrian diaspora will be ready to reintegrate and start a new life. Their anticipated entrepreneurial efforts are likely to yield substantial social and economic dividends.

## LIMITATIONS

It would be idealistic to think that the current study was designed and implemented with such precision to be devoid of any limitations. Unfortunately, such is not the case. For one thing, sample size presents a problem. Although the study had 59 respondents, a larger subject pool would increase the generalizability of the findings to a greater segment of the Syrian diaspora. A second problem relates to the possible impact of the respondents' situation and environment on the assessment results. Participants in the study were people who fled their country to live in a Turkish refugee camp. While this sample does not represent the whole of Syria, it is reasonably representative of the people likely to return to their homes and to engage in entrepreneurial actions so as to improve their country and their lives. Only time will tell how many refugees sufficiently trust the new HTS government to provide the stability, peace, and fairness necessary to begin a new life dedicated to entrepreneurship and economic rebuilding.

## REFERENCES

- Bayram, A. (2019). *Entrepreneurship in exile, insights into Syrian refugee startups in host countries*. Retrieved from <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/5cflfea43fd8f9d99c9d1ae1e67f8fa7-0550012023/related/05-icc-case-study-start-up-syria.pdf>
- Bayram, A. (2025). *Starting up a nation: Why Syria's future depends on its entrepreneurs*. Retrieved from <https://salaamgateway.com/story/rubble-to-revenue-revival-of-syrias-entrepreneurship-landscape>
- BBC News. (2025). *Syria country profile*. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14703856>
- Beugelsdijk, S., Maseland, R., & Van Hoorn, A. (2015). Are scores on Hofstede's dimensions of national culture stable over time? A cohort analysis. *Global Strategy Journal*, 5, 223–240.
- Blodgett, J., Bakir, A., & Rose, G. (2008). A test of the validity of Hofstede's cultural framework. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 35, 762–763.
- CIA World Factbook. (2025). Retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/>
- Fang, T. (2003). A critique of Hofstede's fifth national culture dimension. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 3(3), 347–368.
- Grenness, T. (2012). Hofstede revisited: Is making the ecological fallacy when using Hofstede's instrument on individual behavior really unavoidable? *International Journal of Business & Management*, 7(7), 75–84.
- Hofstede, G. (1980a). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values*. London: Sage Publications.
- Hofstede, G. (1980b). Motivation, leadership, and organization: Do American theories apply abroad? *Organizational Dynamics*, 16(4), 42–63.
- Hofstede, G. (1983). The cultural reliability of organizational practices and theories. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 14, 75–89.
- Hofstede, G. (1993). Cultural constraints in management theories. *The Executive*, 7(1), 81–94.
- Hofstede, G. (1994). Management scientists are human. *Management Science*, 40(1), 4–13.
- Hofstede, G. (1997). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Hofstede, G., & Bond, M. (1988). The Confucian connection: From cultural roots to economic growth. *Organizational Dynamics*, 16(4), 5–21.
- Jackson, T. (2011). From cultural values to cross-cultural interfaces: Hofstede goes to Africa. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 24(4), 532–558.
- Jones, L. (2024). World's most entrepreneurial countries, 2024. *CEOWORLD Magazine, Special Report*. Retrieved from <https://ceoworld.biz/2024/04/05/worlds-most-entrepreneurial-countries-2024/>
- Khan, H., & Khan, W. (2017). Syria: History, the civil war and peace prospects. *Journal of Political Studies*, 24(2), 587–601.
- Kirisci, K. (2017, June 22). *Don't forget non-Syrian refugees in Turkey*. The Brookings Press.
- Kirkman, B., Lowe, K., & Gibson, C. (2006). A quarter century of “Culture’s Consequences”: A review of empirical research incorporates Hofstede’s cultural values framework. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 37, 285–320.
- Kozul-Wright, A. (2025). *Rebuilding Syria’s economy: Can stability return after war?* Al Jazeera. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2025/1/8/rebuilding-syrias-economy-can-stability-return-after-war>
- Li, J., Lam, K., & Qian, G. (2001). Does culture affect behavior and performance of firms? The case of joint ventures in China. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 32(1), 115–131.
- Martins, M., & Lopes, I. (2016). Culture and profitability: Empirical evidence at a European level. *Corporate Ownership & Control*, 17(2), 579–586.
- McSweeney, B. (2002). Hofstede’s model of national cultural differences and their consequences: A triumph of faith – a failure of analysis. *Human Relations*, 55(1), 89–106.
- McSweeney, B., Brown, D., & Lliopoulou, S. (2016). Claiming too much, delivering too little: Testing some of Hofstede’s generalizations. *Irish Journal of Management*, 35(1), 34–57.
- Minkov, M., & Hofstede, G. (2011). The evolution of Hofstede’s doctrine. *Cross Cultural Management*, 18(1), 10–20.
- Minkov, M. (2013). *Cross-cultural analysis: The science and art of comparing the world’s modern societies and their cultures*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Moalla, E. (2016). What measure for national culture? Hofstede vs Schwartz vs Globe. *Management International*, 20, 26–37.
- Scarborough, J. (1998). *The origins of cultural differences and their impact on management*. Westport, CT: Quorum Books.
- Sivakumar, K., & Nakata, C. (2001). The stampede toward Hofstede’s framework: Avoiding the sample design pit in cross-cultural research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 32(3), 555–574.
- Smith, P. (2002). Culture’s consequences: Something old and something new. *Human Relations*, 55(1), 119–135.
- UNHCR. (2018). Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/syria-emergency.html>
- Venaik, S., Zhu, Y., & Brewer, P. (2013). Looking into the future: Hofstede long term orientation versus GLOBE future orientation. *Cross Cultural Management*, 20(3), 361–385.
- Vignal, L. (2018). Perspectives on the return of Syrian refugees. *Forced Migration Review*, 57, 69–70.
- WFP Syria Emergency Response. (2024). Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/wfp-syria-emergency-response-external-situation-report-02-27-december-2024>.
- World Atlas. (2019). *What are the major natural resources of Syria?* Retrieved from <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-are-the-major-natural-resources-of-syria.html>