# Estimate of the Number of Assyrians Killed in the Turkish Genocide in 1915-1918

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750,000 Assyrians were killed in World War One in the Turkish genocide of Assyrians, Greeks and Armenians. No one kept a tally of the deaths, but this is a very good approximation and here is why.

A Russian[1] (Lilian) visiting the Assyrian homelands before WW1 gives the total Assyrian population at 1 million. We know from demographic studies of the Middle East that the population has increased approximately tenfold since WW1.

Source: https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/population
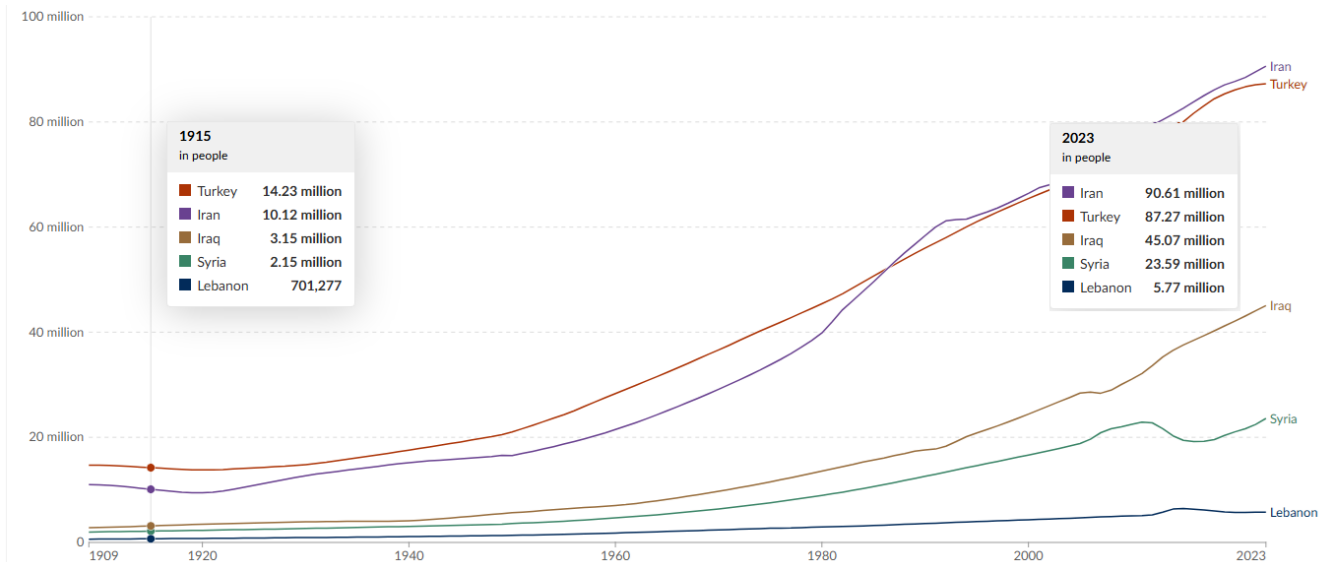
Population	1915	2025	% Increase
Iran	10.12	90.61	895.36%
Iraq	3.15	45.07	1430.79%
Lebanon	0.7	5.77	824.29%
Syria	2.15	23.59	1097.21%
Turkey	14.23	87.27	613.28%
Average Increase			972.19%

The Assyrian population is 3.5 million. Assuming it increased tenfold since 1915, the population must have been about 350,000 then -- if there were no genocide. But since we know from Lilian the Assyrian population was one million just before WW1, then 3/4th of Assyrians must have been killed, else they would number ten million now.

We can calculate the size of a population in the past based on its current size. The rate of population growth is given by the equation

dN/dt = rN

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[1] *Assyrians of The Van District During the Rule of Ottoman Turks*; M.Y.A . Lilian; http://www.aina.org/books/aov.htm.

r is the rate of natural increase
t is some stated interval of time
N is the number of individuals in the population at a given instant

The solution of this equation is

$$N = N_0 e^{rt}$$

N_0 is the starting population
N is the population after a certain time
t is the elapsed time
e is the constant 2.71828

If we assume a natural growth rate, *r*, of 10 per thousand, the average growth rate in the Middle East since 1915 as shown by the data above, and a current population, *N*, of 3.5 million Assyrians, we can solve for the original population, N_0, after the genocide. The time elapsed is 2023 -1915 (108 years).

The original population is given by

$$N_0 = N/e^{rt}$$

The rate of growth, *r*, is 1.08: (.01=10/1000) times the time *t* (108 years). Plugging the numbers in

$$N_0 = 3.5/2.71828^{1.08} = 3.5/2.94 = 1.18$$

This yields a figure of 1.18 million Assyrians in 1915, which, given the variability of our numbers, is in good agreement with Lilian's estimate of the Assyrian population.