Index of sources

These maps, statistical data, newspapers, stories of witnesses and victims and other data together tell the story of what happened to the Armenians during the First World War.

*Note: the sources are NOT listed in chronological order.*

**Source 1:**
Geographical information

The map shows the decline of the Turkish Empire until the start of WW1.
Source 2
Statistical and administrative figures about the Ottoman Empire circa 1900.

Census 1906
Total number of inhabitants: 20,500,000.
Total number of Muslims: 15,500,000
Total number of Greek: 2,825,000
Total number of Armenians: 2,000,000

Census 1914
Total number of inhabitant: approx. 18,500,000
Total number of Muslims: 15,000,000
Total number of Greek: 1,700,000
Total number of Armenians: 1,900,000

Minorities and administration
The Greek and Armenians were the biggest minority in the Ottoman Empire. But they were not the only minorities and there were also, for example, Jews, Bulgarians and Arabs. The minorities were disadvantaged compared to the Turkish Muslims, and Armenians, Greek and Jews had to pay, for example, more tax than the Turkish Muslims.

Economic superiority
Of the 166 Ottoman importers 141 were Armenian and 13 Turkish.
Of the 9,800 shopkeepers and craftsmen 6,800 were Armenian and 2,550 Turkish.
Of the 150 exporters 127 were Armenian and 23 Turkish.
Of the 153 industrialists 130 were Armenian and 20 Turkish.
Of the 37 bankers in the entire country 32 were Armenian.

The Armenian church is one of the oldest Christian churches in the world. The Armenians have their own patriarch.

Source 4

The Armenian alphabet

The Armenian alphabet includes the following characters:

- Ա Բ Գ Դ Ե Զ Է Ը Թ Ժ Ի Լ
- Մ Ն Օ Ո Ծ Կ
- Գ Դ Ե Ը Թ Ժ Ի Լ
- Ց Ծ Կ

These characters represent the sounds of the Armenian language, allowing for the unique pronunciation of words and phrases in this language.
The battle at Gallipoli starts on 25 April 1915 after months of preparation. The British try to conquer the Turkish mainland. In the end, their attempt fails because it is thwarted by Mustafa Kemal, the later Atatürk. Kemal was part of the Young Turks, but did not have a good relationship with the three leader of the Turkish Empire at that moment.

Dr Mehmed Reshid, governor of Diyarbekir, during the 1915 killings and deportations:
“The fact that I am a doctor did not mean that I forgot my nationality! I am a doctor, but I was born a Turk. .... My Turkish identity took the upper hand over my profession. I thought: before they exterminate us, we exterminate them. If you ask me how I was able to kill, as a doctor, I can reply as follows: the Armenians had become dangerous microbes in the body of this country. Well, isn’t it a doctor’s duty to kill bacteria?”
In the war preceding WW1 the Turks lost a lot of territory. The Turks living in the annexed territories were driven out. In this picture you see impoverished Turkish refugees headed to Anatolia, just before WWI.
In the late 19th century, Armenians start organising themselves and ask the government for voting rights. They also don’t want to pay higher taxes anymore because of their Christian faith. The Armenians' struggle for equal rights is bloodily suppressed by the Turkish sultan, leaving more than 200,000 dead and causing huge refugee flows.
Talaat Pasha was minister of Internal Affairs during the government of the Young Turks. After WW1 he immediately escaped the country and was sentenced to death in absentia. He was one of the main responsible for the genocide against the Armenians.

Talaat was killed in Berlin by the Armenian Soghomon Tehlirian, who had lost his parents in the
A German court ruled that should be exempt from prosecution. Today, he is a national hero in Armenia.

Source 11

A telegram from the American ambassador Henry Morgenthau to the American government about deportations from Erzurum. At this moment, America is not yet at war with Turkey. The first sentence reads: ‘Deportation of and excesses against peaceful Armenians is increasing and from harrowing reports of eye witnesses it appears that a campaign of race extermination is in progress under a pretext of reprisal against rebellion. Protests as well as threats are unavailing and probably incite the Ottoman government to more drastic measures as they are determined to disclaim responsibility for their absolute disregard of capitulations and I believe nothing short of actual force which obviously United States are not in a position to exert would adequately meet the situation. Suggest you inform belligerent nations and mission boards of this.’

Source: Armenian National Institute

Source 12

Government notification, put up in public places on 15 June 1915:

Leave all your possessions behind - your household goods, your bedding, your works of art. Close shops and companies and leave everything inside. The doors will be locked with a special seal. As soon as you return, you will be returned everything that you left behind. Do not sell your house or other valuable items. Both buyers and sellers will be prosecuted. ... Make a list of all your possessions, including any cattle you possess, and hand it over to the allocated official, so that all your possessions can be returned to you later on. You have ten days to heed this ultimatum.
Sources - The Armenian genocide, 1915


**Source 13**

A famous photograph which records the deportation in Kharpert. It is not known who took the photograph. What is certain is that the photo was taken from the American consulate.

**Source 14**

This photo was taken by Armin Wegner. He was the second lieutenant in the German army and in 1915 he took pictures of the murder of the Armenians, against orders of his military leadership. 
*Source: Armenian National Institute*

**Source 15**

Some of the Armenian intellectuals arrested on 24 April 1915 and killed.
A photograph of Armenian volunteers at the Russian front. At the start of the war, a (small) number of Armenians volunteered for the Russian army. Early 1915 the Turks suffered a number of heavy Russian defeats in the Caucasus.
Source 18

Monument of the Armenian genocide in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, where the annual commemoration is held, on 24 April.

Source 19
Quote from Fethiye Cetin’s grandmother who tells her granddaughter about her childhood experiences during WW1. She is ‘rescued’ during the deportations in 1915 by a Turkish corporal who took her into his home as a Turkish maid. She was told never to mention her Armenian background again. The said about her that she ‘was a left-over of the great slaughter’.

“The person who had taken me was corporal Hüseyin, the commander of the military police in Cermik…May Allah give him mercy, may he rest in peace, Hüseyin was a good person. He had the authority of a major. He treated me very well, as if I were his own child. Hüseyin was said to be soft-hearted. They had also killed the Armenians in Cermik and thrown them in a deep well. Corporal Hüseyin did participate in the killing of the men, but he was not present when they threw the women and children in the well. He had not obeyed to that order. People said he had also been punished for that.”


Source 20
The Turkish position on the Armenian ‘question’

The Turkish state denies that a genocide has taken place in 1915. It contests the applicability of the term genocide and puts the events into perspective. It was war and many fell victim to armed battle, hunger and disease: Armenians, but many more Turks and other Muslims. The question is consistently referred to as the ‘so-called genocide’ or ‘the Armenian accusations’. Although the Armenian question is slowly being addressed in Turkey, this is done within strict boundaries and especially due to external pressure, mainly from the EU.

Source: Turkije Instituut
Sources - The Armenian genocide, 1915

Source 21

NY Times, December 1915
Weekly Journal, Moscow, 27 November 1916
"Victims of Turkish cruelties"

Source 22

Henry Morgenthau, US ambassador, about the coup by the Young Turks:
In place of a democratic constitutional state they resurrected the idea of Pan-Turkism; in place of equal treatment of all Ottomans, they decided to establish a country exclusively for Turks. Their determination to uproot [Christian schools], or at least to transform them into Turkish institutions, was merely another detail in the same racial progress. Similarly they attempted to make all foreign business houses employ only Turkish labourers, insisting that they should discharge their Greek, Armenian, and Jewish clerks, stenographers, workmen, and other employees... They developed a mania for suppressing all languages except Turkish. For decades French had been the accepted language of foreigners in Constantinople; most street signs were printed in both French and Turkish. One morning the astonished foreign residents discovered that all the French signs had been removed and that the names of streets, the directions on street cars, and other public notices, appeared only in . . . Turkish characters, which very few of them understood. Great confusion resulted from this change, but the ruling powers refused to restore the detested foreign language.'

Source: quote of Henry Morgenthau in *Crimes against humanity and civilization: the Armenian genocide* (Facing history and ourselves, 2004)
As from April 1915 Armenian women en children are removed from their homes and ‘deported’ to the Syrian desert. Usually they have to do this journey on foot. No food is offered, no accommodation and no shelter against the sun. The armed escorts abuse the women and children in all possible manners. Some children are kidnapped and end up as ‘maid’ in Turkish families. Some survive thanks to help from (Turkish) neighbours or soldiers.

**Source 24**

*Terrible suffering of Christian Armenians*

One remembers the report from a few months ago from our Roman correspondent about the Holy See (i.e. the Pope, red.) … regarding the Armenians oppressed by Turkey and the partial success achieved by the Pope’s intervention.

Now the board in New York of the foreign mission of the Presbyterians (i.e. the protestant church, red.) in a rapport about the condition of the Armenians deported from Armenia to northern Arabia and Syria. It mentions the following, from a briefing received from a missionary:

"At Meskene I have seen that women and children threw themselves in graves begging the undertakers to bury them. The government does not provide bread. At Hamar of the 7,000 Armenians taken there, 3,000 were as good as naked; they were busy collecting grasshoppers, which they ate raw or boiled, depending on whether they had access to fire. Some were catching dogs on the street and ate them raw. At Rakka there were 15,000 Armenians, where stayed in tents in a camp at both sides of the Euphrates. They were not allowed to enter the city. Everywhere one could see terrible scenes of nakedness, hunger and death; the authorities did nothing to help. Some of these unfortunates threw themselves into the river in despair. Often they saw entire rows
Sources - The Armenian genocide, 1915

of scary figures suddenly rising from graves begging for bread and water. They had dug their own graves and were waiting for death."

*De Gelderlander, 16 September 1916*