UNHCR'S SUPPORT TO PROTECTION DESKS FOR REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS IN TÜRKİYE

UNHCR in Türkiye
April 2026

50 provinces supported with Protection Desk Interviewers and /or Protection Desk Social Workers.

92 Protection Desk Interviewers and **71** Protection Desk Social Workers supported by UNHCR in 2026.

Context

Refugees and asylum seekers in Türkiye, such as Temporary Protection or International Protection status holders/applicants with specific needs - including women, children, survivors of violence, people with disabilities, and those requiring urgent medical or psychological care - often need particular attention to ensure their safety, rights, and well-being. The Presidency of Migration Management (PMM), with support from UNHCR, is operating Protection Desks in 50 Provincial Directorates for Migration Management (PDMM) across Türkiye to support persons with specific needs and provide tailored services. The Protection Desks help the PDMMs with timely identification and referral of persons with specific needs (PwSN).

Logo of the Protection Desks at PDMMs.

Since 2017, the support provided by UNHCR to PDMMs includes **Protection Desk interviewers** who are fluent in the languages of the refugees and asylum seekers, such as Arabic, Farsi, Dari, Somali, and Turkmen. In 2022, the scope of the personnel support was expanded with the addition of **Protection Desk social workers** with an aim to enhance the effectiveness of case management processes within the PDMMs and to increase the coordination of PDMMs with other public institutions or NGOs.

Standard Operating Procedure

During registration, data update, and other processes, refugees and asylum seekers are generally referred to the Protection Desks by PDMM staff, other institutions/NGOs, or via self-referral. The Protection Desks then assesses the specific needs and determines appropriate support through protection interviews conducted in the mother tongue of the individuals and through counselling. Upon identification of the specific needs, the Protection Desks refer the person to government institutions for service provision and follow-up at the local level. The Protection Desk's social workers may also initiate on-the-spot interventions for emergency cases and formally refer them to government institutions. The Protection Desks also record the specific needs in an online database (GocNet) for future inclusion in national services. In addition, the Protection Desks provide counselling and information on rights, services and legal mechanisms in Türkiye. Furthermore, the Protection Desks provide support to the PMM in the identification of durable solutions for individuals identified in view of their individual circumstances.

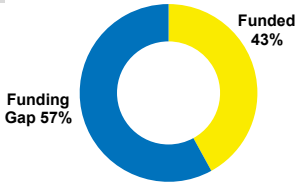
Monitoring

In order to increase access to high-quality service, UNHCR, together with PMM, regularly monitors the Protection Desks through various channels, including on-site monitoring visits. The findings of these monitoring efforts and the identified gaps and challenges are shared with PMM for their information and intervention. UNHCR has also initiated an online satisfaction survey to anonymously collect inputs from individuals who received services from Protection Desks. UNHCR analyses the statistics on the number of Protection interviews conducted and the specific needs identified in order to pinpoint the protection trends and monitor the performance of the Protection Desks. The analyses are used in internal advocacy measures to set the ground for external advocacy efforts and inform tailor-made programmes.

Capacity Building

To enhance the capacity of the Protection Desk social workers and Protection Desk interviewers, enhance their protection awareness, and strengthen their protection-centred interview techniques, UNHCR conducts capacity-building activities jointly with PMM. These efforts contribute to the efficiency of case management and PwSN identification processes, along with enhancing the coordination efforts of PDMMs. The content of these trainings is prepared based on the gaps and needs observed during the monitoring, and PMM's advice.

Funding Information

UNHCR is grateful for generous contributions from its donors, who have provided both earmarked and flexible funding to support its operations in Türkiye.

US$ 210 million
UNHCR requested for the operation in Türkiye for 2026.