UNHCR in Türkiye
April 2026

In March 2026, UNHCR Türkiye strengthened its collaboration with the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** through a new LoU to advance socio-economic inclusion, decent work, and sustainable livelihoods for refugees and host communities.

In February 2026, UNHCR Türkiye signed a new LoU with MÜSİAD, a renowned Independent Industrialists and Businessmen Association, to support economic resilience, advance economic inclusion, employment, and livelihoods for refugees and host communities.

Context

Türkiye continues to host one of the world's largest refugee populations in a context of protracted displacement and evolving labour market dynamics. In this context, UNHCR Türkiye is advancing development engagement and sustainable responses that complement protection and solutions.

UNHCR-supported vocational training helped refugees secure self-reliance in Türkiye.

The focus on accelerating refugees' inclusion and self-reliance through access to national education, skills, employment and labour-markets, alongside host communities is in line with government leadership and national development priorities. **In a context where a significant proportion of the refugee population is of youth and working age, and many refugees were born in Türkiye**, expanding access to socio-economic opportunities reduces dependence on humanitarian assistance and contributes to economic growth and social cohesion for host-communities.

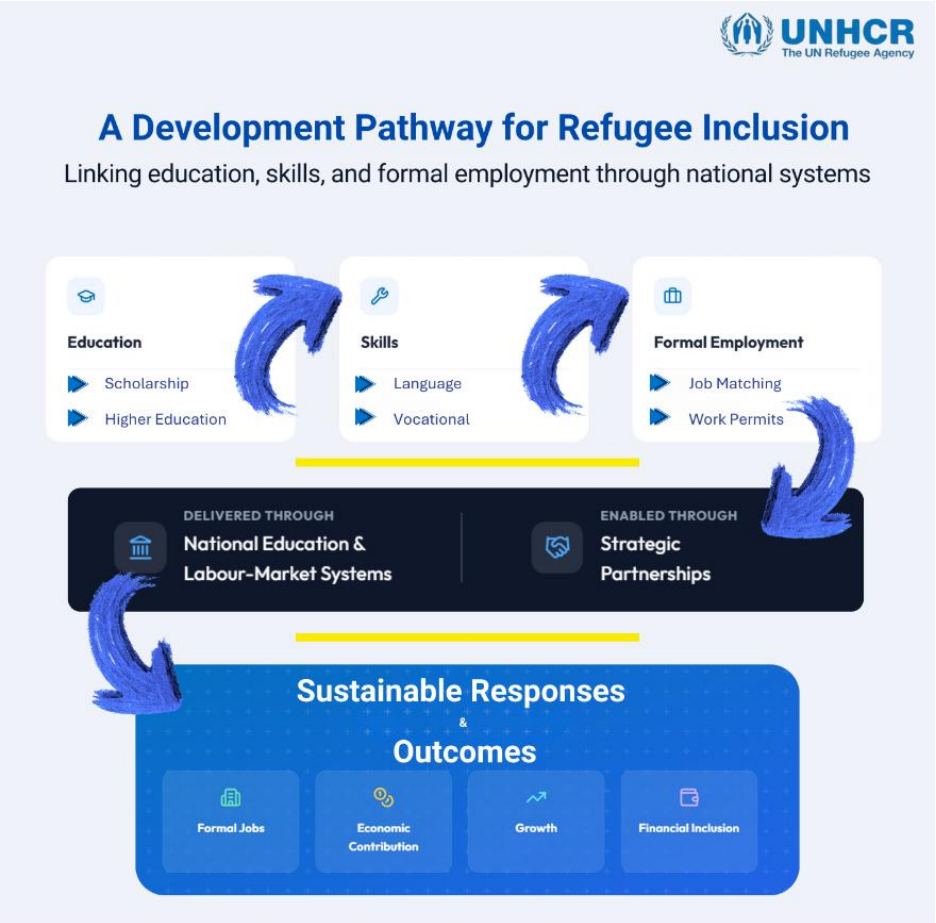
Development Engagement

UNHCR Türkiye's development engagement strengthens solutions in close collaboration with international financial institutions (IFIs) including the World Bank, development partners, and other UN agencies. These partnerships underpin evidence-based policy dialogue, analysis and labour-market alignment, and long-term sustainable responses and socio-economic inclusion. By combining refugee protection expertise with development engagement, UNHCR seeks to align with Türkiye's national development priorities in support of refugees and host communities. This includes private-sector engagement, work-permit advocacy and financial inclusion. The aim is to reduce employment informality, strengthening self-reliance and informing scalable investments that contribute to economic growth and reduced aid reliance. Partnership with the World Bank and the UNHCR-International Finance Corporation (IFC) Joint Initiative based in Istanbul, seeks to advance the socio-economic inclusion of refugees and host community members through market-driven solutions. UNHCR also works closely with UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes under the 3RP in collaboration with UNDP and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to enhance coordination and strengthen advocacy efforts.

Linking Education, Skills, and Employment through National Systems

Education for refugee children and adults in Türkiye is led and coordinated by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). The Council of Higher Education (YÖK) and the Presidency of Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) play a key role in facilitating refugees' access to higher education. UNHCR works closely with YTB to provide scholarships and grants and engage in other activities. MoNE leads and coordinates Türkiye's education response, encompassing formal and non-formal education for children and adults. UNHCR has supported MoNE in delivering Turkish language courses and vocational and technical learning programmes through MoNE's extensive network of Public Education Centres (PECs), the largest providers of non-formal education. As part of its collaboration with MoNE, UNHCR supported the renovation of 90 vocational workshop facilities in 38 public education centres across 21 provinces. UNHCR Türkiye has collaborated with key national institutions, including the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) and the Directorate General of International Labour Force (DGoILF) to enhance refugees' access to economic opportunities and focus on support to employers and advocacy on work permit legislation.

Synergy among various initiatives



UNHCR's **Development Pathway for Refugee Inclusion** links education, skills development, and access to formal employment through national systems, reflecting a coherent and integrated approach.

The pathway begins with **education**, including scholarships and access to higher education, which lays the foundation for self-reliance. It then progresses to **skills development**, with a focus on language acquisition and vocational training aligned with labour market needs. These investments enable refugees to transition into **formal employment** through job matching and access to work permits. The model emphasizes delivery through **national education and labour-market systems**, ensuring sustainability and alignment with host country frameworks, while being enabled by **strategic partnerships** with government, private sector, and development actors.

Working in partnership:

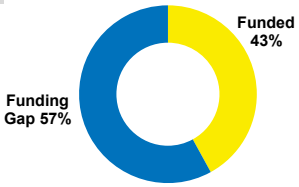
UNHCR engages closely with other development actors to ensure a coherent and interconnected response towards a sustainable solution. The partners include:

IFC International Finance Corporat WORLD BANK GROUP · THE WORLD BANK · European Bank for Reconstruction and Development · giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH · ICMPD International Centre for Migration Policy Developm · UNDP · ILO Internation Labour Organizatic · HAK-İŞ · MÜSIAD

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.

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