

TURKEY

October 2019

Key Figures (as of 31 October 2019)

4 million

Refugees and asylum-seekers in Turkey including over 3.6 million Syrian nationals and close to 400,000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers of other nationalities. Over 98% of Syrian refugees live across Turkey in 81 provinces

9,700

Refugees departed for resettlement in 2019 as of end of October, over 78 per cent of whom are Syrians

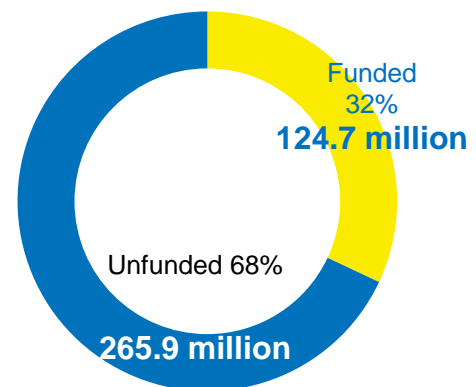
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Registration support missions in October were conducted across the country to observe registration practices. These were in cooperation with DGMM and showed an increase in registration capacity of PDMM.

Funding (as of 22 October 2019)

USD 390.6 million

requested for UNHCR operations in Turkey



Key Developments in October 2019

On 14 October, in collaboration with the World Fair Trade Organisation and the International Development Management Initiative (IDEMA), UNHCR organised a **workshop on social enterprises and refugee artisans**. The workshop was initiated by the UNHCR MADE51 Team which introduces buyers to a global collection of refugee artisanal products. The goal was to enable branding, launching and management for these products at a global level. Some 52 participants from NGOs, social enterprises and academia were present.

UNHCR and UNDP organized the first **planning workshop for the Refugee Resilience and Response Plan (3RP 2020-2021)** on 14 October 2019. Around 150 participants from government institutions, UN agencies, diplomatic missions as well as Turkish, Syrian and international NGOs participated. In her opening speech, the Deputy Director General for Asylum, Migration and Visas of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, thanked UNHCR and UNDP for their cooperation and support, and underlined the importance assigned to the 3RP by the Turkish Government, as a basis for responsibility sharing.

On 14 October, UNHCR participated in the **Global Refugee and Migration Congress** hosted by Gaziantep University. UNHCR's Deputy Representative participated in the official opening ceremony with the Governor and Metropolitan Mayor of Gaziantep, and 1,500 participants and academics from 24 countries.

UNHCR also participated in focus group discussions held by Gaziantep University Institute for Migration between Syrian and Turkish youth communities on campus to find community level solutions to social cohesion issues that emerge.

Promoting Access to and Provision of Protection

Support to registration and development of the national asylum system



UNHCR continued its cooperation with DGMM in the strengthening of the international protection status determination (IPSD) procedures, supporting **International Protection Bureaux (Decision Centres) and the Mobile Decision Units** established by DGMM. Support included interviews and recommendations to support case-processing at the Ankara and Istanbul Decision Centres. On-the-job visits with DGMM to provincial directorates of Denizli, Zonguldak and Çankırı were conducted in October.

Through the support of the European Union jointly with the Republic of Turkey, UNHCR has produced brochures and leaflets illustrating the national registration and international protection status determination procedures. The brochures have been printed in nine languages, disseminated to PDMs in 81 provinces, partner offices and on information platforms.

Strengthening access to justice by refugees

The Şanlıurfa Legal Clinic provided legal assistance to 46 individuals in October regarding international and temporary protection procedures (including registration, documentation, rejection of applications and withdrawal of decisions), access to rights, civil issues (such as marriage, divorce, custody and guardianship), deportation, exit and re-entry procedures, family reunification, resettlement and citizenship procedures. Similarly, 205 individuals benefitted from legal assistance provided by the Gaziantep Legal Clinic, while the Hatay Legal Clinic provided legal assistance to 265 individuals.

UNHCR cooperates with the **Victims' Rights Department of the Ministry of Justice** and with UNDP to enhance access to justice and legal aid for refugees in Turkey. In October, two trainings and awareness-raising activities in Samsun (11-12 October) and Eskişehir (25-26 October) were conducted. The trainings targeted individuals involved in access to justice by refugees in Turkey, specifically when they are victims of crimes, such as judges, prosecutors, lawyers, and judicial support experts (social workers) who help victims during the delivery of their testimonies. The training focused on increasing awareness on the Law on Foreigners and International Protection, the rights of persons in need of international protection and referral mechanisms, as well as improving knowledge on cultural awareness and the implementation of judicial meeting rooms and Judicial Support and Victim Rights Directorates (JSVRD). JSVRDs have recently been introduced into the legal system in Turkey to ensure vulnerable groups, including refugees, are better represented during trials. Judicial support experts also received training on interviewing techniques with children. The awareness-raising sessions addressed asylum seekers and refugees and provided information about rules of the Turkish legal system, particularly what the refugees could do if they were crime victims. The sessions were conducted by a team composed of staff of the Ministry of Justice, UNHCR, UNDP and external experts.

Furthermore, within this scope of cooperation with the Ministry of Justice Victims' Rights Department and UNDP, 13 information leaflets were printed in four languages (English, Turkish, Arabic, Farsi) and distributed at seven awareness raising sessions targeting Arabic and Farsi speaking asylum seekers and refugees. Five out of the 13 leaflets provide brief information on specific topics such as domestic violence, traffic accidents, crimes against property, sexual offences and human trafficking and migrant smuggling, while eight have more general content on legal aid and certain concepts in the legal process such as intervention, victim and victim rights, complaint, child victim of crime, (who is a) witness, compensation and conciliation.

Two trainings for clerks and chief clerks serving at national court front desks took place 10-11 and 21-22 October. These are the fourth and fifth trainings delivered by UNHCR as part of its cooperation with the Ministry of Justice. The trainings, which included 160 participants, focused on increasing the clerks' knowledge of international protection, the legal status and rights of persons in need of international protection, and improving their communication skills. Registry clerks reported that the most challenging issue they encountered during service provision to refugees was the language barrier.

Strengthening Protection and Access to Quality Services of Refugees with Specific Needs

The **UNHCR Counselling Line answered 20,559 calls in October**, providing counselling on services, procedures, referrals and existing support mechanisms. A significant increase in the answer rate for queued calls was observed, from 53% in July to 90% in October. In the South East region of Turkey, the Refuge Call Centre in Sanliurfa received a total of 363 calls in October. The call operators resolved 306 of total queries received mainly on medical and financial support, risk of expulsion and registration.

A **Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS) workshop** for MHPSS and Child Protection sub working group members was organised by UNHCR, jointly with IOM and UNICEF in Gaziantep on 4 October. Representatives from state institutions working on MHPSS were invited to co-facilitate the workshop. Participants examined community-based mental health and psychosocial support in light of the IASC Guidelines on MHPSS in Emergency Settings. The workshop, which focused on reinforcing knowledge, principles and standards to increase MHPSS actors' capacity and uniform their practices, was organised in response to a survey which had revealed the need for further capacity building of actors in South East Turkey.

Cooperation with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS)

UNHCR supports the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services in 19 centres throughout Turkey. The support is extended to 67 Social Service Centres (SSCs), three provincial directorate offices, one child support centre and one violence prevention and response centre.

UNHCR held a **Training of Trainers on Supervision and Coaching in Case Management**, 21-25 October, targeting Istanbul provincial directorates of family, labour and social services. UNHCR has been working closely with the Istanbul provincial directorate since 2008 and has been providing logistical and HR support as well as refugee protection trainings to its relevant social service agencies since 2017. This particular training aimed at equipping the provincial directorate staff with necessary skills to establish a supervision and coaching mechanism to enhance service quality in case management. Training materials were contextualized to be compatible with the provincial directorate's existing system and supervisory teams will be situated in various districts to conduct supervision trainings in social service centres and childcare institutions. The training will be complemented by a follow-up training on 'Supervision and Guidance of Training of Trainers in Refugee Protection' in November to the same participants; and will be facilitated by Istanbul University's Social Services Department. This pilot in Istanbul will be presented to the Ministry of Family Labour and Social Services to be mainstreamed in other cities.

Communication with communities (CwC)

Through its main **digital communication platforms**, Help and Services Advisor, UNHCR shares information about rights, obligations and available services for refugees and asylum seekers. Help has reached approximately 596,000 unique visitors since its launch in August 2017; Services Advisor has received approximately 200,000 unique visitors; and UNHCR's followers continue to grow on the CwC Facebook page with approximately 43,000 followers. In October, UNHCR published a range of announcements to inform refugees and asylum-seekers of various issues relevant to them. These included posts on the newly published 'Discover Gaziantep' booklets aimed to help refugees, the Turkish people and others navigate life in Gaziantep. A new programme of Turkish language learning courses was also advertised on the CwC facebook page as well as an update from DGMM on booking appointments under the Istanbul regulations.

Promoting Social Cohesion and Harmonization

Four **Neighbourhood Gatherings** were organized in October in Rize, Afyonkarahisar, Denizli, and Muğla in October reaching 500 refugees, host community members and service providers. The gatherings were advertised through various government venues and covered in the media. At the gatherings, the Deputy Director General of DGMM stressed the importance of a neighbourhood culture as an imperative tool to the harmonization process, while DGMM's Head of Harmonization and Communications Department noted that it was important to support Syrian refugees until they chose to return to their country once stability was established in Syria.

Additionally, two **Engaged Conversations** were held in Konya and Osmaniye in October. The two events collectively reached around 620 refugees and host community members. They included four focus group discussions with refugees and four with host community members focusing on social cohesion. The engaged conversations were also covered on various government websites and the media. DGMM representatives, including the Head of Harmonization and Communications Department and the Head of the Department of the Protection of Human Trafficking Victims, emphasized the contributions refugees and migrants make in their host countries, stressing that generalizations should be avoided and respect maintained regardless of ethnical, religious and cultural differences.



Performance by the Folk Dance Team of Osmaniye Public Education Center during the engaged conversations event in Osmaniye on 23-24 October. ©DGMM

Two **Social Cohesion Workshops** for the Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of National Education were organized on 8-9 October in Kahramanmaraş and Gaziantep. Some 142 local religious officers and 185 personnel from the provincial directorate of National Education attended the workshop in Kahramanmaraş while 155 local religious officers and 110 personnel from the provincial directorate attended in Gaziantep. Both events were publicized on DGMM's website.



UNHCR conducted a **culinary workshop on "migrating tastes"** in Istanbul in cooperation with the Istanbul Culture and Arts Foundation (IKSV Design) and the Culinary Arts Academy (MSA). This is the third Migrating Tastes workshop and hosted 10 Turkish and 10 refugee participants. During the workshop, refugee and Turkish participants were paired together to cook a menu of common regional tastes.

Refugee and Turkish participants demonstrate their culinary talents at the 'Migrating Tastes' culinary workshop in Istanbul. ©UNHCR/E. Gürel

Engaging at the local level (municipalities, governor offices, imams, mukhtars)

UNHCR organized a **consultation meeting with mukhtars** from 19 neighbourhoods in the Sancaktepe district of Istanbul. The meeting was organised in collaboration with UNHCR's partner, World Academy for Local Democracy (WALD) and coordinated by Sancaktepe Municipality to provide information regarding UNHCR's activities on refugee protection and refugees' access to rights and services through the protection desks established by WALD and the municipality. The meeting was also an attempt to understand the issues and challenges faced by mukhtars with regards to refugees and social cohesion, to discuss localized solutions and to strengthen coordination between mukhtars and other stakeholders. The mukhtars had expressed that social tension in neighbourhoods had escalated recently. Additionally, misperceptions on refugee access to social assistance and livelihood opportunities still hindered social cohesion. UNHCR will continue to work with local partners and counterparts to address the issues that emerge from these meetings.

Working towards Durable Solutions

Education

In October, UNHCR collaborated with the Presidency of Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) to organise **one-day workshops for DAFI scholarship students** in Ankara and Gaziantep. The workshops included capacity building sessions on entrepreneurship, innovation and leadership to support scholars' preparedness for the labour market. UNHCR also participated in the National Stakeholders Dialogue meeting

organized by HOPES – the Higher and Further Education Opportunities and Perspectives for Syrians – a project funded by the EU, with a view towards creating employment prospects for Syrians. The meeting brought together key institutional stakeholders and students to explore priorities based on needs and to identify practical interventions on employment and entrepreneurship of Syrians under temporary protection.

Self-reliance and livelihoods support

UNHCR continues to cooperate with the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR). On 22-23 October, UNHCR supported İŞKUR by training 44 İŞKUR employment experts from Antalya on protection regulations, global economic trends, livelihoods and communication skills with the aim to include more refugees in the labour market.

UNHCR's support to refugee entrepreneurs continues through training, mentorship and financial support. HABITAT has provided entrepreneurship, financial and IT literacy trainings to 1,082 beneficiaries in total as of October 2019.

Resettlement and complementary pathways

As of end of October, close to 15,020 submissions for resettlement of refugee cases (64 per cent Syrian and 36 per cent refugees of other nationalities) were made to 18 countries. Over 9,701 refugees departed for resettlement (78.5 per cent of them Syrian).



Participants gather for a group photo after the neighbourhood gathering held in Fethiye, Muğla on 18 October, which brought together refugees and the host community to foster a culture of living together. ©DGMM

Thanks to donors for their support to UNHCR Turkey and their unrestricted and regional funds in 2019 as of 22 October

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LINKS

[Regional Portal - Syria Regional Refugee Response](#) | [Regional Portal - Mediterranean](#) | [UNHCR Turkey website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Services Advisor](#) | [UNHCR Help](#)