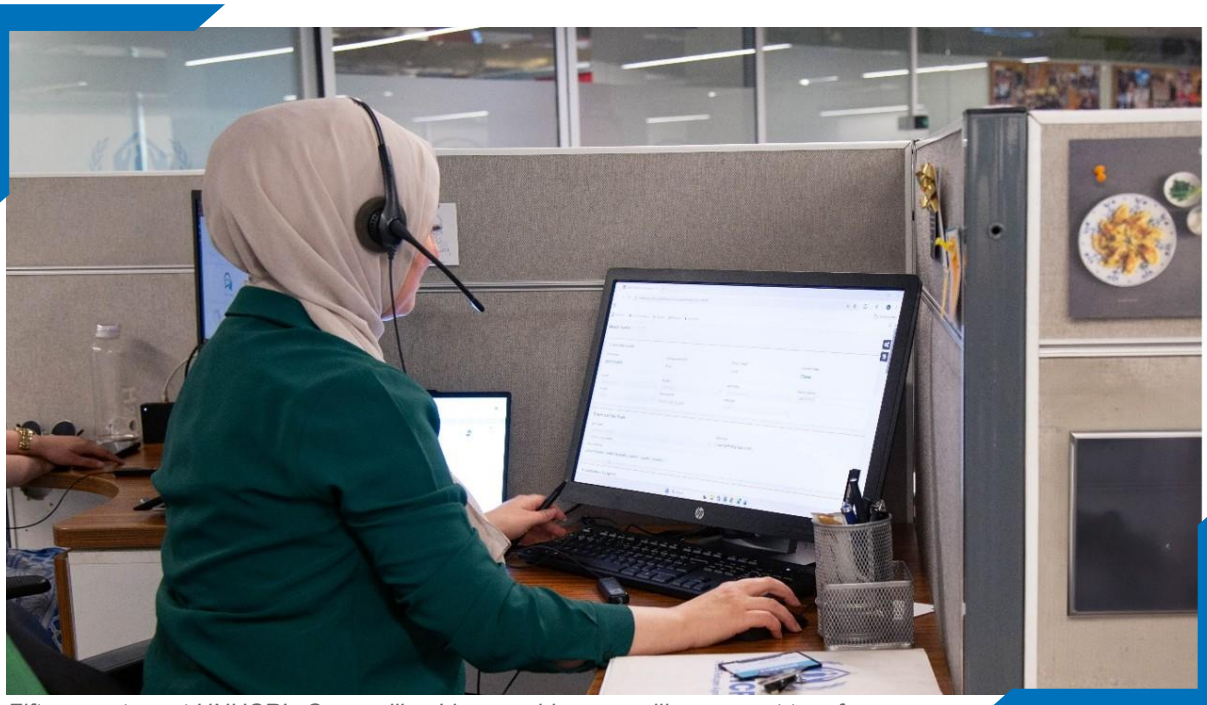
UNHCR supports refugees through a robust individual protection response system, starting from counselling to finding solutions.

UNHCR Türkiye's individual protection response system addresses a wide range of challenges refugees face, including administrative detention, deportation, registration, child protection, gender-based violence, medical and health insurance, social services, education, healthcare, financial challenges, disability, and other specific needs.



Fifty operators at UNHCR's Counselling Line provide counselling support to refugees.

Highlights

The challenges refugees face may vary from person to person. While some issues can be addressed through immediate action, most require systematic follow-up. Over the years, UNHCR has developed a protection response structure to provide responsive and remedial support to individuals at heightened risk.

UNHCR receives referrals through its counselling line, corporate email address, partners and other relevant actors in the field. After receiving the case, an assigned caseworker supports each refugee, provides a safe environment for communication, and builds a healing relationship based on trust.



Listening to the needs and finding a solution together is at the centre of UNHCR's protection approach.

The caseworker informs the refugee of all available options and helps them identify and reach solutions by leveraging their strengths and working with service providers. The caseworker assesses each case to identify needs and potential solutions/responses, and refers to relevant services including those provided by public institutions, local authorities and NGOs.

Cases that remained under follow-up are assessed for continuity of assistance and sustained engagement. In parallel, UNHCR engages with provincial authorities, including Directorates of Migration Management, Directorate of Family and Social Services, Directorate of National Education and Bar Association, to help people access documentation, education, health care, legal aid and essential social services.

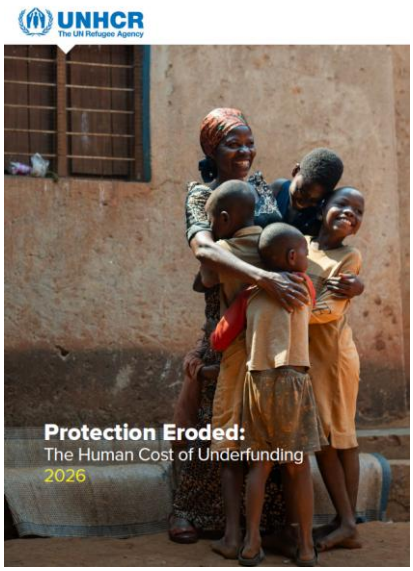
UNHCR's counselling line is often the first responder to protection cases. With support from the Government of Japan, ECHO and other donors, UNHCR responded to over 123,000 calls from all provinces across Türkiye during January to September 2026. The counsellors provided tailored guidance and facilitated referrals for further assistance where needed.

On 18 September, a Japan-Türkiye Parliamentary Friendship Group delegation visited UNHCR's Counselling Line. Led by MP Ichiro Aisawa, Chair of the UNHCR Parliamentary League, the delegation included former Minister MP Ryuji Koizumi and MP Tomomi Inada. The Japanese Ambassador accompanied them. Ms Angela Li Rosi, UNHCR Representative, briefed them on the refugee situation and UNHCR's work, followed by an exchange of views and a visit to the Counselling Line operators.



Recent Developments

Following discussions between UNHCR, and the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), a reduced tuition fee rate will apply from the 2026-2027 academic year to newly enrolled refugee students under temporary or international protection who enter university through the Higher Education Institutions Examination (YKS). They will pay the minimum fee set by Presidential Decision, rather than the higher international student rate. UNHCR estimates that this will reduce their tuition fees by at least 50 per cent. YÖK acknowledged UNHCR's continued advocacy and the concerns raised through the Higher Education Working Group when announcing the change.



In September, UNHCR published a report titled Protection Eroded: The Human Cost of Underfunding, which looks at the impact of the current global funding crisis on protection and solutions for refugees and other forcibly displaced people. Drawing on data from UNHCR operations across the world, the report highlights how sustained funding shortfalls are already affecting critical protection systems, including registration and documentation, asylum procedures, gender-based violence and child protection services, livelihoods and economic inclusion, as well as voluntary return and reintegration. The report also underlines that the impact of underfunding goes beyond reductions in the number of people reached. In many contexts, it is affecting the systems and capacities that underpin effective protection and longer-term solutions.

Protection-Assistance and Advocacy



UNHCR's protection assistance directly impacts refugee families with specific needs.

Protection and Access to Asylum Procedures

Between January - September, the UNHCR Türkiye Counselling Line responded to 123,388 calls. Most calls came from Syrian nationals (40 per cent), followed by Afghans (39 per cent), Iranians, and Iraqis from 78 provinces. The main line of inquiry for all nationalities was resettlement (around 50 per cent), followed by legal assistance (15 per cent).

Counselling Line operators receive regular training to equip them with accurate information on various protection aspects. On 1-2 September, UNHCR Protection Unit conducted two training sessions for Counselling Line operators on international and temporary protection registration and documentation procedures and guided the operators on the structured questions form for efficient identification of gaps and accurate counselling on procedures.

From 22 to 24 September, within the scope of the EU-funded project titled “Supporting Türkiye’s International and Temporary Protection Processes”, UNHCR organized a roundtable meeting in Antalya with migration and asylum experts who have taken part in Mobile Decision Teams and operate at Decision Centers. During the meeting, both PMM and the UNHCR shared their assessments on refugee status determination (RSD) processes, good practices and areas for further improvement. As an output of the meeting, a report outlining good practices and recommendations for enhancing the quality of RSD interviews and decisions will be prepared to serve as a reference material.

Between 26-27 September 2026, UNHCR contributed to a training organized by the Ankara Bar Association Refugee Rights Centre for lawyers specializing in refugee law. UNHCR delivered sessions on Constitutional Court individual application procedures and case law, individual application procedures at the European Court of Human Rights and case law and country of origin information, strengthening lawyers’ capacity to support refugees’ access to effective remedies.

On 29-30 September, UNHCR held a workshop for the Protection Desk (PD) staff in Istanbul with the participation of 45 Protection Desk staff and 8 personnel from PMM, within the scope of the Supporting Türkiye’s International and Temporary Protection Processes Project. The workshop brought together PD staff across provinces combining group analysis of challenging cases with a case analysis workshop and a synthesis session that translated discussions into recommendations for the upcoming activities.

Support for Solutions

Voluntary Returns

UNHCR continues to monitor voluntary returns of Syrian refugees to ensure returns are voluntary, safe, dignified, and well-informed. Local media reported that Interior Minister Mustafa Çiftçi stated the current number of Syrians living in Türkiye is 2.2 million, while 755,000 Syrians have returned to Syria voluntarily since December 2024. UNHCR monitored and interviewed 78 per cent of all these returns and 99 per cent of all returns in 2026.

Resettlement and complementary pathways:

The resettlement quota allocated to Türkiye has increased significantly throughout the year, including a quota for Finland of 150 Afghans originally allocated to other countries. This reflects the high level of unmet needs and the operation's capacity to deliver. The total annual quota allocated to the operation by 13 countries currently stands at 3,931 places - the largest allocation globally to a single operation.

Between January and September 2026, UNHCR has submitted resettlement application for 3,038 refugees (1,881 Afghans, 772 Syrians, 331 Iranians, 17 Iraqis, and 37 from other countries of origin) to twelve countries, mainly Canada, Australia, France, Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands. In the same period, 1,517 refugees (716 Afghans, 632 Syrians, 117 Iranians, 25 Iraqis and 27 from other countries of origin) departed for resettlement in eight countries, mainly Canada, Australia and France.

Social Cohesion



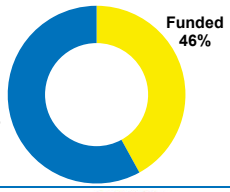
Participants of the Urban Gardens Project

From June to September 2026, partner NGO Human Resource Development Foundation (HRDF), with support from UNHCR, implemented a project titled "Urban Gardens", jointly with Van Ipekyolu district municipality. The project spanned approximately three months with active participation of 10 female beneficiaries (1 of Iranian nationality and 9 of Afghan nationality). Established on approximately 1.7 acres, the garden supports collaborative production among women and strengthens a culture of solidarity. As part of the initiative carried out in cooperation with the Directorate of Women's Policies, the HRDF, and the UNHCR, refugee women have also been integrated into the production process this year. The initiative aims to support active participation of women in the production process, contribute to their economic empowerment, and strengthen social solidarity networks among women.

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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