

2016 KEY FIGURES

1

Turkey is the top refugee-hosting country in the world

28,901

Refugees submitted by UNHCR for resettlement (since 1 January 2016)

15,140

Refugees counselled on the work permit regulation by UNHCR and partners (Since March 2016)

24,703

Non-Syrian refugees and asylum-seekers with specific needs identified by UNHCR and referred for assistance (since 1 January 2016)

32,047

Refugees and asylum-seekers received counselling from UNHCR Ankara (since 1 January 2016)

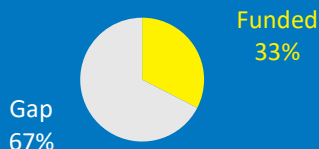
7,428

Officials and humanitarians trained by UNHCR on international protection (Since 1 January 2016)

FUNDING (AS OF 31 DECEMBER)

US \$ 350.9 M

requested for the operation



PRIORITIES

- Increase cooperation with municipalities to assist urban refugees
- Strengthen outreach programmes to support the most vulnerable
- Implement winter support plans for the 2016-2017 winter season
- Continue roll-out of Syrian refugee verification exercise with DGMM

TURKEY

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

October - December 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

- Turkey continues to be the **world's largest refugee hosting country**: 2,814,613 Syrians registered as of 22 December 2016 according to the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM), out of whom 258,585 were hosted in refugee camps, and 2,556,046 were residing in host communities. In addition, 291,209 refugees and asylum-seekers from Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, Somalia and a number of other countries were registered with UNHCR as of 31 December.
- Close to 29,000 refugees were submitted for resettlement during 2016 – the **highest level of resettlement submissions** in the history of UNHCR Turkey.
- **UNHCR Turkey's annual Participatory Assessment exercise with refugee communities took place in 30 locations across Turkey.** As in previous years, this exercise was based on focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews with different thematic areas identified for discussion in education, livelihoods, access to registration / documentation, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and child labour in order to ensure that refugees and people of concern are involved in the planning and implementation of the activities assisting them.
- As temperatures dropped drastically in the country, **around 610,000 refugees were able to protect themselves from the cold weather by December** through UNHCR's one-off cash assistance to urban refugees and delivery of winter packages to refugees in camps.



510,000 vulnerable refugees living in urban areas will benefit from UNHCR's 2016-17 winter assistance programme through the multi-purpose cash component. The programme is carried out in cooperation with UNHCR partners and thanks to generous contribution of its donors.

Photo: © UNHCR / C. Argun

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context – 2016 in Review

2016 was a year that brought about many important achievements in terms of protecting and providing assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers in Turkey.

During the first half of 2016, UNHCR welcomed the Government of Turkey's legislative and other initiatives geared to improve livelihood opportunities. Work permits were made accessible to persons under Temporary Protection on 15 January 2016, and on 26 April 2016 a work permit regulation was also issued for international protection applicants and status holders. Both regulations facilitate access to work permits six months following an individual's registration with the authorities, and allow for increased self-reliance and additional opportunities for refugees in Turkey.

On the occasion of World Refugee Day (20 June), UNHCR and the Union of Turkish Bar Associations signed a Memorandum of Understanding formalizing and expanding their long-standing cooperation to provide legal assistance to asylum-seekers and refugees in Turkey in an effort to strengthen the legal framework and implementation of existing legislation.

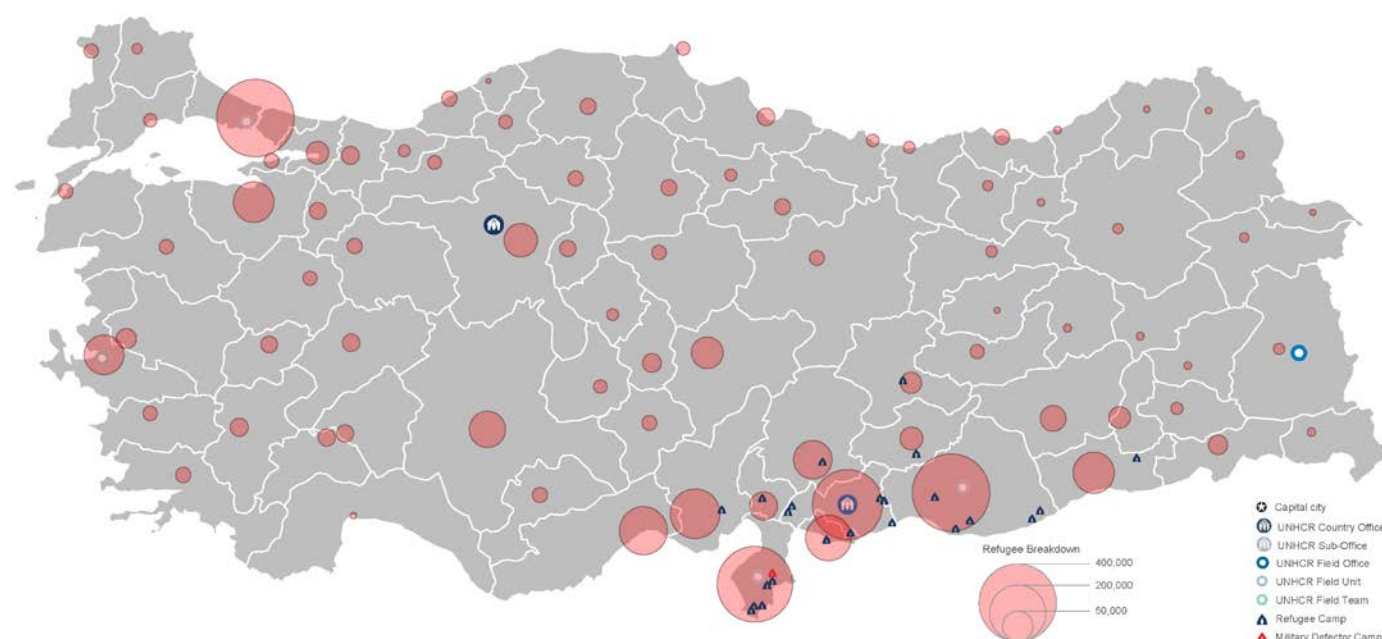
From August 2016, following a Protocol signed with the Ministry of Health, the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) is now able to cover the cost of delivering disability reports to Syrians under Temporary Protection out of its health budget. This measure grants disabled Syrian refugees access to social assistance including a home-based special care allowance. Moreover, a new Regulation on Private Care Centres for Disabled Persons was published in the Official Journal on 4 November 2016 that also covers disabled refugees. Now, following an application made to the Provincial Directorates of Family and Social Policies, disabled refugees may be placed in private care centres.

UNHCR's long-standing cooperation with Turkey was formalized and strengthened on 1 September 2016 when Turkey's Foreign Minister and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees signed a Host Country Agreement.

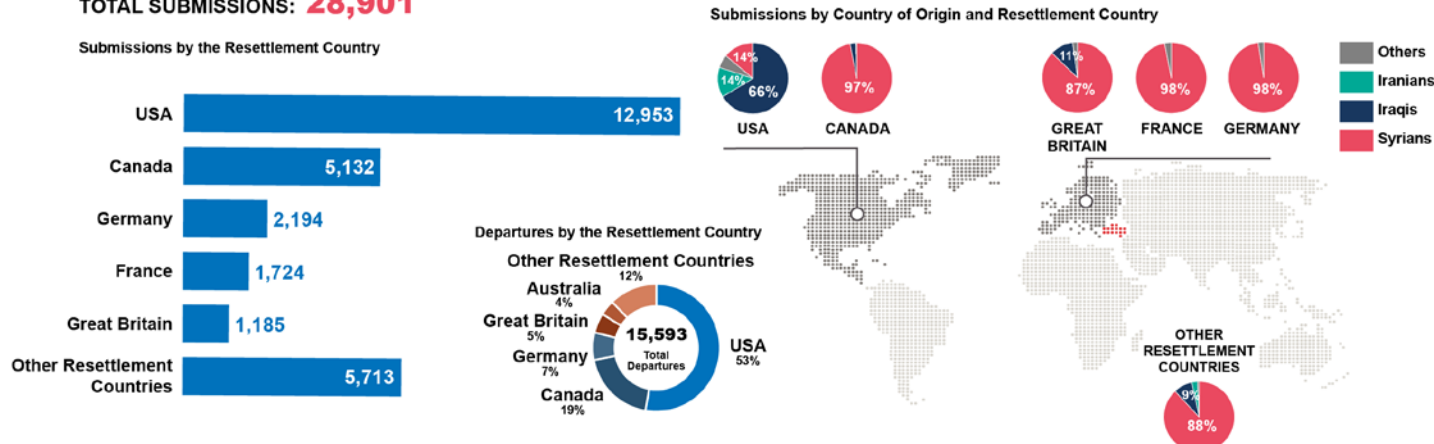
In October 2016, for the third consecutive academic year, the Council of Ministers waived higher education fees for Syrian students for the 2016-2017 academic year.

Also from October, AFAD started converting a number of tents to container camps, increasing the capacity of camps to accommodate more people.

Provincial Breakdown of Refugees and Asylum-Seekers, and Refugee Camps Locations in Turkey



TOTAL SUBMISSIONS: 28,901



Protection

- Strengthening partnerships with women and men of concern of all ages and backgrounds across Turkey:** In line with its Age, Gender, and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM) policy, UNHCR and partner agencies undertook the annual Participatory Assessments with refugee communities from October to December 2016. The Participatory Assessment remains one of the most effective, field-tested methodologies for gaining an understanding of the needs and capacities that reside within refugee communities, and will enable refugees' to contribute to all of UNHCR and partners' planning processes and interventions for 2017. As in previous years, this exercise was based on the focus group discussion and semi-structured interview formats on different thematic areas. Based on the existing range of data obtained through the urban outreach programme, the areas selected for the 2016 exercise were Education, Livelihoods, Access to Registration/Documentation, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), and Child Labour.

Prior to the launch of the exercise in October, guidance materials were developed to help facilitators conduct the discussions and trained partner agency staff. Approximately 2800 refugee women, girls, boys and men of Syrian, Iraqi, Afghan, Iranian, and Somali origin were invited to participate in urban and peri-urban areas in 26 provinces of Turkey (Ankara, Kirikkale, Gaziantep, Izmir, Mugla, Konya, Kayseri, Yalova, sakarya, Yozgat, Elazig, Denizli, Edirne, Tokat, Bursa, Van, Mersin, Agri, Corum, Canakkale, Hatay, Erzurum, Kars, Istanbul, Isparta, and Sanliurfa). The Participatory Assessment findings will be systematized, analyzed and shared with the refugee stakeholders through structured feedback sessions and other partners through the release of a prioritization report in early 2017. In the interim, UNHCR is incorporating the key considerations and findings in its programme review.



Focus Group Discussion with Children group in Gaziantep. Photo: © UNHCR / F. Kawata

- Increasing numbers of refugees' rights are participating in decision-making processes:** UNHCR Istanbul has been advocating for and encouraging the establishment of refugee committees in urban areas, which also contribute to improving the representation of and accountability to persons of concern in the Marmara Region. Following these efforts, the Bagcilar Municipality agreed to add Syrian refugees to national youth, women, and children committees in the area. In cooperation with partner ASAM, the first Women's Committee was established in Izmir for Syrian refugee women. By the end of year the committee met four times and members were briefed on refugee rights and work permits, and discussed the problems and obstacles they face as well as brainstormed possible solutions.

- Supporting youth initiatives implemented under the Turkey Youth Action Plan: Through the Global Call for Proposals on the Youth Initiative Fund launched by its HQ in November, UNHCR, RSC-MUDEM and ASAM supported a joint initiative by Syrian and Turkish youth on accelerating communication for positive change. Further, on 11 December, UNHCR and partners supported a theatre production called “Tomorrow is Ours”, which was written, performed and staged by a group of talented Syrian youth in Gaziantep. The event was attended by 400 spectators from the refugee and host communities in the region.
- Galvanizing action to end violence against women and girls: Within the scope of the 16 days of activism against SGBV, UNHCR Turkey organized a series of activities throughout the country between 25 November and 10 December around this year’s theme: “healthy relationships at home, in schools, and in the community”. In Ankara, activities such as games, drawing and discussion sessions following viewing a short video on the topic were organized to provide awareness and prevention of SGBV as well as give refugee parents and children the opportunity to express their ideas and opinions on what positive and healthy relationships mean to them.

Supported by its partner ASAM, the newly established Syrian Women’s & Youth Committee in Adana conducted interviews with refugee women. The participants requested access to vocational training opportunities and livelihood activities for women as being crucial to tackle early marriage and domestic violence as women will be empowered to advocate for their own rights.

Other humanitarian partners also organized events in the country, such as the Reyhanli Women’s Committee in Gaziantep. Out of their own funds, they conducted a session on awareness raising on contagious diseases in schools, another session on women’s rights and a third on education to encourage Syrian students to attend Turkish schools.

- 7,974 asylum-seekers and refugees were counselled: From October – December 2016, UNHCR Ankara counselled 3,287 non-Syrians in group sessions about asylum procedures, asylum law rights and obligations, and services offered by the government, UNHCR and non-governmental partners, as well as access to them. Also, an additional 4,660 persons of concern, of which 1,630 were female, contacted UNHCR Protection by phone or approached UNHCR in person to obtain counselling and advice on topics varying from resettlement, medical issues, assistance, accommodation, employment, and to other protection issues like SGBV.
- 6,757 non-Syrians with specific needs were identified and referred for protection and other assistance: Out of this number, 3,193 individuals (1,539 cases) were referred on a priority basis to RSD procedures, and 3,564 individuals (1,171 cases) were referred for resettlement consideration. Other targeted protection interventions undertaken by UNHCR for these individuals included referrals, advocacy, and protection follow-up with the line ministries.
- Enhancing coordination and follow-up on urgent protection cases in the Aegean/Western border region: Since October 2016, UNHCR convened two additional sub-working group meetings on urgent cases in Izmir to identify gaps in procedure and to avoid duplication of assistance. In addition, UNHCR prepared leaflets on available services in Izmir to be distributed to beneficiaries through partners in early 2017.
- Mitigating the impact of the refugee situation on host communities, and promoting social cohesion: UNHCR initiated 22 Community Support Projects (CSPs) - small to medium sized projects – in 22 municipalities to assist persons of concern in communities, and to alleviate pressure on local services and infrastructure. CSPs can cover a wide range of interventions in all sectors, including protection, basic needs, education, livelihoods, and health.

In southeast Turkey, between 21 and 23 October, UNHCR’s partner STL organized a film festival which included movie screenings in the Antakya Amphitheatre to bring together Turkish and Syrian communities.

- UNHCR continued its protection advocacy initiative with Turkish authorities concerning pre-registration, access to protection and asylum, and access to person of concern held in removal centres.

Capacity Building and Awareness Raising

- UNHCR delivered sessions on a wide range of topics such as international protection, including child protection and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), to build the capacity of persons representing:



- Strengthening capacity in protection of refugee women and children living in Turkey: In the last quarter of 2016, UNHCR trained an increasing number of MoFSP staff – 709 working at the headquarters and provincial levels – responsible for child and women protection under different projects and initiatives.
- 131 Gendarmerie General Command staff based in different provinces received training: As part of the new UNHCR Project with Gendarmerie GC the staff were trained on refugee protection under the 1951 Convention and the national asylum framework; mixed migratory movements and protection sensitive border management; and identification of persons with special needs.
- Improving knowledge on livelihoods, social economic support and social cohesion for Syrian refugees: UNHCR Istanbul organized a workshop for participants from 27 municipalities in the Marmara Region on these topics in collaboration with Union of Marmara Municipalities.
- Expanding outreach capacity and finding alternative channels for information dissemination: In cooperation with the Istanbul Office of the Mufti, PDMM and PDoFSP, UNHCR Istanbul organized a workshop for 30 coordinator imams from different districts in Istanbul on access to rights and services for Syrian refugees under Temporary Protection and to increase knowledge and raise awareness on early marriage and child labour issues.

Education

- Syrian refugee child enrolment on the rise in Turkey: In December 2016 the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) announced that the enrolment rate had reached 59%, with 491,896 children enrolled in Turkish schools and temporary education centres (TECs).



Education is the key to a secure and sustainable future for refugees and their communities. Children constitute almost half of Syrian refugee population driven from their homes, and enduring access to education for this population has never been more urgent. Photo: © UNHCR / E. Gürel

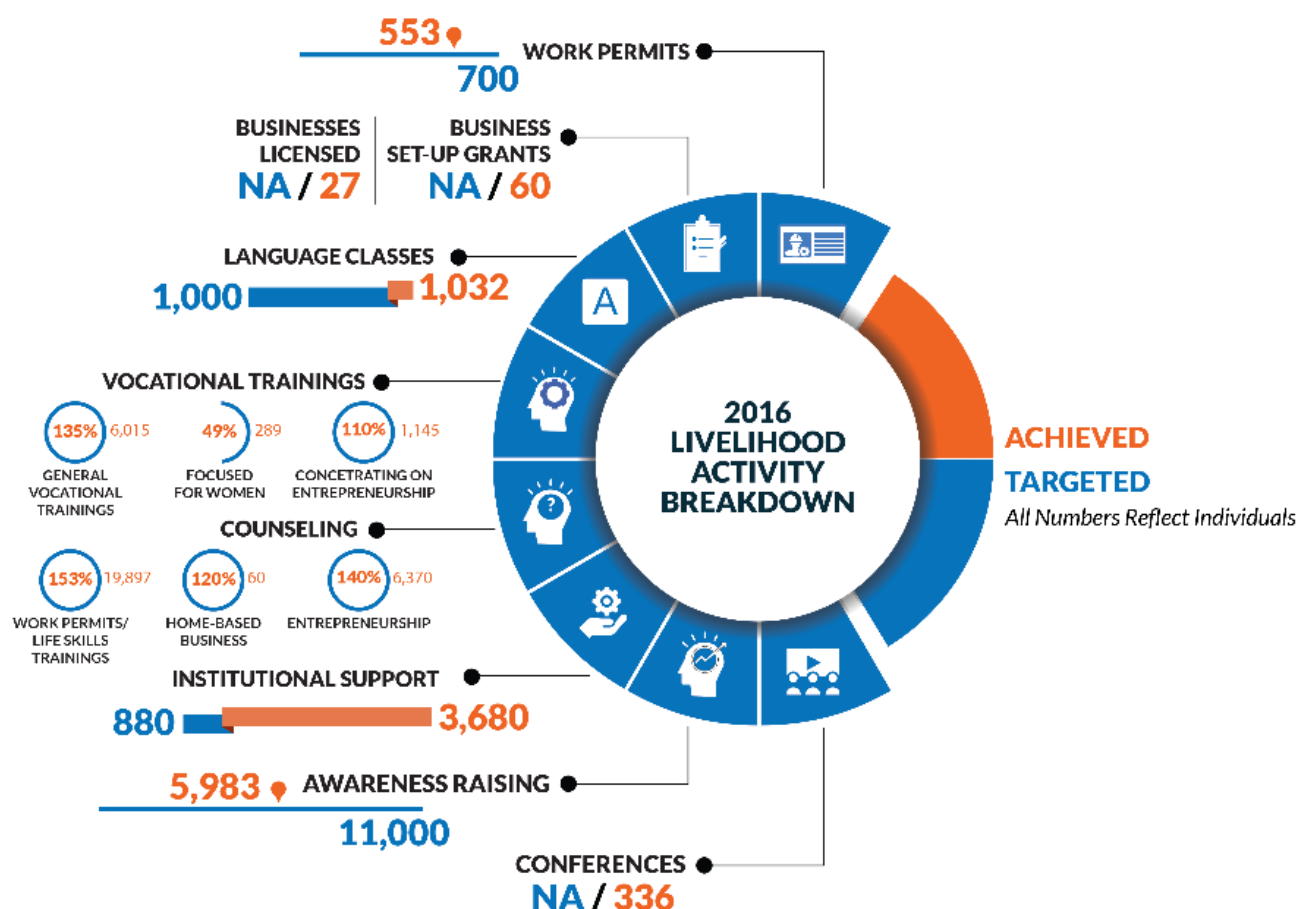
- UNHCR supports MoNE's efforts to teach Turkish to refugee children: Over 400,000 Turkish language textbooks, including a work book and a CD with audio exercises, were procured by UNHCR on behalf of MoNE and distributed to provincial education directorates for use in TECs. All TECs will offer 15 hours of Turkish language instruction in order to promote inclusion of refugee children in Turkish schools.
- Higher education preparation and access to higher education remain priorities: Turkey now implements the largest DAFI scholarship programme in the world with a total of 818 refugee youth awarded scholarships that include tuition costs and a monthly stipend for accommodation and living expenses. The Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) was initiated by the Government of Germany in 1992 enabling thousands of refugee students to continue post-secondary education in countries of asylum.

Also, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) issued calls for applications for UNHCR-funded higher education preparation programmes for almost 1400 high school graduates living in urban areas and a further 700 persons living in camps.

- Two workshops were hosted for MoNE that were attended by over 280 officials from Ankara and provincial education directorates: The Board of Education held extensive discussions on certifying refugees' learning while they are in Turkey, while the Directorate of Lifelong Learning discussed ways in which to strengthen the refugee response and promote the integration of Syrian children in the national system. Proposed amendments to the regulatory framework governing the provision of education for foreigners, including refugees, were also discussed.
- Promoting knowledge on access to education in Turkey: UNHCR and UNICEF, as education sector co-leads, provided training to over 120 NGO staff in Istanbul, Izmir and southeast Turkey on the education opportunities available to refugees and how refugee families could have access to these services.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- Syrian refugees have increased access to livelihood opportunities in Turkey: 26,327 Syrians under Temporary Protection received counselling and participated in awareness raising sessions by UNHCR, in cooperation with IMPR,



on entrepreneurship, work permits, and jobs and UNHCR has facilitated the issuance of 553 work permits since the beginning of the year. Since October, UNHCR also helped facilitate the registration of 27 Syrian businesses. By the end of 2016, UNHCR reached 3680 organizations on the topic labour market access for foreigners under TP and 247,018 information dissemination products such as leaflets and brochures were distributed.

In Izmir, the first conference on labour market integration and work permits for Syrians under TP in the Aegean region was convened for frontline state and civil society actors, trade unions and employers with the participation of 180 people. UNHCR partners organized additional work permit conferences that took place in a total of 14 cities, with the largest held in Adana, Ankara, Istanbul, Sanliurfa, and Kilis.

UNHCR in partnership with IMC organized a career fair in Istanbul on 19 December that brought together Syrian refugees looking for employment and internship opportunities with representatives from the private sector, academic institutions, training centres and university career centres. 327 individuals attended the event where they were able to network and exchange information on jobs and training.

- Encouraging refugee employment through private sector partnerships: On 2 December UNHCR organized a private sector conference with 120 actors such as large enterprises that procure from Turkey, Turkish SMEs, trade unions, and trade associations. Information and experiences were shared between the brands that encourage employment of refugees, companies that are currently employing refugees and potential refugee employers. DGMM, the Ministry of Labor and ISKUR were also part of the event with presentations and an interactive Q&A session.



- 127,490 hygiene kits were provided since the beginning of the year to address some of the health needs of the refugee population in camp and urban settings.



Camp Coordination and Camp Management

- In addition to the distribution of blankets and winter clothes to the camp-based refugee population, 10,000 tents were provided for replacement, primarily in camps in Sanliurfa (Akcakale, Ceylanpinar and Viransehir).
- UNHCR also funded Advanced Turkish Language Programme in 17 camps in SE Turkey: 581 students were enrolled in the programmes as of December 2016. The UNHCR Education Unit follows and monitors the implementation of the programme on a regular basis and provides technical support.



Basic Needs and Cash-Based Initiatives

- By the end of December, 488,648 Syrian and non-Syrian refugees received winter assistance cash: UNHCR's cash-based winter support was kicked off in November through which the most vulnerable refugees living outside of camps received debit cards issued by the Turkish postal system (PTT). These cards can be used in any shop which is part of the MasterCard circuit, allowing refugees to buy a variety of goods or services in thousands of shops across the country. Refugee families received a card carrying a one-time value between USD 200 and USD 300 depending on family size.

In addition to its one-time cash assistance, which reaches out to some 510,000 most vulnerable urban refugees across Turkey, UNHCR, in close cooperation with AFAD is providing winter clothing to some 270,000 refugees in camps. Photo: © UNHCR / E. Argunhan



- Over 120,000 refugees living in camps received winter packages by the end of the year: AFAD is ensuring the distribution of winter items, including clothes, high thermal blankets and heaters across the 23 camps in southeastern Turkey, and UNHCR is monitoring these distributions in collaboration with AFAD.
- 1,342 Iraqi, Afghan, and other nationality refugee households continue to benefit from regular cash assistance: UNHCR delivers an average of USD 20 per person per month through cash payments provided by Garanti Bank.
- 4,144 non-Syrian refugee students received cash grants for access to education, in the amount of USD 50 per child per six-month term. The cash assistance is provided upon verification of their school assistance records.
- Provision of WASH and empty containers to frontline institutions on the Western Borders and Mediterranean Sea: In early 12 containers as well as three shower and six toilet containers were delivered to local authorities in Aydin province, and in December four toilet and three shower containers to Edirne Land Forces / ASAM for use by frontline institutions as reception points and/or waiting areas for apprehended or intercepted persons.

Working in partnership

- The Government of Turkey leads the refugee response with UNHCR providing direct support, capacity building and technical advice to Turkish authorities. As the refugee agency, UNHCR also coordinates the efforts of the UN agencies and partners to support the country's refugee response to avoid duplication and gaps in international assistance. In this role, UNHCR co-leads the Regional Refugee Resilience and Response Plan (3RP) for the Syria crisis with UNDP and the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP) with IOM.
- UNHCR implements its activities with 14 partners: [Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants](#) | [Concern Worldwide Ireland](#) | [Danish Refugee Council](#) | [Directorate General of Migration Management](#) | [Human Rights Foundation of Turkey](#) | [International Blue Crescent Relief and Development Foundation](#) | [International Medical Corps UK](#) | [International Middle East Peace Research Center](#) | [International Organization for Migration](#) | [Support to Life](#) | [The Human Resources Development Foundation](#) | [The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities](#) | [Turkish Red Crescent Society](#) | [United Nations Office for Project Services](#)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

UNHCR's requirements in Turkey for 2016 amounts to **US\$ 350.9 million**. As of 31 December 2016, total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **US\$ 114.2 million**, including **US\$ 101.1 million** for the Syria situation.

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.



Contacts:

Lauren Panetta Chammas, Reporting Officer, panetta@unhcr.org

Levent Eksi, Associate Information Management Officer, eksi@unhcr.org

Links:

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

[UNHCR Turkey - Winter Cash Assistance Video Story](#) [Women's Community Centre in Gaziantep: Empowering Refugee Women to Support their Communities](#)