

## Turkey

November 2018

**Almost 3.9 million refugees and international protection applicants registered**, over 90 per cent of whom are Syrian refugees, and close to 10 per cent of whom are refugees and international protection applicants of other nationalities. Almost 96 per cent of the Syrian refugees live in urban and peri-urban areas while the other four per cent live in 13 Temporary Accommodation Centres (TACs) managed by the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM).

By the end of November 2018, some **14,590 refugees were submitted for resettlement** to 10 different resettlement countries from Turkey. Over 70 per cent are refugees from Syria and close to 30 per cent are refugees of other nationalities, including Afghans. Close to **8,310 refugees departed on resettlement** (almost 92 per cent Syrians and over eight per cent refugees of other nationalities).

As of the end of November 2018, DGMM completed the **closure of six and decongestion of three Temporary Accommodation Centres**. UNHCR provided relocation cash support to **over 44,000 refugees** who opted to move from TACs to host communities.

### Update on Achievements

**Alternatives to Camps:** As of the end of November, six TACs have been closed by DGMM after refugees have relocated either to host communities or other TACs. UNHCR is currently supporting DGMM in the decongestion of three TACs (Öncüpınar and Elbeyli, the two TACs of Kilis province, and Türkoğlu, the only TAC of Kahramanmaraş province), where residents have been offered the option to relocate to urban areas or stay in the TACs. About 40 per cent of the TAC residents are expected to opt to relocate to host communities. UNHCR has been providing one-off cash support to refugees moving into host communities, and transport support to those wishing to relocate to another camp. Since the start of the TACs closure, UNHCR provided one-off cash payments to over 44,000 individuals. The work of the interagency task team and a post-relocation monitoring by UNHCR are ongoing.



Families leaving a TAC located in South-east Turkey to move to urban areas. Photo: UNHCR / E. Gürel

**Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP):** The **Stakeholder Roundtable for the 3RP 2019 – 2020** took place on 22 November. Following planning meetings and consultations with a wide range of government counterparts and partners, the Stakeholder Roundtable served to present the main strategic directions and priorities of the 3RP for 2019-2020, seeking comments and endorsements, in principle. Some 35 senior government officials and nearly 100 participants attended, including from donors and civil society organizations partners. In an opening speech, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs underlined the need for strong international burden- and responsibility sharing, for which the 3RP provides a platform, and the DGMM provided an overview on Turkey's comprehensive legal framework for international and temporary protection. The 3RP brings together 34 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and 12 United Nations (UN) agencies to support the refugee response by Turkey, appealing for 1.6 billion USD.

## Promoting Access to and the Provision of Protection

**Access to protection in closed centres including access to information and legal assistance:** The **Union of Turkish Bar Associations (UTBA)** and UNHCR co-organized an International Conference on Access to Justice by Refugees - Legal Assistance and Legal Aid on 12-13 November in Antalya. The Conference brought together 145 lawyers from 71 bar associations in Turkey as well as legal professionals, policy and lawmakers, adjudicators, academics, public institutions, and NGOs from Turkey and other countries. The participants shared their respective perspectives, experiences and good practices in refugee situations. The conference provided a platform considered useful by participants and enabled discussions on the way forward to address gaps and challenges in the provision of legal assistance to refugees.

As part of its ongoing cooperation with the **Ministry of Justice** to develop the capacity of judges, prosecutors and courthouse personnel (namely social workers and registry clerks) in the field of international protection, a one-day **roundtable meeting was organized on child and early marriages** in November, which brought together some 20 judges and prosecutors from four provinces (Gaziantep, Konya, Istanbul and Ankara), and representatives from DGMM, the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS), Ankara Bar Association, UNICEF and NGOs. During the roundtable meeting, DGMM and MoFLSS representatives presented the administrative proceedings on child marriages, as well as measures implemented and services provided under the child protection legislation. To ensure that courthouse personnel is trained to properly guide refugees who approach the courts, the Ministry of Justice and UNHCR formed a **working group** to draft information materials to equip respective staff with the necessary information, reinforce the “Do No Harm” principle and support a gender-sensitive approach.

**Support to registration, verification and development of the national asylum system:** During November, UNHCR facilitated and accompanied the study visit of six DGMM staff members to Belgium, with the aim of learning about the country of origin information (COI) and legal procedures pertaining to registration, reception, quality assurance, and legal counselling. The **study visit** aimed at strengthening DGMM's newly established COI system “Kure” by analysing the Belgian system. In addition to visits at Asylas and the Federal Agency for Reception of Asylum Seekers, DGMM staff benefitted from briefings and information sharing from the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS), and sat in on court hearings at the Council for Aliens Law Litigation to learn of the Belgian international protection process from start to finish.

## Strengthening Access to Quality Services for Refugees through Public Systems and National and Local Institutions

**Cooperation with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS):** UNHCR organized four **training sessions** for Ankara Provincial Directorate of Family, Labour and Social Services (PDoFLSS) staff on international law, international protection, identification and referral of persons with specific needs, child protection and protection of women. The sessions reached 120 participants from social service centres, child support centres, violence prevention and monitoring centres and other PDoFLSS institutions who work with groups of persons with special needs, such as children, survivors of violence, elderly, persons with disabilities, those in need of social assistance. Aspects related to education were a main area of interest of the participants, including grade determination to access primary and secondary education, language proficiency support as well as strategies and ways to enable children out of school to resume formal education.

### Child protection, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) prevention and response, identification of and social support to refugees with specific needs:

Within the scope of the **16 days of Activism Campaign** against SGBV for which the 2018 theme is “Ending Gender-Based Violence in the World of Work”, UNHCR conducted a series of conferences, workshops and awareness raising activities, including with partners. Among the many activities in different parts of Turkey, the **Ankara Metropolitan Municipality** and UNHCR implemented a painting activity involving 34 refugee and Turkish community members. In **Van**, the local authorities and UNHCR ran a two-day workshop and a film screening on GBV, in which refugees and staff of the local authorities participated. In coordination with the **Gaziantep Municipality**, UNHCR organized an awareness raising session on violence against women with 100 women refugees.



As part of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign, Gaziantep University and UNHCR organized a bike tour in Gaziantep which brought together the city's youth. Photo: UNHCR / E. Gürel

**Social cohesion:** In collaboration with the Human Resource Development Foundation (HRDF), UNHCR organized a two-day **workshop on “Migration, Women and Social Cohesion”** on 29-30 November in Istanbul with the participation of women from Syria and Turkey. The participants were divided into two thematic groups to identify problems, propose solutions and suggest future planning points. The groups deliberated on the themes of violence against women and social cohesion, then made presentations on possible ways forward. Suggestions included increasing government-run awareness campaigns on child marriages, welcoming male participation in activities against sexual violence, and improving relations with host community members by conducting events to explain the causes of the Syria refugee crisis and why Syrians fled their homes.

**Engaging at the local level (municipalities, governor offices, imams, and mukhtars):** In November, as part of UNHCR's funding of the **Ankara Mamak Municipality Centre for Counselling and Coordination for Asylum-Seekers**, UNHCR completed the recruitment of 11 staff including social workers, psychologists and interpreters for the centre. The centre will identify refugees and asylum-seekers, and provide them with health and psycho-social support and first-level counselling through legal, education and livelihoods counsellors. The centre will also ensure referrals to available service providers within the Mamak district.

With the World Academy for Local Democracy's support, UNHCR co-chaired **district level coordination platforms** in the Bağcılar and Pendik districts of Istanbul to streamline the referrals among institutions and improve the provision of services. These were the first meetings of their kind in the two respective districts. Participants included the district municipalities, public institutions, local authorities and NGOs. Participants introduced themselves, their activities and their engagement in the refugee response, and discussed the challenges faced by refugees in the districts, possible solutions, and areas of cooperation.

**Education:** Over 400 applications for the **DAFI** (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) global higher education scholarship programme were received from refugees of nationalities other than Syria by UNHCR Turkey. After the applications were assessed, 125 shortlisted candidates were interviewed by a panel comprised of staff from the Association for Solidarity with Asylum-Seekers and Migrants (ASAM) and from UNHCR. Seventy-nine students were selected for DAFI scholarships and will start benefiting from the programme in December 2018. At that time, these students will be part of close to 1,070 refugee students (over 980 Syrians and 85 from other countries) currently enrolled in higher education scholarship programmes supported by UNHCR in Turkey.

Some 300 refugees in Istanbul, Eskişehir, Mardin and Trabzon started **Turkish language classes** in public education centres (PECs), in line with the Ministry of National Education's priorities. While the majority of the beneficiaries are Syrians, refugees from other nationalities (e.g. Iraqis, Iranians and Afghans) can also be enrolled in these classes. UNHCR is supporting PECs with teacher recruitment through its payroll service provider, and course participants receive cash stipends conditional on regular attendance and will be certified at the conclusion of the course. Courses will be provided in November and December by which time participants should have completed the basic level (A1) of Turkish courses.

## Promoting and Preparing Durable Solutions for Refugees

**Self-reliance and livelihoods support:** A two-day **job readiness training** was organized in Izmir by Habitat Association and UNHCR for refugees and members of the host community. Over 40 participants, including Syrian refugees and Turkish employees of different textile firms, were briefed on labour rights and obligations, including health and safety at the workplace, under the national legal framework regulating the labour market. The training is part of a project aiming to enhance self-reliance and facilitate formal employment through entrepreneurship skills-building trainings, mentorship and financial support.

During November, three **job fairs** were organized by FAO and UNHCR in Adana, Mersin and Gaziantep. The objective of the job fairs was to **facilitate employment of the trainees who benefited from vocational trainings** organized in the framework of FAO and UNHCR's cooperation, aiming to enhance livelihood opportunities in the agricultural sector for Syrian refugees and host community members. It was a unique opportunity for trainees to directly interact with potential employers from different sectors. For instance, during the Gaziantep fair, three local farms offered job opportunities to approximately 30 beneficiaries. Since the beginning of 2018, some 865 beneficiaries both Syrians and members of the local communities in Adana, Gaziantep, Izmir, Mardin, Mersin, and Şanlıurfa, benefited from the support.



Turkish and Syrian beneficiaries visiting İŞKUR's stand at the Mersin fair to register on their database. Photo: FAO

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