



National Protection Working Group Meeting

Time & Location	7 August, 2019 / UNHCR Country Office, Turkey
Chaired by	Lara Özügergin – Assistant Inter-Agency Coordination Officer
Participants	UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women, IFRC, TRC, GIZ, ASAM, MSYD-ASRA, CARE, SEMA, Bashmeh & Zeitooneh, AAR Japan, Takaful Alsham, WHH, Al Resala
Meeting Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. UNHCR Update on Developments in Istanbul2. Q&A

Agenda Point	Discussion
UNHCR Update on Developments in Istanbul	<p>UNHCR Policy Development Unit (PDU) delivered a briefing on the overall situation in Istanbul, including interpretation of recently issued public statements and announcements as well as status of ongoing support to DGMM in establishment of a plan of action/procedures. Main highlights are below, with further details in shared presentation of PDU:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ As of July 12th, stricter controls (in the forms of ID checks in the streets) have been put in place in Istanbul.▪ A public statement (July 18th) issued by DGMM on obligations of Syrians in Turkey, with a reference to Art. 33 of the Temporary Protection Regulation. It was mentioned in the announcement that acts contrary to these obligations are interpreted as a threat to public order.▪ A public statement (July 22nd) issued by Istanbul Governorate on ‘combatting irregular migration’ indicated that persons who are unregistered/do not have ID cards are to be referred to provinces designated by Ministry of Interior (MoI) whereas those registered in other provinces are expected to return to their provinces of registration by August 20th in their own capacity.▪ The second public statement (August 1st) issued by Istanbul Governorate was titled as ‘irregular migration, informal employment and unregistered Syrians’ included information on the outcomes of implemented measures. The number of irregular migrants referred to removal centers for deportation purposes, number of unregistered Syrians referred to TACs as well as visits to workplaces for counseling to employees and employers were mentioned. YIMER 157 hotline was also indicated as a source of information for complaints, inquiries etc.



Inter-Agency
Coordination
Turkey

- As for the activities of UNHCR, the ongoing contact with relevant stakeholders, including DGMM at the highest level and partners, and continuous monitoring of the situation related to implementation in the field were explained. The main advocacy messages were the need for provision of information on the procedures as well as the establishment of avenues to assist Syrians under TP or others in need of protection in terms of their compliance with national legal obligations set forth. In addition, clarification on the procedures that will be applicable for different categories and messaging were among the discussion points at the consultations with DGMM.
- UNHCR is also following up on reported cases of individuals reported to have been subjected to administrative detention. Referrals are received mainly through UNHCR field offices, Counselling Line as well as partners
- As the statements do not include comprehensive information as to the procedural framework, UNHCR is currently liaising with DGMM to clarify and support in developing a plan of action.
- Current discussions on the state of the procedures are as follow:
 - DGMM minivans will be deployed in 6 locations in Istanbul. As of August 7th, DGMM decided that 2 of the minivans would be located in Esenler bus terminal, the other 4 locations are yet to be decided. It is expected that the other locations will be determined by Istanbul Governorate and DGMM in the coming days.
 - The minivans will be mobile work stations for PDMM staff and will include 3 personnel as well as processing equipment.
 - Procedures to be followed in the minivans differentiate based on persons' status of registration with DGMM, which is detailed below:
- As of August 7th, procedures for Syrian nationals in Istanbul who are registered with PDMM in other provinces and without valid travel permits are as follows:
 - Once persons approach minivans in set locations, they will be asked to present their TPIDs for checks on GöçNet. After persons provide finger prints, they will be given travel permits and will be counseled to approach the PDMM of the registration province within a week. It is yet unknown whether these persons would be asked to fulfil signature duties in the provinces.
 - No assistance, such as bus tickets will be provided by DGMM, hence persons will be expected to return to their registration provinces in their own capacity.
- As of August 7th, procedures for Syrian nationals in Istanbul who are not registered are as follows:
 - For persons who have not yet been registered with any PDMM, once they approach the minivans, their basic biodata information and finger prints will be obtained. This will not replace formal registration with PDMM. Once processing is finalized these persons will be referred to one of the designated provinces (which is to be decided by DGMM upon a list worked on by UNHCR in view of the backlogs, workload of PDMM, livelihoods opportunities), no final decision reached). They will be counseled to approach PDMM in the designated province within a week to finalize registration procedures. As these persons will not be registered at that given moment, travel documents replacing travel permissions will be provided via the minivans.
 - A number of Syrians with no registration have been referred to Öncüpınar TAC in Kilis for processing at the TAC. So far, it is known that approximately 1000-1300 individuals have been referred. Their processing takes place in the TAC by Kilis



Inter-Agency
Coordination
Turkey

	<p>PDMM and they are discharged from the TAC subsequent to registration to stay in Kilis. As their registration is carried out by Kilis PDMM, they are expected to remain in the province for 30-day until they receive their TP ID. Processing of individuals whose TP statuses have ceased subsequent to voluntary repatriation to Syria will be followed as per the TP Regulation. If they approach the minivans, they would be referred to the provinces they were previously registered in for a decision on their TP status.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ With regards to registration in Istanbul (as it has been closed to TP registration as well), UNHCR continues to advocate on exceptions for most vulnerable persons of concern. As of now, categories for exceptional registration in Istanbul include newborns, serious medical conditions, enrolment in higher education and persons who are to establish businesses. UNHCR is advocating for most vulnerable individuals as well as for family unity purposes. Currently, in cases of family unity, PDMM may continue registration of children (below 18) who are unmarried and whose family members are registered in Istanbul. Children of registered families who are above 18 and married are to be referred to another province for registration. For medical cases that are receiving treatment in Istanbul, it is expected that PDMM will extend travel permits however their province of registration will not be Istanbul.▪ In order to harmonize messaging and support refugees' access to information on rights, obligations and procedures, UNHCR supported DGMM in developing an information leaflet. The draft leaflet has been sent to DGMM for their inputs, subsequent to which it will be finalized. As the procedures are not yet fully determined, the leaflet will be regularly updated in line with developments and decisions of DGMM.<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Action Point: Once the information leaflet is approved by DGMM, UNHCR will relay it to PWG members for their dissemination to persons concerned. It is noted that the information leaflets should be retained with no changes in content/logo. As decisions regarding procedures are still evolving, the mentioned leaflet will be regularly updated by UNHCR and shared with the Protection Coordinator for dissemination through partners. Partners are also advised to provide the number of the UNHCR Counseling Line (444 48 68) to persons.▪ In addition to supporting DGMM in developing a plan of action, UNHCR will be providing staff support to DGMM, to equip the minivans as well as Öncüpınar TAC for registration and referral. In consideration of the potential need, it is being considered that a number of staff already recruited under the continuous registration project may be referred to areas of need. Additional staff may also be recruited, however the exact level and type of support of UNHCR is to be clarified once further information on procedures and estimate numbers of persons to be relocated are received through DGMM.
Q&A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What is the general profile of Syrians who are referred to Öncüpınar TAC, as we have heard that the majority are single men. Are there women and children being referred as well?<p>There is no designated profile, as those detected to be unregistered at the controls by law enforcement were referred to Oncupınar TAC. However, the majority has so far been males in view of the methodology of identification.</p>▪ Within the processing carried out at the minivans, will vulnerability/protection assessments be carried out by PDMM staff?



The processing is expected to be quite quick as this will not be a registration process. If there are visible vulnerabilities, they may be referred to PDMM Protection Desks for necessary protection interventions. Furthermore, persons who are already registered in the system have information as to their specific needs on GöçNet which would be taken into consideration. However, there will not be a dedicated time for such detailed assessment at minivans. In cases of SGBV, if the person is already registered with a PDMM in another city where risks due to security concerns exist (i.e. access of perpetrator to survivor) then transfer of registration province should take place before referral. However it is crucial that UNHCR is informed on such individual cases for necessary follow up with DGMM.

- **Do we have a sense of the number of children apprehended and referred for processing? Especially in consideration of the designated date (August 20th) for persons to travel to designated provinces, are there discussions in relation to ensuring their access to education as the new school term will start very soon?**

As the minivans are not yet operational, we do not currently have a comprehensive understanding on the profiles of persons nor the scale concerning different profiles. The minivans are expected to become operational today or tomorrow. UNHCR is also advocating for the extension of the grace period, however no commitments have been made so far.

- **How were the provinces for referral of unregistered Syrians designated?**

As for the initial list, the provinces with large populations of Syrians where services are overwhelmed were not designated. Selection was based on the capacity of the province for intake as well as availability of livelihoods opportunities. UNHCR shared with DGMM the possible cities in this regard and DGMM will make the final decision.

- **Will financial assistance be provided to persons that are referred to provinces, especially to cover expenses of travel?**

Neither UNHCR nor DGMM has a budget to finance the travel of persons referred. There is no clear picture yet as to the estimate number of persons who will be processed, hence it is also difficult to foresee the budget that would be required for transportation assistance.

- **How long do you expect the minivans to be operational?**

We foresee that until August 20th persons will be approaching minivans voluntarily. Following the deadline of the grace period, law enforcement agencies reportedly will direct the detected persons to minivans.

- **Are public institutions planning for livelihoods programming in the designated provinces?**

At this stage it is difficult to plan in a fully-fledged manner as the scale of relocation is not known. Once all have a better understanding, a more effective planning by all may be commenced.

- **Due to fear, it is observed in South East Turkey that many persons of concern are anxious to approach PDMMs.**

It will be very important for partners to disseminate harmonized messaging on the issue and refer unregistered Syrians, including those who have recently arrived, to PDMM as registration is the key to legalize stay in the country and to have access to the services. There is an existing information leaflet on rights and obligations under TP, which can be disseminated through PWGs.

- **Action Point:** UNHCR to share information leaflets on rights and obligations under TP with PWG members for dissemination.



Inter-Agency
Coordination
Turkey

- **Partners observe various incidents and identify individual cases with claims of forced return to Syria. There is also a lot of information accumulated through media outlets. What can we do about this situation?**

Information needs to be collected as much detailed as possible to create a foundation for advocacy with DGMM. We would suggest for partners to document incidents and individual cases as much as possible. It will be important for UNHCR to be informed on incidents as well as individual cases.

- **Action Point:** UNHCR to share standardized information collection document to record cases and incidents requiring follow-up.
- **Action Point:** Establishment of referral lines with UNHCR field offices to relay information on cases in an effective and systematized manner. UNHCR field offices to share contact information of focal points to receive referrals.

- **Some partners would be willing and able to provide assistance and support to persons, such as through bus tickets and NFIs. Can we coordinate these efforts?**

We need to better understand the capacity of each organization, what type of support they would be able/willing to provide, as well as the profile of the persons in order to discuss way forward. To this end, it would be very beneficial for PWG members to consult internally within their organizations, which would then assist collectively mapping the services/ assistance planned to be provided. Some among us may decide to establish assistance criteria, as there may be a significant number of persons processed. We can facilitate ad hoc meetings through existing coordination platforms once mapping efforts are finalized.

- **Action Point:** Protection coordinator to share template for mapping of potential support through PWG members. Members to discuss potential support internally. Once these processes are concluded, PWG can facilitate ad hoc dedicated meetings.



Action Points

Focal Point

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