

# TURKEY

May 2019

Key Figures (as of 29 May 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

## 8,389

**Refugees submitted for resettlement consideration** to 15 different countries so far in 2019

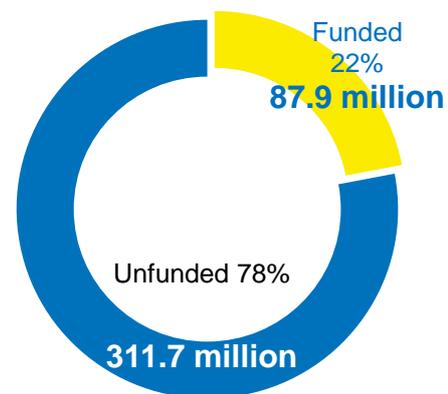
## 26,565

**Individuals who have benefitted from UNHCR's livelihoods skills, language and vocational training** since January 2016

Funding (as of 29 May 2019)

## USD 399.6 million

requested for UNHCR operations in Turkey



## Key Developments in May 2019

The inauguration ceremony of UNHCR's project dedicated to increasing access to Turkish language learning and vocational training of Syrians in Turkey took place on 20 May in Ankara. The project, which is funded by the EU and is implemented by UNHCR in cooperation with the Government of Turkey, provides Turkish language and vocational training courses for refugees to equip them with skills to communicate and interact in daily life in Turkey. The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and the European Union Delegation as well as around 121 participants of ministries, government institutions, NGOs and UN Agencies attended the inauguration.

As part of the collaboration with DGMM on the closure and decongestion of **Temporary Accommodation Centres (TACs)** UNHCR organised an internal workshop to assess and analyse the impact of the support with relocation following a post relocation monitoring which was conducted in February. At the same time, DGMM and UNHCR undertook preparations for the closure of two more TACs in Sanliurfa, namely Suruc and Ceylanpinar, with the aim to complete the closure by end of July.

The **Higher Education Council** in Turkey revoked its quota for foreign students enrolled at university. Previously, university programmes were allowed to only accommodate a maximum of 50 per cent foreign students. This decision applies to both private and public universities and is expected to pave the way for higher university enrolment rates by Syrian refugees. There are currently more than 20,000 Syrian students enrolled in Turkish universities. UNHCR, working closely with YTB, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities, to provide university scholarships to 981 refugee students through the DAFI scholarship programme, and YTB's *Turkiye Burslari* programme to extend its coverage. A further 83 refugee students from countries other than Syria receive higher education grants to assist with the cost of tuition fees.

**Alternatives to Camps:** Within the scope of cooperation between the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) relocation scheme, DGMM and UNHCR undertook preparations for the closure of the two Temporary Accommodation Centres, Suruc and Ceylanpinar, in Sanliurfa. DGMM aims to complete the closure by end of June where approximately 30,000 individuals would be relocated either to host communities or to another TAC per their preferences. In addition to the one-off cash assistance and transportation assistance to other TACs, UNHCR is working with DGMM to provide information to refugees on the relocation and available services in provinces. UNHCR supports the Alternatives to Camps intervention by covering refugees' transportation, relocation, basic and specific needs. In May, some 2,035 refugees relocating from the Suruc and Ceylanpinar TACs were supported through relocation grants to enable their settling into host communities.

**Harmonization Strategy and Action Plan:** In an effort to strengthen social cohesion, DGMM and UNHCR advance in implementation of a series of activities running until March 2020. The activities include engaging local and refugee communities and service providers at the provincial level on social cohesion and strengthening the communication and harmonization between refugees and the host community; between refugees and service providers; as well as increasing public awareness. Activities will take the form of harmonization gatherings, regional workshops, engaged conversations and neighbourhood gatherings with refugees and the local community. Social cohesion workshops will also include staff of the Presidency for Religious Affairs and Ministry of National Education. Materials aimed at addressing providing information to the public and increasing awareness of refugees about their rights and obligations are being distributed.

Within UNHCR and DGMM's Harmonization Initiative, eight neighbourhood gatherings were organised in May in Ankara, Erzincan, Eskisehir, Bursa, Sakarya, Kocaeli and Adana. The gatherings aim to strengthen the interaction between refugee and host communities by creating a convivial environment where members of both communities learn about the culture and values of each other and develop friendships and empathy. The first eight gatherings which took place during Ramadan, were organised in the form of iftar dinners where more than 2,200 refugees, host community members, local authorities and NGO representatives joined, and high-level officials, including governors, district governors and DGMM directors. The neighbourhood gatherings served as a tool for positive messaging for the refugees and host community.

## Promote access to and support the provision of protection

### Support to registration, verification and development of the national asylum system

In May, provincial directorates of DGMM updated the data of 81,101 Syrian applicants (under temporary protection) and 10,817 applicants for asylum seekers of other nationalities (under international protection) bringing the total number of persons with updated data, beyond the dedicated verification initiative, to 274,813 for Syrians and 36,702 for other nationalities in 2019. In addition, DGMM approved the expansion of the verification online scheduling system for applicants under international protection, which was until then only available for scheduling of verification appointments for Syrians.

A workshop on Operation Data Management was held in Ankara in May with the participation of 12 DGMM and 10 UNHCR staff. The workshop, organized within the scope of UNHCR's European Union funded project on the reinforcement of Turkey's national asylum system, aimed at enhancing operational data management methods and best practices.

In cooperation with the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM), UNHCR and DGMM jointly conducted their sixth induction training on continuous registration between 21-24 May. Twenty-nine participants were trained on the legislation, the identification of persons with specific needs, protection and registration tasks in order to be assigned to work with the Provincial Directorates of Migration Management to support the directorates with registration of temporary and international protection applicants.

## Strengthen 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 continues to work closely with MoFLSS through some 50 Social Service Centres across the country. Social Service Center staff conduct house visits, and provide protection services as well raise awareness on issues such as family planning, child labour, school enrolment, child marriage and registration.

### Strengthening access to justice by refugees

UNHCR supports refugees' access to legal assistance in Turkey through an agreement with the Union of Turkish Bar Associations (UTBA). In May, 277 legal aid cases concerning refugees and asylum-seekers were submitted to the UNHCR-UTBA Commission to assess attorney fees and other relevant expenses. The appointments were related to first instance and appeal stages in administrative and civil courts as well as oral and written counselling services, and mostly concerned Syrian nationals followed by Afghans, Iranians and Iraqis.

## Promote and prepare for durable solutions for refugees

### Self-reliance and livelihoods support

The joint vocational training centre between UNHCR and Ankara Metropolitan Municipality (AMM) provides language and vocational courses to refugees and the host population. In May, the Centre reached 117 beneficiaries with language training and 119 beneficiaries with vocational training.

UNHCR provides refugee entrepreneurship support through training, mentorship and financial support. By the end of March UNHCR had reached a total of 3,449 individuals with entrepreneurship training and 145 individuals with business license and 502 individuals with business grants.



Refugees and members of the host community benefit from vocational training at the UNHCR/AMM vocational training centre. Photo: UNHCR

Livelihoods activities have so far reached 26,565 individuals with skills, language and vocational training programmes since January 2016. Similarly, counselling on access to the labour market and entrepreneurship has so far reached 49,122 individuals.

### Monitoring the voluntary nature of self-organized returns

UNHCR monitors the voluntary nature of the returns and ensures that all who wish to return are provided with the necessary information as to the consequences of their decision to return. In cases where return is sought as a result of protection-related issues, UNHCR provides counselling on possible interventions in Turkey to enable individuals to make well-versed return decisions. At the end of May, the total number of voluntary return interviews observed by UNHCR in 2019 stands at 10,763 individuals (5,270 families).

### Education

Turkish language and vocational training courses for refugees, within the EU-funded project inaugurated on 20 May have begun. The project is implemented by UNHCR in cooperation with the Government of Turkey, and so far, 328 beneficiaries (including Iraqis, Afghans and Syrian refugees) have enrolled in courses in the four provinces of Ankara, Bursa, Konya and Kayseri.

### Resettlement and complementary pathways

As of end of May, over 8,389 submissions (around 70 per cent Syrian and 30 per cent refugees of other nationalities) of refugees were made, and over 4,500 refugees departed on resettlement (83 per cent of them Syrians).

### Communication with communities

UNHCR shares information about rights, obligations and available services for refugees through its main digital platforms, Help and Services Advisor. Since the launch of these platforms in August 2017 until the end of May, Help received approximately 494,593 unique visitors, and Services Advisor approximately 168,845 unique visitors.



Neighbourhood gatherings between refugees and the host community as part of UNHCR and DGMM's Harmonization Initiative took the form of Iftar dinners in May. Photo: UNHCR

### Thanks to donors for their support to UNHCR Turkey and their unrestricted and regional funds in 2019 as of 29 May

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### LINKS

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