

# TURKEY FACT SHEET

July 2019

## Some 4 million refugees

Turkey continues to be home to the world's largest refugee population.

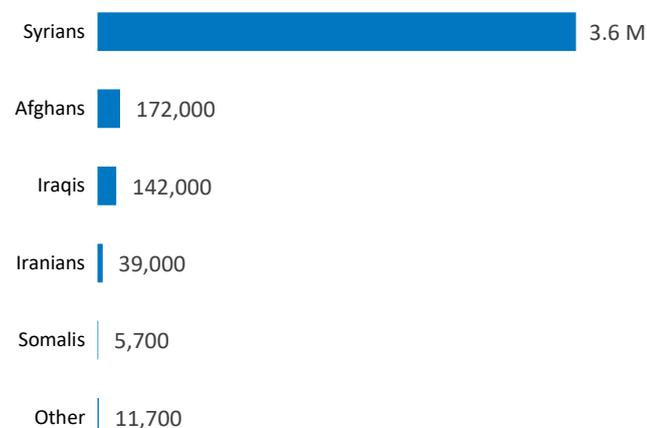
## Key locations

Over 98 per cent of refugees in Turkey live in urban, peri-urban and rural areas, while the remaining refugees live in Temporary Accommodation Centres.

## Refugee youth

Close to 1.4 million refugees in Turkey are under 15 years old, and over 800,000 are aged between 15 and 24.

### POPULATION BREAKDOWN



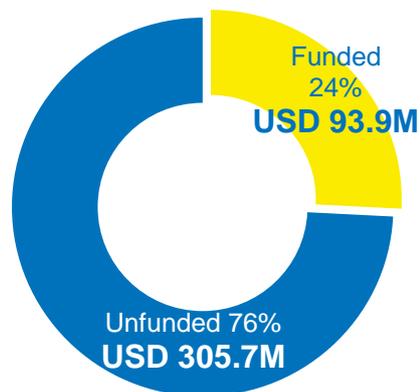
\* Data source for Syrian population: DGMM as of 4 April 2019.

\* Data source for other nationalities: UNHCR as of 10 September 2018, after which UNHCR phased out of registration.

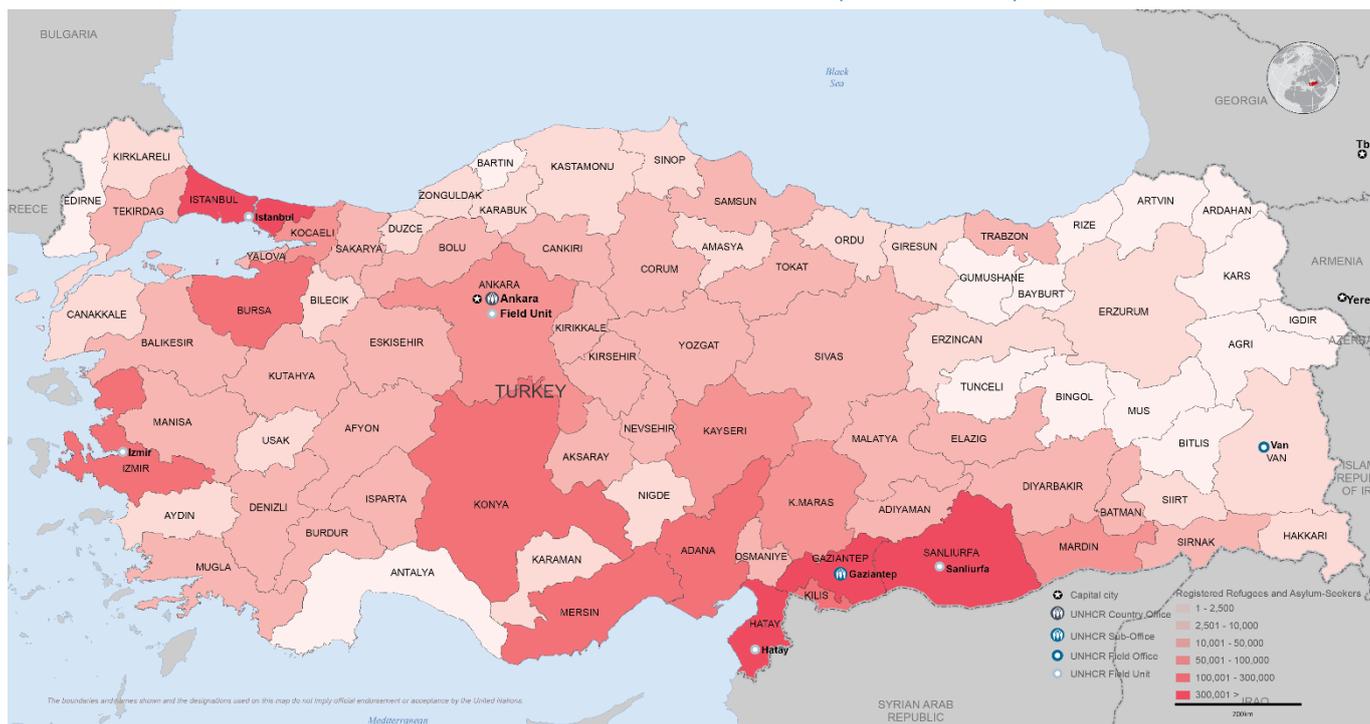
### FUNDING (AS OF 30 JULY 2019)

**USD 399.6 M**

requested for UNHCR operations in Turkey



### BREAKDOWN OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS PER PROVINCE (AS OF 01 JULY 2019)



## Working with Partners and Public Institutions

- The **Government of Turkey leads the refugee response** with UNHCR providing operational and capacity development support. Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees in the world and its response to refugees has been generous and positive. Turkish legislation (Law on Foreigners and International Protection and Temporary Protection Regulation) provides refugees and asylum-seekers with a range of rights, including access to education, health care and social services, upon registration with the authorities. Nonetheless, protection and capacity gaps continue to be observed in the implementation of the legal framework, in particular due to the scale of the needs. UNHCR Turkey has a country office in Ankara and field presence in Istanbul, Izmir, Gaziantep, Hatay, Şanlıurfa and Van.
- In supporting the refugee response in Turkey, UNHCR works in **partnership** with public institutions at the national, provincial and local levels, including municipalities, with international and national non-governmental organisations, with United Nations sister agencies, with private service providers as well as with refugees themselves.
- As the Refugee Agency, UNHCR provides for **coordination** of the support of partners to Turkey's refugee response, with a view to avoid duplication and gaps, and address unmet needs of refugees and asylum-seekers. In this role, UNHCR co-leads with UNDP the **Regional Refugee and Resilience Response Plan (3RP)** in response to the Syria crisis, and chairs the International Protection and Migration Results Group of the Turkey 2016-2020 UN Development and Cooperation Strategy (UNDCS). Through sector working groups and other fora, UNHCR contributes to improving referral networks to public service providers and working towards the complementarity of interventions by the different actors in the response.

## Strategic Directions

Turkey's legal framework for international and temporary protection forms the basis of UNHCR's strategy and priorities in 2019. The agency more specifically has the following key strategic directions:

- UNHCR promotes **access to and the provision of protection**, by continuing to work in close partnership with the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM), the Turkish Coast Guard and Land Forces, the Gendarmerie General Command, the Ministry of Justice, and the Union of Turkish Bar Associations (UTBA), advocating for the admission of persons in need of international protection, their access to fair and efficient national asylum-procedures and promoting procedural standards and safeguards. Cooperation with DGMM to support continuous registration and international protection procedures remains a priority. Efforts to improve access to legal assistance of refugees are expanding.
- Turkey's legal framework provides for access to health care, education and social services by refugees. In strengthening protection and access to quality public services, UNHCR is focusing on child protection services (in particular for unaccompanied or separated children), the prevention and response to SGBV as well as social services for persons with specific needs. The cooperation with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, in particular its Social Service Centers will be expanded, as well as support in the identification, referral and response to cases of refugees with specific need, working with civil society partners.
- In an effort to promote **social cohesion and harmonization**, UNHCR supports DGMM in the implementation of the National Strategy on Harmonization and the National Action Plan and engages with local administrations and municipalities to strengthen interaction and social cohesion between refugees and host communities. A priority for refugees in this regard are Turkish language courses, provided through Public Information Centers (PECs).
- UNHCR promotes and prepares for **durable solutions** for refugees. This entails working with the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) with regard to higher education and language training for higher education preparation. The focus on self-reliance will also be pursued by working with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services and ISKUR, with a view to improving access to the labour market for refugees.

Advocacy for an increase in resettlement quotas and for safe complementary pathways for refugees continues, with 20,000 resettlement places as the target for 2020. UNHCR monitors the voluntary nature of spontaneous returns, and works with the Government to address some of the barriers, such as lack of civil documentation, in case larger numbers of Syrians opt to return and conditions permit to facilitate such returns.

- Throughout its work, UNHCR prioritizes enhancing **partnership and communication** with a wider range of stakeholders. As over 98 per cent of refugees in Turkey live in urban, peri-urban and rural areas, UNHCR Turkey continues to strengthen its community-based and outreach approaches and further invest in communication with communities, including host communities, through a variety of channels and tools and engage them directly in the response.

## Priority Activities

### Promoting access to and the provision of protection

On the basis of the national legal framework for international and temporary protection and in compliance with the principle of non-refoulement, UNHCR promotes protection-sensitive border management and access to international protection procedures for refugees and asylum-seekers, including those in removal centres. To do so, UNHCR works to improve access to information and legal assistance. Support to the Directorate General for Migration Management (DGMM) and its provincial departments across Turkey continues to be a priority, including to support continuous registration as well as quality and efficiency of the international protection procedures.

More specifically, UNHCR interventions in Turkey focus on:

- **Enhancing partnerships with key institutions**, including DGMM, the Turkish Coast Guard, the Gendarmerie General Command, Turkish Land Forces and line ministries at both the field, provincial and central level, to monitor trends and to promote protection-sensitive border management that supports admission to territory, continuous registration and access to international protection procedures for those in need of protection and assistance.
- **Supporting DGMM to register international protection applicants and temporary protection beneficiaries.** UNHCR supports DGMM to implement continuous registration, process new applications in a timely and efficient fashion and establish a functioning referral system for applicants in Turkey, and identify persons with specific needs throughout the process. To this effect, UNHCR continues to provide technical, material and human resources support to DGMM.
- **Strengthening the refugee status determination procedures conducted by DGMM** to build a resilient, efficient and quality national asylum system. Capacity-development activities for DGMM and Provincial Directorate of Migration Management (PDMM) staff continue to take place, including through study visits, joint missions and on-the-job visits to coach PDMM personnel involved in status determination and help establish a sustainable country of origin information mechanism. These activities aim to ensure DGMM and its provincial departments improve the quality and efficiency of refugee status determination procedures in line with international standards.
- **Broadening access by refugees to legal protection and assistance** by working in close collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and the Union of Turkish Bar Associations. A range of initiatives enhance the capacity of lawyers, judiciary and court personnel, including knowledge in national and international refugee law, support consistent application of the law, standards and procedures, and provide interpretation support for lawyers. To overcome barriers to accessing legal assistance and legal aid, refugees receive direct support through legal clinics that provide legal assistance in key provinces, undertake referral mechanisms to legal aid, and provide relevant information.

## Strengthening protection and access to quality services for refugees with specific needs

To support the further inclusion of refugees into the Turkish national system, UNHCR actively engages with line ministries and institutions at the national, provincial, municipal and local levels. While inclusion into national services is a priority in all sectors, UNHCR's specific emphasis is on child protection, the prevention and response to SGBV and the identification of and social support to refugees with specific needs.

UNHCR's interventions focus on:

- **Regular monitoring of the situation of refugees and asylum-seekers** to identify individuals with specific needs, assess their vulnerability, provide counselling and refer them to necessary protection interventions by state service providers and other partners. UNHCR also gathers information on access by refugees to services, monitors the implementation of protection interventions on the ground, and designs interventions to coordinate with line Ministries, especially DGMM, at the policy level.
- **Supporting the increase in the capacity of the current national social and protection systems** to provide services to persons of concern with specific needs. UNHCR has strengthened its partnership with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS) to integrate refugees into the national social schemes, with specific support provided to Social Service Centres (SSCs) given the overwhelming numbers of refugee children, women, elderly and with disabilities. The SSCs benefit from support through interpreters, social workers, training activities for staff on international protection, outreach work, psychosocial support, and, where necessary, through equipment, vehicles, office spaces and through the refurbishment of existing spaces.
- **Prioritizing responses for children identified at higher risk** through a child protection systems-building approach, in coordination with UNICEF and other partners, focusing in particular on supporting the development of best interests procedures, which are not currently fully in place, as part of the national case management system.
- **Enhancing SGBV prevention and response mechanisms** by continuing to deliver trainings on SGBV identification, referral and response mechanisms. Jointly with authorities and partners, UNHCR will also continue developing strategies to prevent and respond to domestic violence and to early and forced marriage, including through information dissemination and awareness-raising activities and by identifying individual cases and referring them to specialized services.
- **Assisting refugees with urgent needs.** UNHCR provides one-off emergency assistance, in the form of cash and non-cash assistance, to the most vulnerable persons of concern. These are provided in order to cover costs of medical examinations, medicines and medical devices when these are not covered by the insurance schemes or for the individuals who cannot access the national welfare system; or transportation, rental assistance, food and legal fees.
- **Providing tailored financial support to persons with specific needs** such as LGBTI persons, separated children, adolescents aging out of orphanage care, and children involved in hazardous work and other forms of child labour as an alternative to negative coping mechanisms. As a means to prevent, mitigate and respond to protection risks, UNHCR's cash assistance is complementary to other forms of available financial support, such as the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN), and helps individuals not yet covered by other such social schemes.
- **Supporting networks of active refugee and Turkish youth.** In line with the priorities identified through the national Youth Empowerment Action Plan, youth are engaged in activities on social cohesion, education, and prevention of child marriage with the assistance of UNHCR and its partners.

## Promoting social cohesion and harmonisation

UNHCR implements social cohesion activities and Community Support Projects (CSPs) aimed at encouraging dialogue and inter-action between refugees, host communities and service providers, supporting local communities in receiving refugees. Supporting the implementation of the National Strategy on Harmonization and the National Action Plan continues to be a priority for UNHCR, as well as engaging with local administrations, municipalities, imams and mukhtars to strengthen social cohesion between refugee and host communities.

- UNHCR and DGMM cooperate closely in implementation of a comprehensive framework of activities aiming to promote social cohesion through an inclusive approach by reaching out to refugee and host communities as well as local actors, academia and civil society. Those activities vary from gatherings held at the neighbourhood level to regional high-level workshops targeting different stakeholders in view of their contribution to mutual understanding and better communication.
- UNHCR continues to follow up on its community support projects which have yielded measurable positive impacts in relation to social cohesion and harmonisation while solidifying linkages to the host community.
- UNHCR works on expanding opportunities for Turkish language education through Public Education Centres. As such, UNHCR works with the public education centres and partners to provide trainings for staff and interpreters, and to assist with the cost of materials and teachers' salaries. The provision of Turkish language classes in these centres is a priority expressed by refugees during participatory assessments and is expected to contribute positively to social cohesion and support access to services delivered through Turkish state institutions.

## Working towards durable solutions

UNHCR continues to work with public institutions, private companies and development actors to improve access of refugees to the labour market. UNHCR continues to advocate for resettlement, including increased quotas and safe pathways for both Syrians and refugees of other nationalities, and undertakes resettlement processing.

UNHCR's activities in this area focus on:

- **Facilitating access to higher education** with the Presidency for Turks Abroad by providing higher education preparation programmes with intensive Turkish language courses for refugee youth and higher education scholarships; as well as language training for adults complementary to its vocational training programmes.
- **Promoting labour market access** of refugees in cooperation with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, the Turkish Employment Agency and the Vocational Qualifications Authority. UNHCR's efforts are specifically focused on increasing information on the applicable legal and administrative procedures.
- **Promoting skills development and employability** by providing language and vocational trainings in line with labour market gaps, and entrepreneurship support (including training, mentorship, and grants for business-development and start-ups). With its partners, UNHCR will also continue facilitating access to work permits and business licensing, and organizing events to link employers and employees. UNHCR targets provision of continuous vocational training programmes for job placement to some 5,500 beneficiaries in 2019.
- **Increasing cooperation and partnerships with private sector actors** to promote the employment of refugees, increase market access for entrepreneurs, and raise awareness and share information on refugee employment and work permit procedures. In 2019, UNHCR aims to provide entrepreneurship training to around 1,460 individuals and business start-up grants for 65 refugees as well as organise information events for refugee employment.

- **Continuing individual case processing for resettlement purposes** for refugees with the most acute vulnerabilities or protection risks. Only approximately 0.5 per cent of refugees in Turkey have access to resettlement, despite a need estimated to be at 10 per cent of the refugee population in Turkey. To facilitate durable solutions for refugees and in line with the Law on Foreigners and International Protection, Turkish authorities also continue to provide referrals of vulnerable individuals to UNHCR for resettlement purposes. UNHCR aims to submit 20,000 applications for resettlement in 2019.
- **Advocating for complementary pathways** to expand solution opportunities for refugees, such as family reunification and humanitarian visas, and working with States to help refugees overcome barriers to access these pathways, such as strict document requirements, high cost of applications and narrowly defined criteria, including the age limitation for children eligible for family reunification.
- **Monitoring voluntariness of return** in cooperation with Provincial Departments of Migration Management. By observing interviews with Syrians wishing to return spontaneously to their country of origin, UNHCR ascertains the voluntariness of the returns, and analyses return trends. As such, within the framework of the Working Group on Voluntary Repatriation, established by UNHCR and DGMM, the aim is to cooperate within a broader perspective in areas including civil documentation, survey on the intentions concerning return, and detailed analysis on the return trends.

## Alternatives to Camps

In line with its global Alternatives to Camps policy, UNHCR will continue to support the Turkish authorities in consolidating or closing Temporary Accommodation Centres (TACs), as and when needed, in response to requests from DGMM. UNHCR's specific interventions include supporting the relocation of refugees through the provision of a one-off financial assistance package for those leaving the TACs to move to live in host communities, as well as support DGMM in the transfer to other TACs. This support will continue to be provided should the authorities decide to further consolidate or close more TACs.

## External and Donor Relations

**Thanks to donors for their support to UNHCR Turkey and their unrestricted and regional funds in 2019 as of 30 July 2019**

Denmark | European Union | France | Germany | Ireland | Japan | Netherlands | Norway | Republic of Korea | Sweden | Switzerland | United States of America | United Kingdom | Private donors

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### LINKS

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