

# TURKEY

Year 2018

As of 10 September 2018, **UNHCR phased-out of registration and refugee status determination.** The Directorate General of Migration Management is now the sole authority to register and process international protection applications.

The Directorate General of Migration Management was supported in **closing or decongesting nine tented temporary accommodation centres.**

Over **6,540 refugee students** benefitted from higher education preparation programmes provided by the Presidency for Turks Abroad in cooperation with UNHCR.

## Key Figures

**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

**0,5%**

**Percentage** of refugees submitted for resettlement

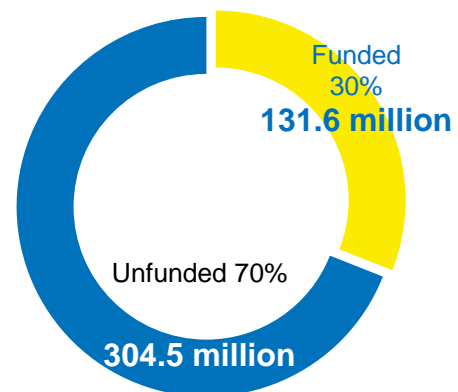
**69,175 refugees**

**Assisted with relocation grants** to move from temporary accommodation centres to provinces

## Funding as of 31 December 2018

**USD 436.1 million**

requested for UNHCR operations in Turkey



## Strategic Directions and Priority Activities

Turkey is host to the largest number of refugees worldwide, and has adopted a legal framework which provides refugees and asylum-seekers with access to rights and services: the Law on Foreigners and International Protection and the Temporary Protection Regulation. This legal framework forms the basis for UNHCR Turkey's strategy and priorities in support of Turkey's refugee response, in line with its Global Strategic Priorities, namely:

- Promote access to and support the provision of protection
- Support the strengthening of access to quality services through public systems
- Provide humanitarian assistance, in particular for alternatives to camps
- Promote and prepare for durable solutions, by supporting self-reliance, pursuing resettlement and monitoring voluntary repatriation procedures.

## UNHCR Turkey's 2018 Achievements

### Promote access to and support the provision of protection

#### Host Country Agreement between the Republic of Turkey and UNHCR

■ To formalize and strengthen UNHCR's long-standing cooperation with Turkey on refugee and asylum issues, the Foreign Minister and the High Commissioner (HC) had signed the Host Country Agreement (HCA) on 1 September 2016. The HCA came into force on 1 July 2018, following the Turkish Grand National Assembly voting in the law on the ratification of the HCA and publishing it in the Official Journal on 7 March 2018. The HCA will enhance UNHCR's ability to support the Government in its delivery of protection and assistance to refugees.

#### Collaboration with the Gendarmerie

■ A **Handbook on Irregular Migration and International Protection** was produced and disseminated to the Gendarmerie across the country. It was promoted through joint field visits to six provinces in border locations.

■ A total of 185 Gendarmerie officials participated in interactive trainings on international protection in mixed migratory movements.

#### Registration

■ Some **84,170 applicants for international protection** were registered by UNHCR and referred to designated cities in Turkey between 1 January and 10 September 2018, when **UNHCR phased out of registration** and refugee status determination. As of 10 September, the Directorate General for Migration Management (DGMM) is the sole authority in Turkey responsible for registering international protection applicants and for processing their applications.

■ Throughout 2018, UNHCR supported DGMM and its provincial branches in the implementation of a fully decentralized **national registration system** and the development of a referral system for international protection applicants.

#### Refugee Status Determination

■ UNHCR processed and **decided on 5,410 applicants' refugee status** between 1 January and 10 September 2018, at which date, in agreement with the Turkish authorities, **UNHCR ceased its refugee status determination activities**. From that date onwards, the Provincial Directorates of Migration Management (PDMMs) are the only authorities responsible for processing asylum applications lodged by individuals in Turkey.

■ To **strengthen the national asylum procedure**, more than 150 interpreters and 250 DGMM and PDMM staff dealing with refugee status eligibility at the central and provincial levels were trained through on-the-job mentoring and coaching, consultations on procedures and practices, the development of standard operating procedures and checklists. The DGMM-UNHCR Quality Assurance Board was re-activated in 2018, including to develop monitoring mechanisms and quality assurance tools.

#### Verification of registration of Syrians under temporary protection

■ The support to **verification** during 2018 resulted in updating the registration records of 96 per cent of the verification target across Turkey. DGMM and UNHCR joint induction trainings ensured that over 630 staff were operational at verification centres.

- Thanks to the **Protection Desks** at DGMM verification centres, 16 per cent of the verified population were identified as persons with specific needs and were referred to state services for assistance. The Protection Desks were introduced through the verification and DGMM has appointed psychologists and social workers to manage them, especially in large provinces.
- Towards the end of 2018, DGMM and UNHCR finalized the plan for 2019 which will that continuous registration support starts in January - February 2019.

### Access to legal protection and assistance

■ In cooperation with the Union of Turkish Bar Associations (UTBA), a **Legal Clinic** was established in Şanlıurfa. The clinic provided legal assistance to more than 500 cases brought by refugees and asylum-seekers, and counselled even more individuals by sharing information on their rights and obligations in matters of civil law, administrative appeals, and protection of women and children refugees. The clinic also supported the engagement of Bar Associations and lawyers in legal representation.



The President of the UTBA and UNHCR Turkey Representative at the opening ceremony of the Legal Clinic in Şanlıurfa Photo: E.Gürel

■ UTBA and UNHCR also cooperated with 18 Bar Associations across Turkey to **train some 3,310 lawyers** in matters of international protection and to **cover legal fees** under the national legal aid scheme for refugees. As part of this cooperation to support the existing national legal aid system, litigation fees and other legal expenses were also covered, thus allowing refugees to access legal representation.

## Strengthen access to quality services for refugees through public systems, national and local institutions

### Support to the national social protection system

■ The **cooperation with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS)** was strengthened by the signing of a **Letter of Understanding (LoU)**, which focuses on supporting the capacity of social service centres (SSCs) to provide protective, preventive, and supportive services, as well as counselling and rehabilitation for refugees. Together with UNICEF and UNFPA, UNHCR formed a SSC task force to coordinate the support provided to SSCs and harmonize the training curricula for staff working at SSCs.

■ In an effort to promote **social cohesion**, 27,630 individuals from both refugee and host communities participated in social interaction activities with UNHCR's support. In addition, in the Black Sea region and Central and Eastern Anatolia, UNHCR provided staff training, infrastructure and office equipment to 23 different government, municipal and civil society organizations to effectively **identify persons with specific needs and support their inclusion in government services**.

### Child protection

A key principle of child protection lies in establishing a child's best interest. The **Best Interests Determination (BID)** procedures are therefore conducted by a panel of experts when particularly important decisions affecting the child need to take place. In 2018, the Inter-agency BID panel involving UNICEF, Human Resource Development Foundation (HRDF), the Association for Solidarity with Asylum-Seekers and Migrants (ASAM), and

UNHCR considered close to 190 individual BID reports. Furthermore, some 180 UNHCR and partner staff members from Ankara, Izmir and the South East benefited from trainings on updated BID Guidelines.

### SGBV prevention and response mechanisms



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

■ For the purpose of the **prevention, mitigation and response to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) through awareness-raising**, UNHCR implemented a participatory assessment focused on SGBV, whereby some 30 focus group discussions were conducted with nearly 300 women, men, girls, boys and LGBTI persons of concern. The main protection risks identified were child and forced marriages, sexual harassment in the workplace and domestic violence. The exercise revealed a strong interest for more awareness-raising sessions on the risks, prevention and response to SGBV, on referral mechanisms and national laws. In addition, as part of the **16-days of**

**activism campaign against gender-based violence**, UNHCR and partners reached close to 3,830 individuals in 13 provinces through a wide range of activities and social events.

### Refugees with urgent needs

■ Some 6,630 refugees and asylum seekers were provided with financial, transportation, accommodation, medical, and education **assistance**.

■ The **UNHCR-ASAM Counselling Line** answered over 178,250 calls and provided counselling on procedures, referrals and existing support mechanisms. Thanks to this form of counselling, close to 25,680 refugees and asylum-seekers with **specific needs** were identified and referred for protection support, including 4,230 **survivors of SGBV**.

### Collaboration with the Ministry of National Education

■ In 2018, close to 3,000 refugee children and adults were able to attend basic **Turkish language class** with UNHCR's support, and 143,500 **Turkish language teaching textbooks** were provided to the Ministry of National Education for refugee education.



Refugee children learning Turkish at UNHCR's partner office in Istanbul. Photo: UNHCR / E.Gürel

### Local engagement

■ In an effort to foster **social cohesion** among the communities through community-based approaches, DGMM and UNHCR conducted two national consultation meetings with **mukhtars and municipalities**. Close to 90 mukhtars from 42 of provinces participated in the mukhtars' workshop and representatives from 26 municipalities in 26 different provinces participated in the workshop on municipalities. Both workshops were the first of their kind, and enabled actors to share good practices, discuss common challenges, and think of social cohesion interventions to be embarked upon in 2019.

### Access to higher education with the Presidency for Turks Abroad

■ Working with the Presidency for Turks Abroad (YTB), UNHCR supported the enrolment of Syrian students in **higher education preparation programmes** to enable them to meet the language proficiency requirements for admission to higher education. In 2018, **over 6,540 students** benefitted from the preparation programmes in two cohorts (November 2017-July 2018 and November 2018-July 2019). Close to **80 per cent of the 2017-2018 cohort successfully obtained proficiency certificates** that will enable them to enroll in university.



The higher education preparation programme for Syrian students run by UNHCR in collaboration with YTB celebrated the end of the school year with the graduation ceremony in Ankara. Photo: UNHCR / E.Gürel

■ By providing 1,180 youth with **full university scholarships**, and a further 500 students with **cash-based assistance** to help offset the cost of university attendance, UNHCR also supported the enrolment of refugee students in university.

## Provisions of humanitarian assistance and temporary services to meet unaddressed needs, including in temporary accommodation centres

### Support to DGMM on the consolidation and closure of temporary accommodation centres

■ In 2018, UNHCR supported DGMM in the **closure of six temporary accommodation centres (TACs)**, which hosted 51,200 persons, and the **decongestion of three additional ones**, which hosted close to 45,200 persons. Refugees residing in the TACs were given the option of moving to an urban area in a province of their choice, to another TAC identified by DGMM if their TAC was closed, or to stay in their own TAC if it was decongested. UNHCR supported the relocation of refugees who opted to leave their TACs. A one-off cash **relocation assistance package** to cover transportation, rent and immediate needs was provided and more than 65 million Turkish Liras were received by 60,490 refugees choosing to move to urban areas. Close to 8,685 refugees opting to move to another TAC received transportation assistance.



Families leaving Akçakale TAC located in Şanlıurfa to move to urban areas. Photo: UNHCR / E. Gürel

## Promote and prepare for durable solutions for refugees

### Access to the labour market of refugees

■ Support to refugees in Turkey was provided in a number of ways throughout 2018, with a particular focus on reducing administrative barriers in working closely with the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) through training and capacity development of its staff and institutional support. The **employment** of over 2,500 individuals and the registration of over 500 individuals on the İŞKUR national database. Close to 1,090 individuals received direct **work permit fee assistance** and over 1,200 beneficiaries received counselling services on access to the labour market and entrepreneurship support.

### Skills development and employability

■ In 2018, **close to 1,110 individuals** benefited from the **Entrepreneurship Support Programme**, which has been implemented in 14 cities of Turkey (İstanbul, Şanlıurfa, Hatay, Gaziantep, Adana, Mersin, Kilis, Mardin, Bursa, İzmir, Adıyaman, Konya, Ankara and Kayseri) since 2016. The main goal of the programme is to provide the knowledge and necessary tools for existing and potential entrepreneurs to start, develop or register their businesses. The entrepreneurship programme trainings consisted of both basic and in-depth entrepreneurship topics: information on legal procedures to establish a business or obtain a business license, access to finance, cash and in-kind grants, and business start-up support.

■ In partnership with the Izmir Governorate, the first **Textile Machine Operator Training and Harmonization Centre** was launched in the Karabağlar district. Close to 85 refugees and host community members took part in vocational training programmes, with a 90 per cent attendance rate and over 50 per cent of participants being women, thanks to the children's day-care specifically designed to encourage women's participation. Turkish language courses were incorporated to facilitate refugees' access to the labour market. More than half of the graduates were referred to textile industry employers, with an estimated employment rate of 20 per cent.



UNHCR provided technical and vocational training for refugees in line with the market needs to increase their employability. Photo: UNHCR

### Resettlement processing on the basis of a rigorous prioritization

■ In 2018, **over 16,040 refugees were submitted for resettlement consideration** to 18 different countries, including close to 72 per cent of Syrians and 28 per cent of other nationalities. Of the cases submitted, 22 per cent of cases were under the children at risk category, 67 per cent under the legal and physical protection needs, and 11 per cent under medical needs. After submission, close to **8,980 refugees departed to different resettlement countries**, including over 91 per cent of Syrians.

■ These submissions and departures were made possible thanks to the **32 selection missions from 18 resettlement countries** organized by UNHCR in close participation with IOM and other partners, following the referral of over 52,280 refugees by DGMM. Resettlement is an integral part of responsibility sharing among the international community, and these efforts ensure that vulnerable refugees are considered for resettlement as a durable solution and are provided new opportunities to restart their lives in resettlement countries.

## Voluntary repatriation

■ In 2018, UNHCR continued to monitor voluntary returns and **observed the voluntary repatriation interviews of 10,395 families** in the PDMMs of Gaziantep, Hatay, Şanlıurfa, Kilis, Kahramanmaraş, Osmaniye, Ankara, and İzmir.

## Interagency and communication with communities

### Communication with communities

■ The **Services Advisor** is a platform built on an interactive map which enables service providers to refer persons of concern to other necessary services, and therefore contributes to avoiding gaps and duplication in service provision. In 2018, the platform was used by over 82,310 visitors and had more than 530,000 page views. To increase the coverage and use among service providers, UNHCR conducted training sessions in 10 provinces for over 270 partner staff.

### Interagency coordination

■ As the Refugee Agency, UNHCR continued to coordinate the efforts of partners to **support Turkey's refugee response** and avoid duplication and gaps in international assistance. In this function, UNHCR co-led the Regional Refugee and Resilience Response Plan (3RP) for the Syria crisis with UNDP, and led the International Protection and Migration Pillar of the Turkey 2016-2020 UN Development and Cooperation Strategy (UNDCS). In 2018, the 3RP raised USD 1.47 billion out of a total financial requirement of USD 1.75 billion meaning a funding level of 84 per cent.

## External and Donors Relations

### Thanks to donors for their support to UNHCR Turkey and their unrestricted and regional funds in 2018

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### LINKS

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