

TURKEY

January 2020

Key Figures (as of 30 January 2020)

4 million

Refugees and asylum-seekers in Turkey including almost 3.6 million Syrian nationals and close to 330,000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers of other nationalities. Over 98% of Syrian refugees live across Turkey in 81 provinces

999

Refugees departed for resettlement in 2020 as of end of January, 77 per cent of whom are Syrians

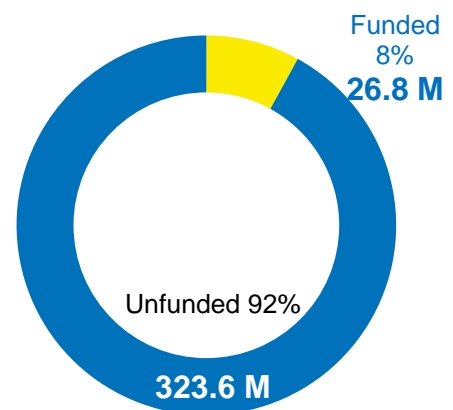
30,910

Calls answered on the UNHCR counselling line in January with a 92% answer rate for queued calls

Funding (as of 06 February 2020)

USD 350.4 million

requested for UNHCR operations in Turkey



Key Developments in January

The fourth **Migration, Security and Social Cohesion Regional High-Level Workshop** took place in Kocaeli on 14 January. In his opening speech, UNHCR's Deputy Representative underlined Turkey's harmonization policy as a two-way process by refugee and host communities to establish a culture of living together and highlighted the importance of approaches at the local level. He also noted that harmonization recalls and builds on the resilience of refugees as well as their strength in coping with the challenges of displacement. The Deputy Minister of Interior outlined that Turkey developed its unique migration management system incorporating cultural and historic components, while also welcoming Syrians to Turkey without discrimination. The Governor of Kocaeli highlighted that Kocaeli hosts individuals from around the world and is a melting pot of cultural wealth.

A mission of the **Priority Situations Core Group on Resettlement** was organised by UNHCR and the Governments of Sweden and Ireland and took place in Istanbul between 29-31 January. It brought together 33 participants from 17 States as well as representatives of Turkey, the EU Delegation in Turkey and IOM. The Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) and the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs played an active role in the discussions on the protection situation and the procedures in Turkey as well as on ways to promote resettlement and complementary pathways. Participants visited four sites in Istanbul where particularly vulnerable groups including women and children at risk, LGBTI and refugees of other nationalities reside.

DGMM and UNHCR co-organised a **training on standards and procedures of international protection status determination** from 13 to 17 January. The training brought together 88 migration experts of DGMM and Provincial Directorates across the country, who undertake refugee status determination as well as police officers and civil servants working on migration. The training provided technical and practical information on interviewing techniques, legal analysis and exclusion analysis of decision making relevant to international protection status determination.

Promoting Access to and Provision of Protection

Support to registration and development of the national asylum system

UNHCR continued its cooperation with DGMM in the strengthening of the international protection status determination procedures, supporting **International Protection Bureaux (Decision Centres) and the Mobile Decision Teams** established by DGMM. In January, support included interviews and recommendations to support case-processing at the Ankara Decision Centre and the Aksaray PDMM through a mobile decision team mission, in coordination with DGMM.

The technical team of DGMM and UNHCR on **country of origin information** finalized the Country of Origin Method Guide which is the product of eight months of consultations and review by DGMM and UNHCR and contains shared findings of related study visits to Germany and Belgium.

UNHCR delivered two specialised **trainings** in January organised jointly with DGMM. One focused on exclusion analysis (16-17 January) and provided guidance on conducting international protection status determination interviews for cases containing elements which trigger the application of exclusion clauses within the scope of Article 1F of the 1951 Convention, establishing material facts for exclusion and conducting exclusion analysis. The training benefited DGMM and UNHCR staff engaged in international protection status determination interviews and decisions recommendations at the Ankara Decision Centre for complex claims. The second training was on interviewing techniques in the context of human trafficking. It was held on 23-24 January and benefited PDMM and DGMM staff members.



DGMM/UNHCR training on standards and procedures of International Protection Status Determination which took place in Ankara 13-17 January. ©UNHCR

Strengthening access to justice by refugees

The Şanlıurfa Legal Clinic provided **legal assistance** to 62 individuals in January regarding international and temporary protection procedures (including registration and documentation), access to services, civil law matters (such as marriage, divorce, custody and guardianship), deportation, exit and re-entry procedures, family reunification and citizenship procedures. Similarly, 185 individuals benefitted from legal assistance provided by the Gaziantep Legal Clinic, while the Hatay Legal Clinic provided legal assistance to 121 individuals.

Strengthening Protection and Access to Quality Services of Refugees with Specific Needs

The **UNHCR Counselling Line answered 21,562 calls in January**, providing counselling on services, procedures, referrals and existing support mechanisms. A significant increase of 20.7 per cent in the answer rate for unique calls was observed in January and the answer rate for queued calls reached 92 per cent. The main reason for this increase was the inactivation of the health insurance for nationalities other than Syrians. In South East Turkey, the Refugee Call Centre in Şanlıurfa received 293 calls, most of which were resolved and focused mainly on medical and financial support. UNHCR also counselled 74 refugees through the UNHCR Gaziantep hotline where queries were mainly related to resettlement, medical assistance, registration and ESSN assistance.

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

UNHCR identified and assessed 900 individuals with specific needs in January who were referred to UNHCR's partners and service providers. Persons of Afghan and Syrian nationality with specific needs were prioritized for assessment and resettlement consideration. Over 140 SGBV survivors were provided with

necessary counselling by UNHCR or partners on sexually transmitted diseases, medical treatments and psychological assistance.

In order to identify protection responses and solutions, 42 best interests assessments (BIAs) were concluded and 16 best interests determination (BID) decisions were determined by an interagency panel consisting of participants from UNICEF, UNHCR and partners ASAM and the Human Resource Development Foundation (HRDF). Thirty one children were newly identified as survivors of SGBV.

As part of the UNHCR's cash for protection interventions, 12,068 individuals were provided with financial assistance. The payments were made to vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers of different profiles, including transgender, intersex, adolescents discharged from child care institutions as well as those attending various educational courses.

UNHCR facilitated a training on community-based protection on 16-17 January for 22 GIZ partners and three UNHCR staff. GIZ contributed to the translation of UNHCR regional training materials into Turkish, which will be useful for UNHCR partner focal points. Furthermore, on 27 January, UNHCR organized the first protection training for Team International Assistance for Integration (TIAFI) volunteers in Izmir. The training covered topics on international protection, rights and obligations of temporary and international protection applicants, child protection and SGBV. Participants also examined and discussed protection-related case studies.

Cooperation with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS)

UNHCR organised a study visit in Case Management Supervision Processes to Linz in Austria for Istanbul's Provincial Directorate of the Ministry of Family Labour and Social Services (PDoFLSS) and Municipalities of Zeytinburnu and Kucukcekmece. Participants visited institutions in Linz working on basic needs, welfare, social cohesion, volunteer work and other aspects of the refugee response. They also had the opportunity to meet and engage with refugees and asylum seekers. Conclusions from the visit included recommendations of establishing a mentorship programme as well as coaching and supervision systems within local institutions.

In January, UNHCR provided additional equipment to social service centres across Turkey, which included 145 scanners and 112 printers.

Communication with communities (CwC)

Through its main **digital communication platforms**, Help and Services Advisor, UNHCR shares information about rights, obligations and available services for refugees and asylum seekers. Help has reached approximately 661,145 unique visitors since its launch in August 2017. The Services Advisor received approximately 216,263 unique visitors. UNHCR's followers continue to grow on the Facebook page for information for refugees and asylum-seekers, reaching about 45,600 followers.

Promoting Social Cohesion and Harmonization

As part of the cooperation with DGMM on harmonization, two **Engaged Conversations** were held in Sakarya (6-7 January) and Yalova (21-22 January). The events included focus group discussions with refugees and host community members focusing on social cohesion. The events were covered on government websites and the media. The Governor of Sakarya who was present stated that harmonization corresponds to mutual understanding, security and trust, while the Rector of the University of Yalova spoke at the opening ceremony reiterating that humanitarian principles should constitute the core of all social interactions, and similar events would be supported by the University of Yalova in the future. The Deputy Governor of Yalova mentioned that social problems could be minimized if people got to know each other better.

From 15-17 January, three **Social Cohesion Workshops** took place in Istanbul and Bursa for the personnel of the Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of National Education. The events in Istanbul hosted the Deputy Director General of DGMM, the Head of Istanbul PDMM, Head of Istanbul Provincial Directorate of National Education, the Deputy Provincial Mufti of Istanbul, and around 400 religious officials and 400 teachers. The Provincial Directorate of national education underlined the high importance the Directorate attaches to offering tailored programs to students who have fallen behind their academic schedules. In Bursa, the Deputy Provincial Mufti underlined the hospitality of the host community towards refugees, and the Head of Bursa's Provincial Directorate of Migration Management highlighted that the main focus of harmonization was on the host community and its leaders, especially religious officials and teachers. The workshops were covered by the media.

The **Isparta Social Service Association** organised two excursions on 26 and 28 January for the refugee and host communities in Isparta through its cooperation with UNHCR which serves to promote social cohesion and communication among both communities. The excursions were an opportunity for 137 children and adults to enjoy outdoor trips.

Engaging at the local level

A number of events took place across the country in January reflecting **engagement with the local authorities and community leaders**. In Izmir, 28 local community actors including mukhtars, school teachers and civil society members were briefed on interpretation and counselling services provided to local actors through the Refugee Support Desk, established within the scope of UNHCR's cooperation with the Buca District Municipality in Izmir.

Working towards Durable Solutions

Education

The first **Higher Education Working Group** Meeting of 2020 was organized on 15 January focusing on social cohesion activities for Syrian university students under temporary protection with the participation of numerous stakeholders and government counterparts. With 33,000 Syrian students enrolled in universities across Turkey according to the Council of Higher Education, activities and research on social and academic support initiatives at universities were discussed and the emerging key themes were that Syrian students struggled with the initial orientation processes, often felt socially isolated and language continued to be a barrier.

Self-reliance and livelihoods support

UNHCR continues to cooperate with the **Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR)**. On 23-24 January, UNHCR trained 31 İŞKUR provincial directorate personnel in Istanbul. The training, which focused on international refugee law and UNHCR's mandate and strategy in Turkey, was entitled "Project cycle management for improved implementation of activities for refugees under temporary protection" and is part of an ongoing activity focusing on the skills development of İŞKUR personnel.

Overall, since 2016 until January 2020, UNHCR reached a total of 4,882 individuals with entrepreneurship training and supported 206 individuals with business licenses and 537 individuals with business grants. Livelihoods activities reached 29,568 individuals with skills, language, and vocational training programmes, while 83,720 individuals have benefited from counselling services on access to the labour market through interpreters provided to İŞKUR Service Centres from January 2016 to December 2019.

Resettlement and complementary pathways

As of end of January, UNHCR made 1,543 submissions (1,399 Syrians and 144 refugees of other nationalities) for resettlement to third countries, while 999 refugees departed for resettlement (768 Syrians and 231 refugees of other nationalities). DGMM referred 920 Syrians to UNHCR for resettlement consideration in January and UNHCR conducted five resettlement interview missions across Turkey.

Increasing Multi-Stakeholder Support to the Refugee Response

Interagency coordination

UNHCR is working with inter-agency sector coordinators to further develop the 2020 ActivityInfo database, allowing 3RP sector partners to report against the new 3RP framework. UNHCR is also working with sector coordinators to update the indicator guidance notes in line with the new 3RP framework, to promote consistent reporting against new indicators.

In Istanbul, two task forces were formed during the first meeting of the Protection Working Group for 2020. These are an Emergency and Earthquake Preparedness Task Force and a Community-Based Protection Task Force.

Public information and communications

In January, UNHCR Turkey’s Facebook page reached a total of 35,876 followers and the Twitter account gained 570 new followers amounting to around 20 new followers per day. UNHCR has launched its active engagement in the global **Model United Nations** Refugee Challenge in 2020, with a series of events at universities across Turkey to encourage young people to debate issues related to forced displacement. The challenge focuses on the themes of climate change and displacement; countering toxic narratives about refugees and migrants; supporting the economic inclusion of refugees; and improving access to education for refugees. The award-winning resolutions will be shared with policymakers.



Excursion in Isparta bringing together refugees and members of the host community in the spirit of mutual communication and social cohesion. ©UNHCR

Thanks to donors for their support to UNHCR Turkey in 2020 as of 6 February 2020

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LINKS

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