

# TURKEY

June 2019

Key Figures (as of 27 June 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

## 500,000

Unique visitors to UNHCR's digital HELP platform which shares information about rights, obligations and available services to refugees, since August 2017

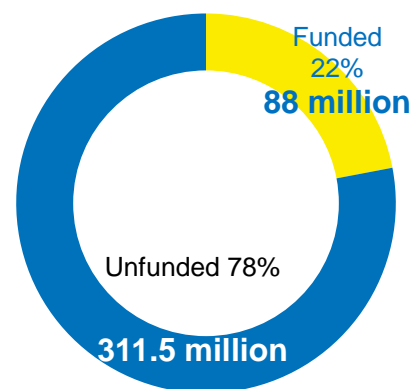
## 468

People benefitted from Turkish language courses in Public Education Centres in Ankara, Konya, Bursa and Kayseri with the support of UNHCR

Funding (as of 24 June 2019)

## USD 399.6 million

requested for UNHCR operations in Turkey



## Key Developments in June 2019

The third **Joint Steering Committee Meeting of the UN Development Cooperation Strategy (UNDCS)** took place on 25 June. UNHCR presented the achievements and planned activities of the Results Group on Migration and International Protection which it chairs. This is one of four result groups within the framework of the five-year plan. Stakeholders from government institutions, including the Strategy and Budget Office, civil society organizations, academia and international organizations discussed priorities for the next planning cycle, in line with the new guidance of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and the soon expected National Development Plan of Turkey.

In collaboration with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Group, The Turkish Grand National Assembly and UNHCR launched the Turkish version of the **Handbook for Parliamentarians** entitled "A guide to international refugee protection and building state asylum systems". The President of the IPU, Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, was on official visit to Turkey and spoke at the launch together with UNHCR Representative, the Chair of the IPU Turkey Group, and the Speaker of the Turkish Grand National Assembly. The Handbook was launched at the Turkish Grand National Assembly in Ankara on 11 June and will be disseminated to all parliamentarians.

UNHCR issued a press release on 24 June stating that Turkey, along with Germany, Ethiopia and Costa Rica would co-convene the **Global Refugee Forum** to take place in Geneva in December 2019. The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Presidency released statements on the occasion of World Refugee Day in which the role of Turkey at the upcoming Global Refugee Forum was referred to. Turkey called on governments and stakeholders to participate in the Global Refugee Forum and to declare significant pledges for refugees.

UNHCR and the Istanbul Culture and Art Foundation organised a musical concert in Istanbul on 20 June to celebrate **World Refugee Day**. Four musical bands, two Syrian and two Turkish took to the stage and entertained an audience of around 600 refugees and Turkish citizens. Another concert was organised in Ankara in cooperation with the Ankara International Choir, Kecioren Municipality, Ankara University, the Association of Spouses of Heads of Missions in Ankara and IOM. Various events were also held in South East Turkey, Izmir and in Ankara bringing people together to express solidarity with refugees, host countries and host communities.

## Promoting Access to and Provision of Protection

### Cooperation with the Gendarmerie General Command

UNHCR organised a study visit to Germany for 10 Gendarmerie officials from Ankara and provinces across Turkey as part of its cooperation with the Gendarmerie General Command (GGC) between 11-13 June. Participants visited and met officials of the German Federal Police in Munich, the arrival facility for asylum seekers in Munich, the German Red Cross, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), as well as an NGO assisting victims of trauma and torture. The aim of the study visit was to provide an overview of the German system on international protection, border management and the role of NGOs in identifying persons with specific needs and their referrals.

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

UNHCR continues to cooperate with the Directorate General for Migration Management (DGMM) in the strengthening of the international protection status determination procedures by supporting International Protection Bureaux (Decision Centers) and Mobile Decision Units established by DGMM. UNHCR engages in supporting interviews and recommendations drafting at the Ankara and Istanbul Decision Centers, working closely with DGMM.

As UNHCR continues to support DGMM in the development of a Country of Origin Information (COI) System, a newly established DGMM-UNHCR technical team convened in June to formulate guidance notes on country of origin research. Also in June, UNHCR facilitated two case-study sessions for DGMM at the Country of Origin Information workshop on Palestinian refugees organised in Istanbul by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO). Representatives of DGMM and PDMMs as well as COI experts from European Union and European Free Trade Association member states participated in the workshop. UNHCR, through its Division of International Protection, facilitated a session on Article 1D of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

### Strengthening access to justice by refugees

In June, UNHCR facilitated a two-day training for 51 lawyers of the Istanbul Bar Association and the Istanbul Bar Association Human Rights Center, which covered general principles of international and temporary protection and refugee law within the legal framework of Turkey, as well as standards, policies and practices related to child protection, the prevention and response to SGBV, other groups with specific protection needs and matters of civil law related to refugees.

UNHCR also delivered a training in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, the last of a series of seven trainings targeting social workers serving in courthouses across the country from 27 to 28 June. The training which was held in Ankara benefitted 60 social workers, of a total of 420 social workers trained since October 2018.

In June, 168 legal aid cases were submitted to the UNHCR-Union of Turkish Bar Association Commission for assessment to cover attorney fees and other relevant expenses, amounting to a total of 1,846 appointments since November 2018. Most appointments were for applications made to civil and administrative courts. The majority of appointments concerned Syrian nationals followed by Afghans, Iranians and Iraqis.

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

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

In cooperation with DGMM, UNHCR organized a workshop for Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations (SASF) under the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS) in Ankara on 24-26 June 2019. The workshop targeted 98 SASF staff from densely refugee populated provinces and 10 Turkish Red Crescent staff. It covered the legislative framework of international and temporary protection in Turkey, social cohesion, identification of persons with specific needs and referral mechanisms. The participants underlined the strong need for closer linkages and referrals between different government systems.

In Sanliurfa, the Refugee Call Centre has been receiving 536 calls, and 60 cases, which required further processing, were referred to Social Service Centres. In June, queries covered topics such as medical and financial support, and registration.

### Communication with communities (CwC)

UNHCR's followers continue to grow on UNHCR's Facebook page for refugees and asylum-seekers. In June, UNHCR published an animated video on the Services Advisor to promote the platform among refugees and explain how it is used. On World Refugee Day, the facebook page featured UNHCR's High Commissioner video message recognizing refugees for their courage and determination, which generated a high number of comments, likes and shares. By the end of June, the page had approximately 28,000 followers.

## Promoting Social Cohesion and Harmonization

### Engaging at the local level (municipalities, governor offices, imams, mukhtars)

To mark World Refugee Day with its theme, "Take a step with refugees", UNHCR organised an event in Ankara in collaboration with Ankara Metropolitan Municipality, Altindag Youth Centre and Mamak Refugee and Coordination Centre. Some 60 children both from refugee and host communities participated in the event, which included interactive activities such as creating ceramics and sports competitions, and served to play a positive role in promoting peaceful communication between the communities.

Similarly, in the South East region of Turkey a number of activities were organised to celebrate World Refugee Day. These included a conference on the role of women in social cohesion, a theatrical performance; and a neighbourhood dinner where more than 300 children and adults from host and refugee communities as well as mukhtars and representatives of Antakya Municipality participated.

## Working towards Durable Solutions

### Education

In June, around 2,300 students are enrolled in the 2018-2019 cohort of the Higher Education Preparation Programme implemented with the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) through 32 language centres in 18 provinces. A total of 980 refugee students (898 Syrians and 82 from other countries) were provided with university scholarships by UNHCR through the DAFI scholarship programme as well as support to extend the coverage of YTB's Turkiye Burslari programme. A further 72 refugee students from countries other than Syria received higher education grants to assist with the costs of paying tuition fees.

On June 27-28, UNHCR and YTB organized a student workshop for EU-funded scholarship students in Gaziantep. Nearly 70 students attended the workshop, which focused on improving problem solving skills, entrepreneurial thinking and leadership skills development. The workshop also provided information on access to the Turkish job market and the process of work permits.

### Self-reliance and livelihoods support

UNHCR translated the national vocational qualifications and standards into Arabic in June, through its cooperation with the Vocational Qualifications Authority under the Ministry of Family Labour and Social Services. The translations cover 13 sectors and are meant for refugees and asylum seekers to assess their competency and proceed with the certification process for employment. The next steps of UNHCR's cooperation with the Vocational Qualifications Authority will include support for the certification process.

FAO started its vocational training programmes in May and so far has reached 340 beneficiaries. The programme covers topics on beekeeping, food processing and the management of livestock, olive and pomegranate crops, ornamental plants, and greenhouse vegetable crops.

UNHCR's support to refugee entrepreneurs continues through training, mentorship and financial support. So far, UNHCR has reached a total of 3,493 individuals with entrepreneurship training and 145 individuals with business licenses and 502 individuals with business grants.

### Resettlement and complementary pathways

As of end of June, over 8,800 submissions for resettlement of refugee cases were made (72 per cent Syrian and 28 per cent refugees of other nationalities), and over 5,500 refugees departed for resettlement (82 per cent of them Syrian).

### 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 necessary information as to the consequences of their decision. In cases when 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. UNHCR strives to expand its monitoring capacity in 2019. As of 30 June, the total number of voluntary return interviews observed by UNHCR stands at 12,172 individuals (6,025 families) in 2019. The total number of interviews monitored since 2016 is 62,594 individuals (30,971 families).



Launch of the Turkish version of the Handbook for Parliamentarians in collaboration with the Inter-Parliamentary Union Group at the Turkish Grand National Assembly in Ankara. Photos: UNHCR/Cansin Argun

### Thanks to donors for their support to UNHCR Turkey and their unrestricted and regional funds in 2019 as of 24 June

Denmark | European Union | Germany | Japan | Malta | Netherlands | Norway | Sweden | Switzerland | United States of America | United Kingdom | Private donors

### CONTACTS

**Amira Abd El-Khalek**, Reporting Officer, Turkey, [abdelkha@unhcr.org](mailto:abdelkha@unhcr.org), Tel: +90 312 409 7420

### LINKS

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