

TURKEY

September 2020

Key Figures (as of 30 September 2020)

4 million

Refugees and asylum-seekers in Turkey including over 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.

2,739

Refugees departed for resettlement in 2020 as of end of September, 72 per cent of whom are Syrians. UNHCR has so far provided over 5,300 submissions to 15 countries for resettlement consideration in 2020.

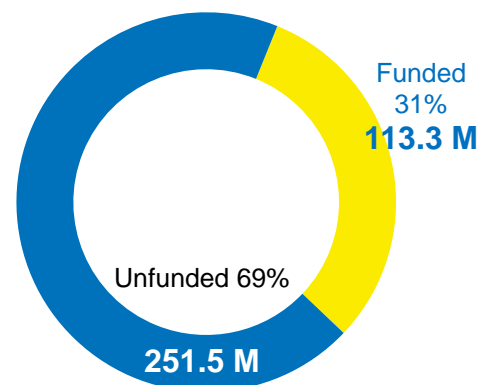
21,553

Households have received one-off emergency cash assistance by the end of September (over 98,200 individuals).

Funding (as of 29 September 2020)

USD 364.8 million

requested for UNHCR operations in Turkey



Key Developments in September 2020

The launch of the **2019 Syrians Barometer**, a reliable reference on perceptions of Syrian refugees and host community in Turkey over the last years, took place on 9 September. Representatives of various public institutions, embassies, UN agencies and partners participated in the launch. Professor Murat Erdogan, the lead researcher of the study presented the main findings of the Syria Barometer. The recent study had been commissioned by UNHCR Turkey, which also provided comments and technical level support. The final version of the Syrian Barometer has been posted online on the UNHCR website as well as the website of the Turkish-German University.

Jointly with the Directorate General for Migration Management (DGMM), the fourth **Regional Social Cohesion Workshop** was organised virtually by UNHCR on 15 September, bringing together some 30 academics from the Eastern Anatolian region who work on refugee and migration matters. The Deputy Director-General of DGMM and the Head of Harmonization and Communications Department at DGMM highlighted the important contributions of academics to inform policy and implementation of action to foster social cohesion. Academics discussed the social-economic impact of the presence of Syrian refugees in Turkey, urbanization, social inclusion, good practices, challenges and recommendations for the future.

The **Global Task Force on Migration**, the follow-up to the Gaziantep Declaration, was officially launched on 30 September under the stewardship of United Cities and Local Governments Middle East and West Asia (UCLG-MEWA). Over 40 participants, mostly representing signatories of the Gaziantep Declaration, as well as a number of 'new' cities participated in the launch which was an opportunity to share practical examples of progress since the Gaziantep Municipal Forum and to link the work of the Task Force to global processes with the active involvement of the UCLG Secretariat, the Mixed Migration Centre and UNHCR. Participants emphasized the importance of capturing good practices in the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

Emergency cash-based interventions

The disbursement of Covid-19 Emergency Cash Assistance by UNHCR in close cooperation with the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) and through the Postal Service of Turkey, PTT, continued in September. By the end of September, a total of 21,553 households (over 98,240 individuals) had collected their assistance.

UNHCR completed the Post-Distribution Monitoring for the first phase of implementation through phone calls with the COVID-19 emergency cash beneficiaries, comprising of both international and temporary protection status holders. In total, 788 households were interviewed to provide information on the impact of assistance on beneficiaries and coping mechanisms. Key findings showed that 53% of respondents depend on informal sources of income and only 13% have formal employment. Around 46% cannot meet half of their needs. The key findings also show that 97% of respondents prefer cash as an assistance modality and over 90% reported that the process went smoothly.

Protection during times of COVID-19

Amid the rising numbers of COVID-19 cases, new measures and restrictions were introduced by the Government of Turkey such as the mandatory use of face masks in all provinces, limitations on the number of passengers in public transport, the use of the HES code to purchase tickets and stricter controls for people who must remain in self-quarantine. The HES code also became a mandatory requirement for entering public institutions and government facilities across the country. This includes accessing to {Provincial Departments for Migration Management. Flexible work arrangements for employees in public institutions and organisations continue to be implemented across Turkey.

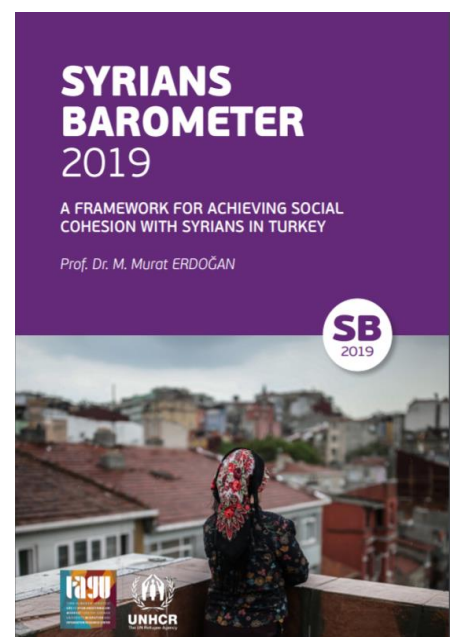
DGMM and UNHCR continue to make improvements and modifications on the online appointment system for international protection applicants and status-holders to strengthen anti-fraud measures. Informative videos are being prepared for refugees and asylum seekers of the new functions of the appointment system and explain its usage in line with frequent questions received from refugees through social media platforms.

Communication with Communities

In September, the UNHCR Counselling Line responded to 22,368 calls. The majority of callers enquired about resettlement (55%) followed by financial assistance (19%), and calls were received from across the country but mostly from Istanbul followed by Gaziantep and Ankara. At the beginning of September, UNHCR launched a separate counselling line for individuals at risk of, or survivors of, SGBV providing a recorded counselling message on reporting mechanisms and available support channels and services. The caller is then connected to one of six experienced operators for counselling in Farsi or Arabic.

In September, UNHCR published information posts on its digital platforms related to the back to school campaign, travel permits online application, university applications, Coronavirus updates, the HES code, SGBV awareness messages, a Facebook live event session on Coronavirus with a WHO expert.

UNHCR also launched an initiative aimed at setting up a group of online refugees to provide feedback on multimedia products. Around 900 refugees showed an interest in collaborating with UNHCR on a voluntary basis, and 16 Arabic and Farsi speakers were selected.



The Syrians Barometer 2019 was officially launched on 9 September and is available in English, Turkish and Arabic

Strengthening Access to Justice by Refugees

Legal clinics in Sanliurfa, Gaziantep and Hatay continued to work on a rotational basis in September providing legal assistance through telephone or video calls. In September, the legal clinics provided legal assistance to 450 persons regarding international and temporary protection procedures (including registration, documentation, rejection of applications and withdrawal of decisions), matters of civil law (such as marriage, divorce, custody and guardianship), exit and re-entry procedures, family reunification and citizenship procedures. Furthermore, 452 legal aid cases were submitted by bar associations, Mainly Izmir, Istanbul and Çanakkale, to the UNHCR-UTBA Commission to enhance access to legal aid for assessment on attorney fee coverage and other relevant expenses.

Engaging at the Local Level

UNHCR cooperates with local authorities, municipalities and partners across the country to identify needs, provide material assistance and support refugee initiatives mobilising themselves and their communities.

In September, UNHCR followed up on the distribution of hygiene kits delivered to local authorities and municipalities across the country to benefit refugees and host communities most in need. In the south east region, UNHCR delivered 13,000 hygiene packages to authorities in Şanlıurfa. This is a second round of hygiene items requested by the governorate for distribution after having completed its first round of distributions. UNHCR also transferred 4,600 hygiene kits to municipalities and PDMMs in 11 provinces of the Marmara region where 4,100 were distributed to populations in need. Since the beginning of the pandemic, UNHCR has delivered over 7,000 hygiene kits in the Aegean region, with around 71 per cent benefitting refugees and 29 per cent benefitting host communities. In the Anatolian region, 27,000 hygiene kits were delivered to 32 provinces and continue to take place in eight of these.

UNHCR participated in the first training organised for refugee committees in South East Turkey entitled “Using Virtual Meeting Platforms and Data Security and Privacy”. The training, held on 30 September with around 65 participants, was useful for UNHCR to gain a better understanding of refugee’s needs. Women were particularly interested in strengthening their understanding to support children with remote education and the issue of safe internet use for children was a concern. Discussions revolved around establishing norms for virtual meetings in terms of connecting to and participating in virtual meetings.

Durable Solutions

The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) has established over 9,500 support centres across the country to allow students to follow their lessons online. These centres were created for families who do not have the devices or internet access required for their children to follow school lessons through distance learning. UNHCR is exploring with MoNE and the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) ways through which it can support these centres for the benefit of both refugee and host communities.

In support of **self-reliance** and in response to difficult socio-economic conditions, UNHCR has been working through its partners to provide online vocational courses, Turkish language courses, soft skills online training and online entrepreneurship training. The Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce (GCC) has been providing Turkish language courses in September with UNHCR’s support benefitting 44 refugees as well as entrepreneurship training. The entrepreneurship training included e-marketing training benefitting 50 refugees, ready-to-wear training for 16 individuals, and knitting training for 42 individuals. UNHCR partner, Support to Life (STL) also provides soft-skills training to beneficiaries on peer-to-peer support and interview techniques, so far benefitting 224 individuals.

As of end September 2020, UNHCR provided over 5,313 **resettlement** submissions (4,387 Syrians and 926 refugees of other nationalities) to 15 countries; and 2,739 refugees (1,990 Syrian and 749 of other nationalities) departed for resettlement to 13 countries. Some 1,410 refugees were referred to UNHCR for resettlement consideration in August. Remote interviews are being undertaken by UNHCR with the support of PDMM Ankara, Izmir and Gaziantep.



The social cohesion workshop with academics from the Eastern Anatolia region took place online on 15 September featuring theoretical discussions, observations and research efforts on social cohesion. Academics, DGMM officials and UNHCR participated.

Thanks to donors for their support to UNHCR Turkey in 2020

USA | European Union | Germany | Japan | France | Norway | Unilever (UK) | Switzerland | CERF | Slovenia | United Kingdom | Denmark | Canada | Sweden | Finland | Spain | Ireland | Private donors

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LINKS

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