

# TURKEY

November 2020

Key Figures (as of 30 November 2020)

## 4 million

**Refugees and asylum-seekers in Turkey** including over 3.6 million Syrian nationals and close to 330,000 international protection status holders and asylum-seekers of other nationalities. Over 98% of Syrian refugees live across Turkey in 81 provinces.

## 3,867

**Refugees departed for resettlement** in 2020 as of end of November, 78 per cent of whom are Syrians. UNHCR has so far provided over 6,000 submissions for resettlement consideration in 2020.

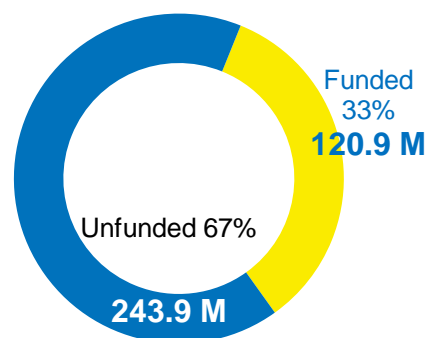
## 37,090

**Households received one off COVID-19 emergency cash payments** by end of November.

Funding (as of 01 December 2020)

## USD 364.8 million

requested for UNHCR operations in Turkey



Within the framework of the joint DGMM-UNHCR cooperation on harmonisation, the **first of six planned regional NGO meetings** took place virtually on 30 November. The meeting brought together 29 representatives of 18 Turkish NGOs operating in the Black Sea Region, alongside DGMM, PDMMs, UNHCR, and representatives of the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) and the Turkish Red Crescent. The meetings aimed to encourage the cooperation between the public sector and civil society, to identify gaps and good practices, to raise awareness on harmonisation policies and practices of the state among civil society, and to enhance the inclusion of civil society in policy-making processes on social cohesion to support information-exchange on policies and activities. Opening speeches were provided by Deputy Director General (DG) of Migration Management Mr. Ramazan Secilmis, Deputy DG of Civil Society Relations Mr. Mehmet Fatih Gunay and UNHCR Representative Ms. Katharina Lumpff.



The **3RP High-level Stakeholders Roundtable** concluding the planning process for the 3RP 2021-2022 planning took place on 30 November with the participation of close to 100 government officials, representatives of donor countries, United Nations agencies, international financial institutions and civil society. Strategic directions and priorities of the upcoming 3RP were presented. Opening speeches were given by the Director General of Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Hatun Demirer; the UN Officer in Charge for Turkey, Mr. Alvaro Rodriguez as well as the two 3RP co-leads, Mr. Claudio Tomasi (UNDP) and Ms. Katharina Lumpp (UNHCR). Ambassador Demirer underlined that, during the compelling circumstances of the pandemic, not to leave host countries alone, and for 'donor fatigue' to set in. It was imperative to provide the necessary support to host countries for equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing. The UNDP Representative noted the importance of maintaining and sustaining the level of support from the international community to deal with the protracted nature of the Syria crisis together with the impact of COVID-19, with a focus on resilience. The 3RP's support to Turkey's response, the UNHCR Representative outlined, takes into account the increased needs caused by the pandemic, the adapted modalities to deliver, and opportunities 'to build back better' based on achievements of previous years. The 3RP focuses on inclusion into national systems while supporting self-reliance and promoting social cohesion, all in the spirit of the Global Compact on Refugees.



At the **Black Sea Region NGOs meeting** organised by UNHCR and the Directorate General for Migration Management (DGMM), Deputy DG Secilmis commended the valuable contributions of the regional NGO meetings and talked of DGMM's harmonisation process which is being implemented in coordination with international organisations, NGOs, academics and public institutions, who are implementing activities or research in migration and social cohesion. Furthermore, the Head of Harmonisation and Communications Department, Dr. Aydin Keskin Kadioglu called civil society organisations one of the most important stakeholders working in the field of migration in Turkey and stressed the necessity to cooperate with them at the local and national level. UNHCR Representative highlighted the critical role that civil society actors play, whether they are national NGOs, local or grassroots organisations, because of their proximity to people in the field. She stated that "local organisations have been the reflection of solidarity, diversity and complementarity of the refugee response in Turkey."

The seventh **Regional Meeting with Academics** took place virtually on 4 November hosting close to 70 academics of various disciplines from 33 universities in the Marmara Region. Topics of discussion included the importance of Turkish language acquisition by refugees for social cohesion, the role of local administrations and the importance of multidisciplinary approaches. In her opening speech, the UNHCR Representative stated that a comprehensive and sustainable response to refugee situations required inclusive policies which enable refugees and host communities to be a part of the response. Within a multi-stakeholder approach, academia constitutes an important actor, especially to inform policy-making and the crafting of initiatives aimed at fostering social cohesion.



General Director of Migration Management and UNHCR Representative provide opening remarks at the seventh regional meeting with academics held virtually on 4 November ©DGMM

In his intervention, the General Director of Migration Management (DG) reiterated the importance of academic studies and research to inform policies and the way forward. UNHCR Representative emphasised that establishing linkages between academia and efforts of 'operational actors in the field' is 'more important than ever' especially in view of the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 and the challenges this imparts on social cohesion.

UNHCR is progressing with the one-off **COVID-19 Emergency Cash Assistance** in cooperation with DGMM and through the service provider PTT regarding new submissions for payments to households identified in need. The total number of households who have received cards so far to obtain their cash is 37,090 households.

## Communication with Communities

In November, the **UNHCR Counselling Line** responded to 20,939 calls. The majority of callers enquired about resettlement (54%) followed by financial assistance (20%), and calls were received from 77 provinces across the country but mostly from Istanbul followed by Ankara and Gaziantep. Callers to the separate **counselling line for individuals at risk of, or survivors of, gender-based violence (GBV)** are increasing and in November, some 2,450 calls came through that line which provides both a recorded counselling message on reporting mechanisms and available support channels and services, as well as GBV-related counselling through experienced operators. Out of over 1,350 individuals who chose to be connected to an operator for counselling, some 54 per cent of individuals received GBV-related counselling.



The **16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) campaign** was launched on 25 November. UNHCR coordinated a range of initiatives. These include dissemination of key information and messages on UNHCR's social media channels for awareness-raising, available protection mechanisms, and existing services and referral mechanisms in Turkey. The initiatives, which are conducted across the country with partners, include, but are not limited to video production, phone counselling, the sharing of inspirational stories from refugee women, and cooperation with over 20 municipalities for the use of their billboards to raise awareness on violence against women.

16 Days of Activism against Gender-based violence campaign is commemorated from 25 November to 10 December of every year. ©UNHCR

## 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. UNHCR also cooperates with border authorities, delivering food packages, water, blankets, baby diapers, and hygiene items to the Turkish Coast Guard Command, the Gendarmerie Command and various district police stations in the Aegean region. Supplies are distributed to intercepted and rescued individuals to respond to their basic needs.

A generous in-kind donation from private sector company **Unilever UK** for hygiene items was received by UNHCR. Items were delivered to 10 public institutions in Hatay and Adana for distribution to refugees and host community members. Items were also delivered to temporary accommodation centres in the south east region of Turkey. Soap and disinfectants from the same donation are distributed to 73 Migrant Health Centres in nine provinces in the south east region



Delivery and distribution of the in-kind donation of soap and disinfectants reached refugees and host communities in the south east region of Turkey. ©ReyhanliMunicipality

for use by visitors and medical staff of the health centres, who serve some 15,000 refugees and asylum-seekers.

## Durable Solutions

As of end of November 2020, UNHCR provided over 6,023 **resettlement** submissions (5,000 Syrians and 1,023 refugees of other nationalities) to 14 countries; and 3,867 refugees (3,018 Syrian and 849 of other nationalities) departed for resettlement to 15 countries. Remote interviews are being undertaken by UNHCR with the support of the Provincial Directorates of Migration Management (PDMM) of Ankara, Izmir, Gaziantep, Mardin and Istanbul.

Bebemoss, a social enterprise based in Istanbul crafting and selling handmade organic toys by stay-at-home mothers, many of whom are refugees, was endorsed by **UNHCR's MADE51 initiative**. MADE51 is a global brand of artisanal home décor and accessories crafted by refugees. This endorsement enables refugee mothers to sustain a living. In November, the social enterprise, Bebemoss, received seed funding from the World Fair Trade Association giving it increased recognition and allowing it to increase its productivity and benefit more refugee families in Turkey.

On 12 November, the **Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR)** and **UNHCR** signed a **Letter of Understanding** which provides a framework for cooperation and collaboration between the two institutions. The Director General of İŞKUR and UNHCR agreed to continue the cooperation, in particular related to online platforms as well as the digitalisation of İŞKUR services.



The Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) and UNHCR sign a Letter of Understanding which provides a framework for cooperation. © İŞKUR

## Thanks to donors for their support to UNHCR Turkey in 2020

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## LINKS

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