

TURKEY

October 2021

Key Figures (as of 28 October 2021)

4 million

Refugees and asylum-seekers in Turkey including over 3.7 million Syrians under temporary protection and over 330,000 international protection status holders and asylum-seekers of other nationalities. While 98.6% of Syrian refugees live across Turkey in 81 provinces, 1.4% are hosted in seven temporary accommodation centres managed by the Presidency of Migration Management.

8,400

Refugees were submitted for resettlement consideration to 14 countries in 2021 so far. Over 5,900 refugees departed for resettlement to 13 countries, 74% of whom were Syrian and 15% Afghan.

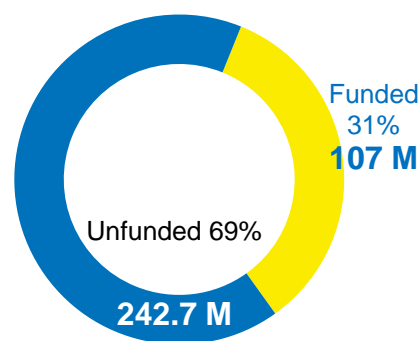
54,700

Calls received on the UNHCR Counselling Line in October. There is an almost 50% decrease in total received calls from September. Most of the callers, the majority Syrian (52%) followed by Afghan nationals (23%), enquired about resettlement opportunities followed by financial assistance. Among those, 2,900 calls came through UNHCR's dedicated GBV line.

Funding (as of 26 October 2021)

USD 349.7 million

requested for UNHCR operations in Turkey



On 27 October, UNHCR signed a protocol of cooperation with the Ministry of Family and Social Services to formalise the long-standing partnership between the two entities in protecting vulnerable groups in need of social services and assistance. Following the signature ceremony, Minister Derya Yanık tweeted about the meeting with UNHCR and how indicative it is of the importance of Turkey's responsibility towards asylum seekers which would require further support by international organizations and the public, aspiring that the Protocol of Cooperation signed with UNHCR would be beneficial for refugees to overcome challenges they face. UNHCR has cooperated with the Ministry of Family and Social Services and its social service centres over the years through logistical and personnel support. The engagement covers services provided by the General Directorates within the Ministry, including those focusing on family and community services, child protection, refugees with disabilities, older refugees, violence against women and gender-based violence.



H.E. Minister Derya Yanık and UNHCR Representative, Philippe Leclerc discuss the longstanding collaboration between the two entities before the signing of the Protocol of Cooperation. ©MoFSS

Social Cohesion and Harmonization

In October, UNHCR and the Presidency for Migration Management (PMM), formerly DGMM, held four neighbourhood gatherings with mukhtars as part of their Joint Harmonization Initiative. The workshops were held in Istanbul and covered the districts of Ümraniye, Üsküdar and Kadıköy, Fatih and Arnavutköy. They included consultation sessions with mukhtars and discussions on social cohesion activities, trends and recommendations, and the importance of strengthening coordination between mukhtars and public institutions in ensuring social cohesion. The sessions helped to create an understanding of the work of mukhtars with foreigners, their rights and the importance of their inclusion in various services. Mukhtars were able to share their observations, challenges and recommendations for better involvement.



The Presidency of Migration Management and UNHCR also held the first Harmony in Economy event in Kayseri on 19-20 October. UNHCR's Assistant Representative for Operations and the Head of the Ankara Field Office represented UNHCR on the first day of the event. The event, which is one in a series of Harmony in Economy events taking place across the country from October to December, aims to bring state institutions and the private sector together to discuss challenges and opportunities for the economic inclusion of foreigners under international and temporary protection. On the second day of the event, participants visited firms and workplaces which present positive examples of cohesion in the economy, and experiences were shared.

Engaging at the Local Level

As part of UNHCR's support to the Friedrich Naumann Foundation's training on the human rights of vulnerable groups. UNHCR facilitated sessions on 6 and 9 October focusing on children's rights and refugee children's protection. The sessions touched upon the national and international legal frameworks, international standards of protection and UNHCR guidelines in relation to child rights and best interests procedures. Around 25 young career professionals and university students participated in the training.

Izmir Metropolitan Municipality, through the support of UNHCR and the Foundation for the Support of Women's Work (KEDV), held a face-to-face focus-group discussion with 11 Syrian women on 14 October. The discussion was held to better understand the level of information available among the refugee community regarding existing municipal services in Izmir, the level of access to services, and challenges refugees might encounter. Participants were also informed of the multi-lingual services provided by the Citizenship Communication Centre (HIM) available at the municipality as well as the City Guide and Refugee Desk activities. Feedback from the participants and beneficiaries of municipal services will be used to improve service provision.

UNHCR conducted trainings for municipal staff on strengthening refugee inclusion in municipal services in the southeast region of Turkey in October, in cooperation with partners Yereliz and ASAM. In total, 12 modules in 20 sessions were delivered to around 100 municipality staff. The modules covered, among other topics, project management and funds, developing relations with NGOs, rights-based service provision, social inclusion and refugee participation, protection of women and children, prejudice awareness, social cohesion and impact-oriented thinking.

UNHCR supported a training on digital inclusion covering basic computer skills, remote work skills, the use of the internet and productivity at the workplace. The training, held through weekly sessions, targeted Syrian and Afghan committee members and was facilitated by Kudra Organization with the support of partner ASAM. UNHCR observed that participants were highly motivated and actively participated in the training. The last round of sessions was concluded on 29 October. In total 13 sessions on digital skills were delivered to 60 refugee committee members in the southeast region. UNHCR is discussing relevant follow-up actions with partners and participants.

UNHCR delivered a series of trainings in October on developing intervention skills for social problems through mediation and conflict resolution, training participants on how to become mediators. Online trainings, held in cooperation with partners, community-based organisations and municipalities, were facilitated on various topics encompassing the theoretical framework of conflict, mediation and resolution mechanisms for refugee and host communities in Adana, Hatay, Gaziantep, Kilis, Adiyaman and Mardin, as well as in Sanliurfa where most of the participants were female. Participants were actively engaged and shared their experiences, ideas and needs. In Gaziantep and Kilis, refugees requested more community centres where refugees could meet, receive trainings and access services; in Adiyaman and Mardin, participants highlighted social cohesion issues and the need for action at the local level to address them. UNHCR is developing an action plan to follow up on the outcomes of the trainings.

Inter-agency Consultations

The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan for the Syria Situation (3RP) High-Level National Consultation meeting on the mid-term review of the 3RP (2021-2022) is planned to be held at the end of November. In the meantime, in preparation for the meeting, UNHCR field offices held consultations with partners and officials across the country. One of these was held in Ankara on 20 October over two sessions: one with 18 participants of state institutions and municipalities, and the second with 19 participants from NGOs. The meetings focused on the 3RP priorities for 2022 while delving into registration challenges for international protection applicants, social harmonization activities, and outreach activities in the context of the pandemic. The findings of the sessions will feed into the larger National Consultation meeting in November which aims to take stock of the progress achieved so far and to validate planning and implementation priorities for 2022. Further consultations will be carried out in November.

Another 3RP planning meeting facilitated by UNHCR was the inter-sector consultation meeting held in Izmir on 12 October covering the Aegean region. Some 45 participants from 26 institutions and organizations including public institutions, municipalities, universities, NGOs and UN Agencies took part. Participants highlighted challenges in access to registration, and to existing services including assistance, and focused on the impact of the pandemic in the provision of services, on livelihoods and social cohesion; and emphasized the need for increased cooperation with public institutions and advocacy efforts in livelihoods, education and protection. Participants also discussed barriers to the formal employment of refugees, challenges in obtaining work permits, both for refugees and employers; and the need for increased communication, awareness-raising and information-dissemination targeting both refugee and local community members.

Representative Missions to Istanbul and Kayseri

UNHCR Representative Mr. Philippe Leclerc was on mission to Istanbul 18-20 October to engage with refugees, key stakeholders and some relevant private sector entities. The Representative's visit to Istanbul included the signing of two Letters of Understanding (LoU), one with Istanbul Governorate and another with the Istanbul Culture and Arts Foundation (IKSV). The Representative held courtesy visits with the Governor of Istanbul, Mr. Ali Yerlikaya; Deputy Governor, Ms. Özlem Bozkurt Gevrek; and Head of Istanbul PDMM, Mr. Bayram Yalinsu. He held a focused-group discussion with Afghan refugees and visited the Centre for Support to Families, Women and Persons with Disabilities (AKDEM) in Zeytinburnu, which hosts a workshop supported by UNHCR, bringing women from the host and refugee communities together. The Representative also met with Istanbul Foundation director, Ms. Dilek İmamoğlu which served to introduce the Representative to the history, structure and current activities of the Foundation. Mr. Leclerc relayed UNHCR's support for the Foundation's women empowerment project.



Mr. Leclerc visits the Centre for Support to Families, Women and Persons with Disabilities (AKDEM) during his mission to Istanbul. The Centre hosts a workshop supported by UNHCR, bringing women from refugee and host communities together. ©ZeytinburnuMunicipality



Roundtable with UNHCR, private sector representatives and Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Lifelong Learning Directorate to discuss challenges to refugees' access to the labour market and areas of collaboration ©UNHCR

On 19 October, the Representative participated in a roundtable with private sector representatives to discuss their role in refugees' access to the labour market, challenges and needs in refugee employment and to identify areas of potential collaboration for the future. Representatives from H&M, Inditex, Al-Baraka Turk Bank, Unlü Textile, Turkish American Businessmen Association (TABA) and Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Art and Vocational Training Courses (ISMEK) and regional employment offices participated in the meeting. The participating companies employ refugees in their supply chains and work towards achieving social compliance in their workplaces. UNHCR works with the invited companies and institutions at different levels varying from vocational training projects to information-sharing meetings and support for work permit procedures.

The meeting with IKSU on 20 October constituted an opportunity to highlight the longstanding common ground between UNHCR and IKSU in organising arts and culture events which include refugees both as consumers and as artists. The Representative and IKSU's Director General held a ceremony for the signing of the Letter of Understanding, where UNHCR expressed appreciation for IKSU's contribution to promoting social cohesion by increasing refugees' participation and inclusion through culture and the arts.

UNHCR Turkey Representative was also on mission in Kayseri on 25-26 October. He met with Kayseri Governor, Mr. Şehmus Günaydın; as well as the Mayor of Kayseri, the CEO of the Kayseri Football Club, and Rector of Abdullah Gül University. During the meeting with the Mayor of Kayseri, Mr. Memduh Büyükkılıç, the Representative reiterated the commitment of UNHCR to cooperate with the Metropolitan Municipality in social cohesion and livelihood prospects targeting both host and refugee communities in the province. The Representative paid a courtesy visit to Abdullah Gül University's Rector, Mr. Cengiz Yılmaz, and expressed satisfaction with the roundtable discussion held jointly between the University, UNDP and UNHCR and the importance of the initiative.

Abdullah Gül University in Kayseri in partnership with UNHCR held a roundtable discussion on 'Urban Economy and the Asylum System'. At the meeting, Vice-Rector of the university, Mr. Erk Hacıhasanoğlu; UNDP Resident Coordinator, Ms. Louisa Vinton; Kayseri Deputy Governor, Mehmet Sadık Tunç; and UNHCR Representative talked of asylum and economic relations. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture, as well as the Provincial Directorate of Migration Management, Kayseri Metropolitan Municipality, relevant public institutions and NGOs. Following the presentations of several participating academics on the economic contributions of refugees in the urban context, the participants exchanged views on the barriers to refugees' access to the labour market within Kayseri and proposed solutions to overcome these obstacles.

Furthermore, during a visit to Kayseri Football Club, Mr. Leclerc evaluated possible cooperation prospects with the Club's CEO, Ms. Berna Gözbaşı who provided information about the club and gave a guided tour through the facility. Both parties discussed potential cooperation areas including initiating joint projects that would include talented local and refugee children. Mr. Leclerc also paid a visit to Nevşehir's Hacıbektaş district, accompanied by Mayor Arif Yoldaş Altıok, who gave a briefing of the history of the district and the philosophy of Hacıbektaş.



Members of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture and officials of public institutions and NGOs discuss refugees' access to the labour market through an initiative of Abdullah Gül University. ©AGUniversity.

Education and Self-Reliance

The Presidency of Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) President and UNHCR Representative held a meeting on 13 October. Both UNHCR and YTB expressed appreciation for the strong collaboration between the two entities, and their commitment to support education opportunities for students under temporary and international protection.

A new intake of DAFI scholars was identified in October. The scholarship holders include 125 bachelor degree students and 75 associate degree students. UNHCR also launched the Higher Education Cash Grant (HECG) programme for the 2021 fall semester in October. The announcement was shared with partners and on



Mr. Abdullah Eren, President of YTB and UNHCR Representative in recognition of the cooperation and strong support for refugees in higher education. ©YTB

UNHCR's social media accounts. After reviewing over 2,500 applications for the cash grant programme, just over 1,100 eligible students were found to be eligible for the grants.

UNHCR developed two online surveys for beneficiaries of the courses at the Public Education centres (PECs). The first survey focuses on the learning outcomes of Turkish language courses and the impact on beneficiaries' daily lives. The second survey is to assess the reasons behind the dropouts. The surveys will be carried out jointly with the PEC management until the end of the year and will serve to define future interventions.

An introductory online workshop was conducted for new international protection DAFI scholars to introduce and explain the rules and obligations of the DAFI programme. A similar workshop for Syrian scholars will be held in November. UNHCR urged the new scholarship holders to establish networks amongst each other and encouraged them to engage in volunteer activities.

The World Bank in Turkey and UNHCR held the fourth and last roundtable for 2021 as part of the Platform on Social Enterprises and Cooperatives, with 46 national policy makers at ministries, chambers of commerce and municipalities. The platform discussed the role of national institutions in strengthening social enterprises and possible cooperation areas.



UNHCR visits Kayseri Football Club and is given a guided tour by its CEO ©KayseriFC

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CONTACTS

Amira Abd El-Khalek, Reporting Officer, Turkey, abdelkha@unhcr.org, Tel: +90 312 409 7420

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