

External update on influx of Syrian refugees

26 September

UNHCR Representation in Turkey

UNHCR Response

UNHCR Representative today visited refugee families who have found shelter in YIBO and Suleyman Shah park in the Suruc region of Sanliurfa Province.

At the Yumurtalik crossing, the UNHCR Representative observed how Syrians were crossing the border to Turkey, and how security and health checks were performed.

She also visited the on-going pre-registration in the Mobile Coordination Centers. Together with the AFAD President Fuat Oktay she delivered a press conference to international and national media stating that the number of refugees that has come since 19 September has reached 160,000. They explained how UNHCR and AFAD have closely cooperated since the outset of the recent influx. Highlighting that the numbers may increase, they appeal to international community that the time is now to support Turkey's intensive efforts in responding the refugee crisis.

Today UNHCR's second airlift landed at Adana Airport in the late afternoon. Together, the eight planned flights are expected to bring in over 130,000 mats, 107,500 blankets, 15,000 sets of cooking utensils, 13,500 plastic sheets, and five prefabricated warehouses over the next eight days.

Arrivals

A Gendarmerie detachment is taking shifts at the crossing at East of Mursitpinar (a.k.a. Kendirci or Akmanak in Kurdish) and although it is officially closed for new-arrivals, small numbers of refugees are admitted there and brought with mini busses to Yumurtalik for formal admission. On 25 September 1,580 new refugees were admitted at Yumurtalik, including 45 persons referred from Akmanak crossing. The total number of new arrivals is now estimated to be 160,000.

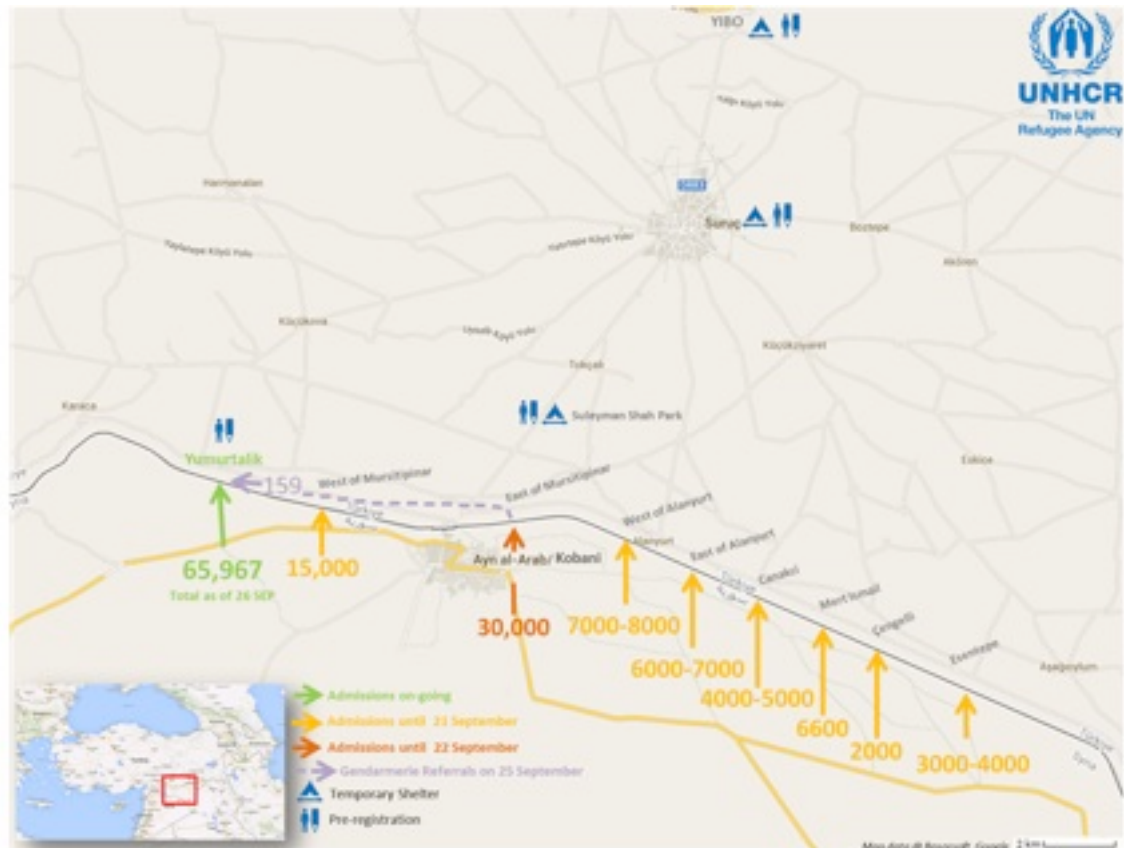
On 26 September 1967 Syrians crossed the border until the 16:30. Many Syrians are already admitted and are waiting for pre-registration. The team talked with many families who stated that they are coming from Kobani city center. A high percentage of the arrivals are women, children, and elderly and 500 children have been vaccinated. Also at least two minibuses and a truck arrived at Yumurtalik coming from the Akmanak.

At another point at the border, 500 meter east of Akmanak, UNHCR witnessed around 300 cars lined up for about 1 km. As far as the UNHCR teams could see



The UNCR Turkey Representative talking with a refugee family in YIBO boarding school photo: UNHCR/ F.Ozdogru

there seemed to be only the driver in each car. The gendarmerie officials at that point informed the UNHCR team that there were clashes in the area across that border point inside Syria in the morning and the vehicles on the other side arrived following those clashes.



Across the border from Yumurtalik and Mert Ismail some 500- 1,500 Syrians remain waiting with their cars and cattle. As there is 20,000 to 30,000 livestock on the Syrian side of the border, allowing all these to cross the border poses concerns, among others regarding cattle diseases. While the authorities are reviewing the situation, the livestock is given water and feed.

According to reports from Syrian refugees the estimated number of people still in Kobani ranges from 5,000 to 20,000 persons. While there are continuous returns UNHCR has witnessed Syrians are arriving in larger groups today than yesterday.

Reception UNHCR observed how five social workers from the Provincial MoFSP were positioned at Yumurtalik to receive, refer and inform new arrivals. They were welcoming the Syrians and guiding them through the admission process' steps such as security check, vaccination, medical health screening and pre-registration.

Registration According to the Sub Governor of Suruç up to 20,000 refugees have been pre-registered. It is estimated the total number of Syrians to be 153,000 persons, 80,000 of whom remained in Suruç: of those 40,000 are estimated to be living with host families and the other 40,000 in concentration points (YIBO, the Wedding Hall, the Condolence houses, Cultural Center, stores, etc).

Coordination UNHCR along with other NGOs attended the coordination meeting called by Suruç Sub Governor and AFAD Provincial Director. AFAD and the Sub Governorate provided a list of needed items and medicines. The NGOs were requested to send a

list of the available items in their stock and UNHCR shared a draft list of its stock still to be finalized pending remaining inputs from other NGOs.

Protection and Needs assessments

The NGOs CARE, IRC, IMC and DRC managed to conduct their protection assessment by means of 12 Focus Group Discussions in three transit shelters. UNHCR supported them in accessing these centres. The preliminary findings of this assessment show that refugees feel safe now. Their priority needs relate to access to services, especially hygiene/ WASH, clothes and medication. It is hoped that the findings can help build momentum for protection issues.

To manage the limited sanitation available at the YIBO shelter, UNHCR advised AFAD managers and refugee representatives to segregate the usage of the stalls and showers in the dormitory building. All agreed to implement the proposal. Some NGOs with WASH expertise are considering making a WASH needs assessment in the transit shelters.

Shelter

There are around 750-1,000 persons staying at the Cultural Center in Suruç Town Centre overnighing either inside the building or in tents. According to the updated Municipality updated listing there are 302 women, 202 men and 316 children.

Currently 270 refugees are now hosted at the Suleyman Shah Park. UNICEF will open Child Friendly Spaces tents at the Park and at YIBO each with one youth worker and one translator.

AFAD is locating another site in the Sanliurfa Province to set up site with individual tents for 20,000 persons.

Health

From 19 until 24 September, 840 refugees received medical attention (600 out-patients and 240 ambulance arrivals). It was confirmed that one of the three mine explosion victims reported on 24 September passed away. The other two are under intensive care unit at the Harran Education and Research University Hospital in Urfa.



Turkish Red Crescent staff running to ensure emergency health care with a child on a stretcher at Yumurtalik border crossing, photo: UNHCR/ F.Ozdogru

Suruç State Hospital informed UNHCR that to date no epidemic disease has been observed among the new-arrivals. UNHCR was also informed that 75 additional medical personnel from Batman, Nevsehir and Sivas will be deployed in 35 ambulatory teams throughout the area. Moreover, as of 25 September, a team of 17 public health workers with training in the treatment of leishmania and malaria, as well as general health screening, will be deployed at YIBO.

There are five Turkish doctors who normally work at state hospitals in other towns and who offered their free time to assist the refugees at the Cultural Centre in Suruç. The doctors prescribe medicine that can be acquired at a pharmacy located inside the building. This pharmacy also dispenses medicine to Syrians coming from the wedding hall, the condolence house, etc. Reportedly the medicines are a donation of the Unions of Pharmacists of Mardin, Sanliurfa and Diyarbakir.

The UK Charity, Doctors Worldwide, on site since 21 September, set up a tent at the Suleyman Shah Park for a 09 medical doctor's team of several specializations such as internal medicine, paediatrics and a dentist. During the day they also visit villages and the border crossings to conduct screenings, vaccinations and primary treatment. Two public health personnel are also present the Park doing screenings. They identified cases of lice, but they cannot administer medicine because there is no water available at the Park.

**Distribution
of
assistance**

According to the Suruç Sub Governor, the current population figures show 50% of the overall refugee population staying with host families and more than half of assistance is available for the transit centres. The main transit centres tend to receive more visits, assessments and most assistance and local authorities are now aiming at reaching out to host families in need of support. The Social Aid Solidarity Foundation (SASF) informed UNHCR that they are employing muhktars to identify families hosting newcomers in all 93 villages of the Suruç province in order to assist them. The Head of SASF reported that dry food is the most pressing need of the new refugee population it estimates to be 153.000 persons. While the new-arrivals staying with host families mention dry food as their biggest need, the Syrian refugees staying at the transit centres mention hygiene kits/ WASH.

UNHCR observes an improvement in the distribution activities that took place on the 25 September. During the distribution of mattresses at YIBO school, women and men were separated and beneficiaries were asked to show their pre-registration family forms.

Currently 10 Sub-governorate Desk Crisis personnel are visiting villages, meeting families and distributing aid items like blankets and hygiene items (detergents, baby diaper and sanitary napkins). The beneficiaries' names and situation are recorded in detail and the records are signed by the Muhktar, Subgovernorate staff and the Imam. Also a photo of the family is taken for the records.

Donor Countries of UNHCR's Regional Syrian Refugee Programme for Turkey:



Other Donor Countries contributing to UNHCR's Regional Syrian Refugee Programme in alphabetical order including un-earmarked funding:



Contacts:

Selin Unal, PI Officer, unal@unhcr.org, Cell: +90 530 282 78 62

Bernardo Santos, Reporting Officer, santosr@unhcr.org, Cell +90 539 585 4643