

# TURKEY



## Operational highlights

- More than 9,200 people in Turkey approached UNHCR to seek asylum, an increase from the previous year of 18 per cent. Nearly 45 per cent of the applicants were from the Islamic Republic of Iran.
- The protection environment was measurably improved following two Government circulars to local authorities permitting residence fees to be waived for asylum-seekers and facilitating access by UNHCR staff to people seeking asylum in detention.
- UNHCR submitted more than 6,800 refugees for resettlement, the highest number of submissions ever from Turkey.
- The waiting times for registration, eligibility interviews and refugee decisions were reduced from more than 16 months to between six and eight months, in line with UNHCR's standards.
- Draft asylum legislation was developed by the Ministry of the Interior in consultation with UNHCR, national and local authorities and civil society.
- The first official visit of the High Commissioner to Turkey, in November 2010, paved the way for bilateral strategic discussions.
- Protection challenges continued to arise along Turkey's borders with Greece and Bulgaria.

## Working environment

Turkey is at a major crossroads for the movement of migrants and people in need of international protection. In addition to the nearly 10,000 asylum-seekers, some 20,000 foreigners were apprehended for illegal stay or entry – most of whom were from Afghanistan, Iraq, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Somalia, and most crossed into Turkey at its eastern border.

Turkey's geographical, political and ethnic links to the Central Asian countries also invite population movements from the north. Illegal crossings between Turkey and Greece accounted for 45 per cent of all illegal crossings at the European Union's external borders. In December, Greece invited Frontex, the European border monitoring agency, to provide support at the Turkish-Greek land border.

UNHCR has limited access to people detained in Turkey, and therefore the number of those in need of international protection is unknown. Difficulties in accessing asylum procedures, especially at borders and places of detention, may have contributed to keeping asylum figures low in comparison to countries in the west. Turkey continues to retain the geographical limitation which restricts its obligations under the 1951 Refugee Convention to people from European countries.

In March 2010, two circulars concerning asylum-seekers as well as people caught in



mixed-migration flows were issued by the Ministry of the Interior. One facilitated the waiving of residence fees for asylum-seekers and refugees, while the other ensured that people in detention wishing to claim asylum were given access to UNHCR.

A lasting solution to the situation of Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq remained pending.

Turkey has continued its leading role in the Budapest Process on migration which it currently chairs. It has also proposed the establishment of a Silk Route Region Working Group as a platform for discussions on migratory movements covering areas from the Middle East (the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq) to Asia (Afghanistan, Pakistan and China).

## Achievements and impact

### Main objectives and targets

#### Favourable protection environment

- UNHCR cooperated with the Government in the drafting of the asylum law and other legislative instruments. It shared legal opinions, needs assessments, gap analyses and comparative studies with the national authorities. As a result, the draft law establishes mechanisms that ensure that the main principles of asylum are upheld.
- The General Directorate for Security (GDS) of the Ministry of the Interior participated in the legislative

## Persons of concern

Type of Population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
<b>Refugees</b>	Iraq	5,300	5,300	41	31
	Islamic Rep. of Iran	1,900	1,900	45	21
	Afghanistan	1,500	1,500	45	39
	Somalia	900	900	51	36
	Various	420	420	36	25
<b>Asylum-seekers</b>	Islamic Rep. of Iran	2,700	2,700	40	20
	Afghanistan	2,000	2,000	41	41
	Iraq	600	600	40	37
	Somalia	340	340	45	29
	Kyrgyzstan	250	250	41	40
	Uzbekistan	140	140	41	38
	Various	700	700	31	20
<b>Stateless</b>	Stateless	800	-	-	-
<b>Others of concern</b>	Various	310	-	-	-
<b>Returnees (refugees)</b>	Various	240	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>18,100</b>	<b>16,750</b>		



process. UNHCR organized three RSD workshops with GDS to harmonise decision-making processes.

- UNHCR coordinated with the Ministries of Education and Health and other national institutions to improve reception conditions. To promote the enrolment of asylum-seeker children in primary education and reduce drop-out rates, UNHCR initiated the Education Project, which evaluates the access to education of asylum-seeker and refugee children in satellite cities. This helped more than 100 child asylum-seekers to go to school in 2010.
- In order to enhance the protection capacity of law enforcement entities at land and sea borders, UNHCR worked with the Gendarmerie General Command to implement a project to address irregular migration.
- Owing to the importance of the Aegean Sea in cross-border movements, UNHCR organized a cross-border meeting in March 2010 with the participation of UNHCR offices in Greece and NGOs active in the asylum field in Greece and Turkey.

### Fair protection processes

- In 2010, UNHCR registered some 9,200 asylum-seekers and conducted 2,000 status-determination interviews. It issued decisions in over 4,300 cases covering more than 8,400 people. UNHCR was successful in clearing a backlog of pending cases, but the overall increase in new arrivals during 2010, which reached 18 per cent, continued to put pressure on staff. The increase in arrivals from the Islamic Republic of Iran reached 45 per cent. This was the third year with a substantial increase in the number of new arrivals, leading to a call for more resources to deal with asylum claims in a timely manner.

### Basic needs and services

- Asylum-seekers and refugees, when they are registered with the authorities and reside in the satellite cities ringing the main towns, can be referred to the social assistance scheme for their medical needs. More than 2,000 people availed themselves of this assistance during the year, while more than 500 were provided with medicines. UNHCR supported those who are not legally registered or lack the necessary documents, and are therefore extremely vulnerable.
- To identify and assist the most vulnerable, UNHCR participated in the development of governmental procedures to ensure that refugee children, female survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, older people and those with disabilities, had access to care.
- In 2010, UNHCR and its partners worked to reinforce reception conditions for asylum-seekers and refugees in 23 satellite cities. Partners pursued a community-based approach, raised awareness among the local authorities and utilized local mechanisms for self-reliance.
- The living conditions of the refugees and asylum-seekers were monitored during field missions. The missions also provided legal and social counselling to people of concern, ensured their inclusion in the local social-assistance structure, disseminated information on international

protection and established contacts among local authorities and civil society.

- UNHCR's NGO partner provided guidance and information and counselling services on HIV and AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases.
- Some 44 per cent of separated children benefited from Best Interest Determination (BID) interviews.
- The provision of direct assistance to meet emergency needs in local transport, accommodation, health, education and financial support decreased by 14 per cent in 2010, thanks to the establishment of effective networks and the mobilization of local resources in the satellite cities. Partners also raised local authorities' awareness of refugee issues.

### Durable solutions

- Resettlement continues to be the main durable solution available to non-European refugees in Turkey. Opportunities for voluntary repatriation or local integration are rare. More than 6,800 individuals were submitted for resettlement and some 5,300 departed for third countries. Despite an increase in the number of resettlement places offered to refugees in Turkey, at the end of 2010 there were more than 10,000 recognized refugees still in need of resettlement.
- In 2010, according to partners and the Government, 255 refugees spontaneously returned to their country of origin. Only four people approached UNHCR for assistance with voluntary repatriation.

### External relations

- UNHCR expanded its public-information activities through the media, publications, public events, lobbying and private-sector fund raising. It continued supporting the Fine Arts Project, with more than 20 Fine Arts Faculties participating for the second consecutive year. The local website and the "Facts and Figures" publications in English and Turkish have become a good source of information for researchers, journalists and many other interested people. The national Goodwill Ambassador, Muazzez Ersoy, participated in World Refugee Day events and made several appearances in the media for UNHCR.

### Logistics and operational support

- UNHCR was able to re-focus its programme away from direct assistance towards activities which foster self-reliance and strengthen the social support capacity of local municipalities and the NGO sector.

### Constraints

The absence of a legal framework for asylum makes it difficult for asylum-seekers and refugees to enjoy their rights in Turkey. Even with improved access to residency in the country, many people of concern continue to live in poverty and have difficulty in accessing health and education.

Due to resource constraints, little could be done to respond to growing needs related to asylum and migration in

the west of the country, or to create effective border-monitoring and screening mechanisms.

The lack of a formal country agreement continued to constrain UNHCR's operation.

## Financial information

The resources available to the Office in Turkey have remained relatively stable over the past five years. In 2010 additional funds allowed UNHCR to address a backlog of 8,000 asylum-seeker cases.

## Organization and implementation

UNHCR operations were managed by the Country Office in Ankara, a field office in Van and field units in Istanbul and Silopi.

## UNHCR's presence in 2010

□ Number of offices	4
□ Total staff	115
International	5
National	53
JPOs	2
UNVs	25
Others	30

## Working with others

UNHCR worked with the General Directorate of Consular Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the General Directorate for Security within the Ministry of Interior, which are responsible for asylum matters. UNHCR also collaborated with the Asylum and Migration Bureau of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of National Education, the Social Solidarity Foundation, the Social Services and Child Protection Directorate, the Religious Affairs Directorate and civil society. Regular meetings between UNHCR's partners and civil society helped identify gaps and improve protection and assistance schemes.

UNHCR worked closely with IOM and ICMC to facilitate resettlement departures, as well as on migration/asylum and trafficking issues.

## Overall assessment

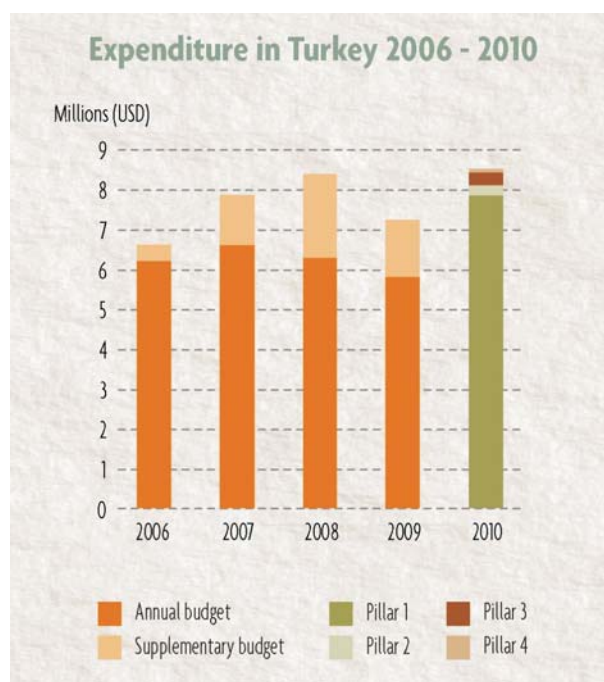
UNHCR is supporting the Government of Turkey as it develops a new asylum system. Meanwhile, it directly adjudicates asylum cases, along with parallel Turkish structures, and finds durable solutions for those in need of international protection.

As a result of additional financial support, UNHCR was able to improve asylum decision-making, reduce waiting periods and increase the number of resettlement submissions—including the rate of acceptance and number of departures related to the latter.

UNHCR shifted the focus of its programme away from direct assistance and towards activities which foster self-reliance and strengthen the social-support capacity of local municipalities and NGOs. Nonetheless, many people of concern continued to live in poverty and without adequate access to social protection schemes, particularly in health and education.

UN security officials and UNHCR are working closely on improving security for personnel involved in the registration, counselling and RSD of asylum-seekers.

Partners	
<b>Implementing partners</b>	
<b>NGOs:</b> Association for Solidarity with Asylum-Seekers and Migrants, Human Resources Development Foundation	
<b>Operational partners</b>	
<b>Government:</b> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Under-Secretariat of the Ministry of the Interior, Bureau for Development and Implementation of Asylum and Migration Legislation and Administrative Capacity, General Directorate for Security of the Ministry of Interior, General Directorate for Social Solidarity and Assistance, Gendarmerie General Command, Land Forces Command, Coast Guard Command, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Health, Social Services and Child Protection Agency, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Human Rights Presidency, Secretariat General for EU Affairs, Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA), Social Solidarity and Assistance Foundations in Cities	
<b>NGOs:</b> Amnesty International, Ankara Refugee Support Group, Association for Solidarity with Asylum-Seekers ( <i>Multeci-der</i> ), Association of Human Rights and Solidarity for Oppressed People ( <i>Mazlum Der</i> ), Bar Associations, Bonjour Ankara Group, Cansuyu, Caritas, Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief (IHH), Helsinki Citizens Assembly, Human Rights Association, Human Rights Foundation of Turkey, International Blue Crescent, International Catholic Migration Commission, <i>Kaos-GL</i> , <i>Kimse Yok Mu</i> , Turkish Education Volunteers Foundation, Turkish Red Crescent Society, Van Women's Association	
<b>Others:</b> IOM	



## Budget, income and expenditure in Turkey | USD

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	Total
<b>FINAL BUDGET</b>	<b>17,023,965</b>	<b>250,000</b>	<b>310,000</b>	<b>110,000</b>	<b>17,693,965</b>
Income from contributions <sup>1</sup>	806,700	0	0	0	806,700
Other funds available	7,037,785	247,346	309,428	109,945	7,704,504
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>7,844,485</b>	<b>247,346</b>	<b>309,428</b>	<b>109,945</b>	<b>8,511,204</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN</b>					
<i>Favourable protection environment</i>					
National legal framework	251,123	0	0	0	251,123
National and regional migration policy	256,978	0	0	0	256,978
Prevention of statelessness	0	159,284	0	0	159,284
Co-operation with partners	394,000	0	0	109,945	503,945
Access to territory	247,277	0	0	0	247,277
<i>Non-refoulement</i>	638,413	0	0	0	638,413
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,787,790</b>	<b>159,284</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>109,945</b>	<b>2,057,019</b>
<i>Fair protection processes and documentation</i>					
Fair and efficient status determination	2,202,055	0	0	0	2,202,055
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2,202,055</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,202,055</b>
<i>Basic needs and essential services</i>					
Basic domestic and hygiene items	677,785	0	93,310	0	771,095
Primary health care	184,045	0	0	0	184,045
HIV and AIDS	45,959	0	0	0	45,959
Education	160,903	0	0	0	160,903
Services for groups with specific needs	347,186	0	0	0	347,186
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,415,878</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>93,310</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,509,187</b>
<i>Durable solutions</i>					
Voluntary return	249,387	0	59,610	0	308,997
Rehabilitation and reintegration support	0	0	59,610	0	59,610
Resettlement	298,153	0	0	0	298,153
Local integration support	279,873	0	0	0	279,873
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>827,412</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>119,220</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>946,632</b>
<i>External relations</i>					
Resource mobilisation	103,310	0	0	0	103,310
Public information	211,625	0	0	0	211,625
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>314,935</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>314,935</b>
<i>Logistics and operations support</i>					
Programme management, coordination and support	876,309	88,062	96,899	0	1,061,270
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>876,309</b>	<b>88,062</b>	<b>96,899</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,061,270</b>
Instalments to implementing partners	420,106	0	0	0	420,106
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,844,485</b>	<b>247,346</b>	<b>309,428</b>	<b>109,945</b>	<b>8,511,204</b>

<sup>1</sup> Income from contributions includes indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions to Pillars 3 and 4, supplementary budgets and the "New or additional activities - mandate-related" (NAM) reserve. Contributions towards all pillars are included under Pillar 1.