

# Turkey

February 2021

**Population:** Turkey is host to the **world's largest refugee population** since 2014. 3.6 million of whom are Syrian under temporary protection and close to 330,000 are refugees and asylum seekers of other

**Legal Framework:** Turkey's refugee response is based on a comprehensive legal framework, in particular the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (2013) and the Temporary Protection Regulation (2014).

UNHCR and UNDP co-lead the **Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan** in response to the Syria crisis. UNHCR chairs the International Protection and Migration Results Group of the 2016-2020 UN Development and Cooperation Strategy.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

Refugees (under temporary protection) **3.65 million**  
Asylum-seekers **330,000**

## TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

	Refugees		Asylum-seekers
Syria	3,574,800	Iraq	173,250
Iraq	1,000	Afghanistan	116,400
Iran	980	Iran	27,000

Data source: UNHCR 2020 Mid-Year Statistical report and UNHCR [data finder platform](#)

## COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

**Advocacy:** UNHCR adapted its programming to provide direct assistance to vulnerable refugee and host communities while maintaining personnel, material and technical support to public institutions. UNHCR prioritised communication with communities, emergency cash assistance, provision of hygiene and protective items, and worked with municipalities and local authorities to strengthen community mobilisation and promote social cohesion.

**Inclusion:** All populations are included in the national COVID-19 prevention and response plans, including for treatment and vaccination. Refugee health professionals also contributed to the response.

**Communication with Communities:** UNHCR provides regular and timely information on COVID-19 in multiple languages, diversifying communication strategies based on the needs of persons of concern and remote working modalities, adopting various digital means of communication and increasing its outreach through the Counselling Line; social media platforms, the Help site, Services Advisor, community sessions and phone calls .

## HIGHLIGHTS

### 134,000 households

In refugee and host communities received hygiene kits in 35 provinces through 61 partners (local authorities, municipalities and NGOs) in 2020. In-kind assistance and core relief items were delivered to public officials, border authorities and persons in temporary accommodation centres in South East Turkey.

### 6,100 refugees

were submitted for resettlement consideration in 2020 to 15 countries. Close to 4,050 refugees departed for resettlement to 14 countries, 77% of whom were Syrian.

### 269,200 calls

were answered through the UNHCR counselling line, from over 70 provinces, most often enquiring about resettlement and financial assistance. Close to 4,000 calls were received through a GBV line set up in September.



### UNHCR's emergency cash assistance reaches 85,000 families during COVID-19 crisis

Read [here](#) how Ahmed and his family benefited from the emergency cash assistance during the pandemic.

## Key Priorities

- Promoting access to and provision of protection:** UNHCR advocates for admission of persons in need of international protection, access to fair and efficient national protection procedures, promotes procedural standards and safeguards by working in partnership with the Directorate General for Migration Management (DGMM) and its provincial directorates; border officials, Gendarmerie General Command, the Ministry of Justice and Union of Turkish Bar Associations. Cooperation with DGMM to support national registration and international protection procedures remains a priority.
- Strengthening access to protection services:** UNHCR focuses on child protection, prevention and response to gender-based violence, and social services for persons with specific needs. UNHCR provides personnel and logistical support to authorities; supports partners in identification, referral and response to refugees with specific needs; and provides cash for protection assistance.
- Resettlement and spontaneous voluntary return:** COVID-19 affected resettlement processing and observations of voluntary returns. UNHCR works with DGMM to enhance procedural safeguards for voluntary returns and access to accurate and updated information. In 2020, remote resettlement interviewing was set up in 8 locations; UNHCR expanded presence to 17 provinces to monitor voluntary return interviews.
- Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance:** UNHCR cooperates with authorities and partners to identify needs, assist, map services, support refugee community mobilisation, and access to work permits; and supports İŞKUR, the Turkish Employment Agency, to improve access to self-reliance opportunities, including through vocational and language training.
- Promoting social cohesion:** DGMM and UNHCR cooperate to enhance social cohesion and interventions in line with the National Strategy on Harmonisation to encourage dialogue between refugees, host communities, public institutions, and service providers. Social cohesion initiatives were redesigned to reach refugee and host communities through alternative modalities during the pandemic.

- External Engagement:** Building on the legal framework, in line with the 3RP strategic directions and Global Compact on Refugees, UNHCR works towards achieving a whole of society approach that enables greater support to and protection of refugees.

## Working with Partners

- UNHCR works in partnership with ministries and public institutions at the national, provincial and local levels, with municipalities, international and national NGOs, UN sister agencies, the private sector, and refugees and host communities. For 2021, UNHCR signed partnership agreements with 16 partners.
- The **Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP)** remains the principal strategy, coordination and fundraising platform for international support to Turkey's refugee response. The **2021-22 Turkey Country Chapter**, co-led by UNDP and UNHCR, was launched on 19 February with an appeal of USD 1.04 billion. UNHCR leads the Protection and Basic Needs sectors.
- Following the GRF, UNHCR launched a **data portal of good practices** on the refugee response by government institutions, local authorities and other organisations.

## Statelessness

- Turkey pledged at the GRF to accede to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and implement it within five years. In 2020, UNHCR and DGMM developed standard operating procedures on statelessness determination. They are considered the first guidance material on statelessness in the national system, setting out principles and procedural safeguards within relevant legislation.

## UNHCR Presence in Turkey

### Staff:

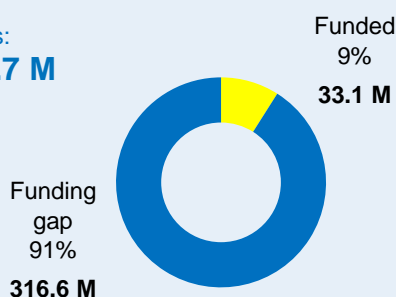
300 National Staff  
 57 International Staff

### Offices:

1 Country Office in Ankara  
 4 Field Offices in Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir and Van  
 1 Sub Office in South East Turkey with presence in Gaziantep, Sanliurfa and Hatay

## Financial information 28 February 2021

Financial requirements:  
**USD 349.7 M**



UNHCR is grateful to the major donors of unearmarked contributions\* to the 2021 global programmes (USD, 28 February):

Norway 80 M | Sweden 66.9 M | Netherlands 36.1 M | Denmark 34.6 M | Germany 22.1 M | Switzerland 16.4 M | Ireland 12.5 M | Belgium 11.9 M

\*Unearmarked contributions allow UNHCR for critical flexibility in how best to reach populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk. Above are donors of USD 10 million or more.

UNHCR Turkey is also grateful for 2021 contributions from the following donors (as of 28 February):

European Union | Japan | Republic of Korea | Google | Switzerland | Germany | Sweden |