

# Turkey



## Operational highlights

- UNHCR conducted refugee status determination (RSD) for all non-European asylum-seekers, and found resettlement opportunities abroad for those who qualified as refugees.
- The Office renewed its focus on helping refugees and asylum-seekers become self-reliant. An Integration Unit worked to strengthen the social support and reception capacities in various communities in which refugees and asylum-seekers reside.
- UNHCR worked with the Ministry of the Interior, other government bodies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to create a state-run refugee status determination process and reception and accommodation system for asylum-seekers. The Office supported the system through staff exchange programmes and on-the-job training.
- The Office's efforts to reach out to the public and the media have raised UNHCR's profile. It is now viewed as the authoritative source of information on refugee protection in Turkey.

## Working environment

In 2007, Turkey confirmed its determination to maintain the “geographic limitation” that restricts its obligations under the 1951 Refugee Convention to people uprooted by events in Europe. Non-European refugees enjoy temporary asylum pending UNHCR's efforts to find durable solutions for them. UNHCR advises the Government on the protection needs of individual non-European asylum-seekers. It conducts RSD for all non-European asylum-seekers and seeks resettlement opportunities abroad for those who qualify as refugees.

Mixed movements of migrants and asylum-seekers, mostly arrive through the eastern border, but a growing number arriving from Africa are landing on the country's Mediterranean shores.

## Achievements and impact

### Main objectives

UNHCR's 2007 programme objectives in Turkey were to strengthen asylum, find solutions for refugees, foster self-reliance and provide assistance to a limited number of destitute asylum-seekers and recognized refugees.

### Protection and solutions

The Office conducted RSD for all non-European asylum-seekers, advised the Government on temporary asylum and identified refugees for resettlement. In 2007, some 4,400 new asylum applications were received, an increase of 68 per cent over the number in 2006.

UNHCR in Turkey made close to 4,000 RSD decisions in 2007, a significant increase over the some 1,600 decisions in 2006. As part of its search for durable solutions, the Office submitted the cases of non-European refugees for resettlement and some 2,700 refugees were resettled from Turkey. The main destination countries were Australia, Canada, Finland and the United States.

UNHCR intervened with the Turkish authorities to ensure that non-European asylum-seekers were not detained or subjected to *refoulement* and could avail themselves of temporary asylum. Despite the concerns expressed by the Office, the number of people *refouled* in 2007 was higher than in previous years.

To support Turkey's efforts to develop a national asylum system, UNHCR focused on legislative and institutional development; training strategies and coordination; RSD knowledge transfer; and reception, integration and social support.

In 2007, the Office organized visits by the authorities and local-community members to reception centres to stimulate cooperation on asylum issues. UNHCR also conducted training sessions for Turkish officials and provided them with legal and policy advice. For the first time, key government officials attended a UNHCR-organized workshop to discuss the policy adjustments required for the integration of refugees in Turkey.

UNHCR registered all asylum-seekers and refugees shortly after arrival to identify and support victims of sexual and gender-based violence and torture, the elderly, and other people with special protection needs. The Office identified some 410 unaccompanied and separated children of concern, for whom places were found either at Social Services and Child Protection Agency shelters or, in emergencies, at UNHCR-contracted facilities. The Office ensured that all separated children underwent a Best Interest Determination analysis following their registration.

### Activities and assistance

**Community services:** Implementing partners engaged psychologists to counsel seriously traumatized refugees and asylum-seekers. On average, more than 250 people benefited from such sessions every month.

Persons of concern					
Type of population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Iraq	3,700	3,700	43	34
	Islamic Republic of Iran	2,100	2,100	42	26
	Somalia	700	700	53	42
	Various	480	480		
Asylum-seekers	Islamic Republic of Iran	1,800	1,800	39	21
	Iraq	1,000	1,000	39	27
	Somalia	800	800	45	28
	Afghanistan	700	700	40	44
	Occupied Palestinian Territory	170	170	40	34
	Sudan	110	110	6	8
	Various	600	600	-	-
Returnees (refugees)	Various	160	-	-	-
Others of concern	Various	310	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>12,630</b>	<b>12,160</b>		



**Domestic needs and household support:** An average of 510 destitute refugees received monthly financial assistance. In addition, some 480 destitute asylum-seekers, many of whom are not registered with the authorities, received one-time assistance.

**Education:** UNHCR distributed school bags, stationary sets and clothing to 2,000 refugee children at the beginning of the school year.

**Health and nutrition:** Through a contractual arrangement with local hospitals, UNHCR provided emergency health care to an average of 270 asylum-seekers and refugees each month. Some 40 people underwent voluntary counselling and testing to prevent or treat sexually transmitted diseases. Sanitary supplies were distributed to some 1,700 refugee women and adolescent girls.

**Legal assistance:** UNHCR hired lawyers in eastern and south-eastern Turkey to counsel refugees and asylum-seekers. In addition, the Office provided on-the-job training for government RSD interviewers by means of mobile training teams; RSD staff exchanges between the Ministry of the Interior and UNHCR; and study visits to model reception centres in other

European countries. Also useful were information sessions on the reception and integration of refugees; working-group meetings on standards of reception for asylum seekers; and workshops on the reception and integration of refugees. A total of 350 civil servants and staff of NGOs participated at UNHCR-organized training and capacity-building events.

**Operational support (to agencies):** A significant increase in media coverage of refugee issues heightened sensitivity towards the rights of the displaced. UNHCR contributed to the staffing, communication and other administrative costs of its implementing partners for their social and legal counselling programmes.

**Shelter and infrastructure:** More than 2,100 vulnerable people received emergency support from UNHCR through an agreement with the Gendarmerie.

**Transport and logistics:** UNHCR helped transport some 1,800 people who had to attend eligibility interviews or complete resettlement formalities in Ankara to travel to the city.

Activities and assistance relating to the Iraq Situation are covered in the *Iraq Situation* chapter.



UNHCR photo

Various forms of training are provided to refugees, mainly from Iran, in the eastern city of Van, in Turkey.

## Constraints

One of the main protection challenges was to find durable solutions for more than 1,000 Iranian refugees who had come to Turkey from Iraq. The refugees, who began arriving in 2002, cannot return either to their first country of asylum or their country of origin and resettlement is not considered an option at this stage by the Government.

Lack of social assistance and the complex administrative procedures needed to join the labour market leave many refugees and asylum-seekers dependent on the limited resources of UNHCR and local charities. Some resort to informal economic activity, which puts them at risk of exploitation.

## Financial information

UNHCR's programme was fully funded. The country operation received additional contributions for capacity-building in preparation for the handover of the RSD to the national authorities, to support community services and social counselling, and for refugee children's programmes. Despite the budget's expansion and almost complete programme implementation, UNHCR's support and assistance for people of concern remained insufficient, including in respect of timely interviews of asylum seekers.

## Organization and implementation

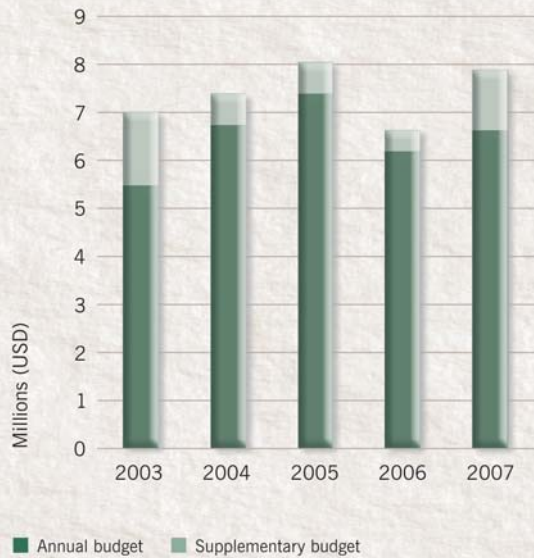
### Management

The country programme was implemented by the Representation office in Ankara and field units in Van, Istanbul and Silopi. In 2007 there were a total of 66 staff members, consisting of six international employees, one JPO, 54 national personnel and five national UNVs.

### Working with others

In 2007, UNHCR worked closely with the Turkish Government (the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Health, Education and Labour) as well as the Gendarmerie and Coast Guard. In close coordination with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNHCR facilitated resettlement. The Office was an active member of the UN Country Team and participated in the review of the UN Development Assistance Framework process.

Expenditure in Turkey  
2003 - 2007



## Overall assessment

As there are few NGOs working in the country, UNHCR is primarily responsible for finding durable solutions for recognized refugees. It is also widely perceived as an expert and impartial intermediary on refugee and asylum issues. Nonetheless, it has been a challenge to ensure that asylum-seekers are received humanely and have access to fair and efficient RSD, enjoy basic rights in accordance with international standards, and find durable solutions – including the possibility of local integration.

### Partners

#### Implementing partners

**NGOs:** Association for Solidarity with Asylum-Seekers and Migrants, Human Resources Development Foundation, International Catholic Migration Commission

#### Operational partners

**Government agencies:** Directorate for Security of the Ministry of Interior, Directorate-General Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Gendarmerie General Command, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of National Education, Social Services and Child Protection Agency, Social Solidarity Foundation

**NGOs:** Bar Association of Turkey, Caritas, Helsinki Citizens Assembly, Gaziantep Relief Foundation, Human Rights Centre and Women's Community Centre, Kaos-GL, Meksa, Turkish Education Volunteers Foundation, Van Women Association

**Others:** Amnesty International, Bilgi University (Istanbul), British Council, Hacettepe University School of Social Work, IOM, Middle East Technical University (Ankara), Turkish Red Crescent Society, UNDP, UNICEF

## Budget, income and expenditure (USD)

	Final budget	Income from contributions	Other funds available	Total funds available	Total expenditure
Annual budget	6,942,267	500,981	6,096,301	6,597,282	6,597,282
Iraq Operation SB	1,489,621	265,048	969,174	1,234,221	1,234,221
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,431,888</b>	<b>766,029</b>	<b>7,065,474</b>	<b>7,831,503</b>	<b>7,831,503</b>

Note: Supplementary programmes do not include seven per cent support costs that are recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR. Income from contributions includes contributions earmarked at the country level. Other funds available include transfers from unearmarked and broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

## Financial Report (USD)

Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects			Previous years' projects
	Annual budget	Supplementary budget	Total	Annual and supplementary budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	2,386,159	107,269	2,493,428	0
Community services	214,436	94,283	308,719	174,217
Domestic needs and household support	618,271	471,576	1,089,847	21,170
Education	46,189	22,186	68,375	0
Health and nutrition	125,354	64,605	189,959	0
Legal assistance	615,727	62,735	678,462	0
Operational support (to agencies)	99,301	12,097	111,398	8,453
Shelter and infrastructure	29,429	0	29,429	0
Transport and logistics	77,752	49,291	127,043	0
Instalments with implementing partners	1,183	507	1,690	(203,841)
<b>Sub-total operational activities</b>	<b>4,213,799</b>	<b>884,549</b>	<b>5,098,349</b>	<b>0</b>
Programme support	2,383,482	349,672	2,733,155	0
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>6,597,282</b>	<b>1,234,221</b>	<b>7,831,503</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Cancellation on previous years' expenditure</b>				<b>(2,168)</b>
<b>Instalments with implementing partners</b>				
Payments made	327,353	94,790	422,143	
Reporting received	(326,170)	(94,283)	(420,453)	
<b>Balance</b>	<b>1,183</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>1,690</b>	
<b>Previous years' report</b>				
<b>Instalments with implementing partners</b>				
Outstanding 1st January				214,225
Reporting received				(203,841)
Refunded to UNHCR				(1,767)
Adjustments				(8,617)
<b>Balance</b>				<b>0</b>